

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,  
Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

14/00141

For publication

**Subject: Proposal to redevelop and expand Portal House School, Dover**

Decision:

**As Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform I agree to:**

- (i) Issue a public notice to expand Portal House School by 20 places as part of the project to rebuild the school on its current location by 1 September 2015.

And, following the closure of the public notice a further Cabinet Member decision will be taken to:

- (i) Expand the school by 20 places as part of the project to rebuild the school on its current location by 1 September 2015.
- (ii) Allocate £8.5m from the Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget
- (iii) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council
- (iv) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts

Should objections, not already considered by me when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

Reason(s) for decision:

Kent's Strategy for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) aims to address, amongst other things, gaps in provision. Therefore, the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent (2013-18) set out the intention to commission 121 additional places for pupils with BESN. This expansion will provide 20 additional BESN places in South Kent.

In reaching this decision I have taken into account:

- the views put forward in writing in response to the consultation;
- the views of the local County Councillors; Headteacher and Governing Body of Portal House School;
- the Equalities Impact Assessment and comments received regarding this; and
- the views of the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee which are set out below

**Financial Implications**

- a. Capital – The capital cost of the rebuild of the school is £8.5m.
- b. Revenue - The school will receive increased funding through the Delegated Budget. Special schools are funded using the DfE Place Plus funding methodology for High Needs Pupils. However, for September 2015 the Local Authority has agreed to purchase 55 places at Portal House School in order to limit the physical capacity of the school whilst the building project takes place. The school will therefore be unable to admit additional pupils during the academic year 2015/16. This will address the challenge of keeping the school open during the building work. Following completion of the project the

Local Authority will purchase 80 places at the school.

c. Human – Additional staff will be appointed as numbers increase gradually at the school over the next few years.


Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

**14 March 2014:** The Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Education & Health Reform that a consultation take place on the proposal to expand Portal House School.

Any alternatives considered:

The SEND Strategy explored all options and the expansion of this provision was deemed the suitable option.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

  
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**Signed**

19 DECEMBER 2014  
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**Date**