

**From:** Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services

**To:** Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee  
8 July 2015

**Subject:** Expansion of Halfway Houses Primary School

**Classification:** Unrestricted

Future Pathway of Paper: **Cabinet Member Decision**

Electoral Division: **Sheerness**

Local Member: **Ms Angela Harrison**

**Summary:** This report informs the Cabinet Committee of the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to permanently expand Halfway Houses (Foundation) Primary School from 2FE to 3FE and reports on the Governing Body decision to expand the school, pending approval by the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform to support this financially.

#### Recommendation

The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the decision to:

- i. Allocate £1,384,353.56 from the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget, being Kent County Council's contribution towards the priority school building scheme which has been agreed with the Education Funding Agency (EFA), subject to any necessary additional works or necessary variations.
- ii. The Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services in consultation with the Cabinet for Education and Health Reform be authorised to negotiate with the EFA as to the necessity and cost of any additional work or variations identified, to ensure that any further contribution is minimised. Any agreements will not exceed current approved financial limits
- iii. The Executive Scheme of Delegation for Officers set out in Appendix 2 Part 4 of the Constitution (and the directorate schemes of sub-delegation made thereunder) provides the governance pathway for the implementation of this decision by officers. In this instance the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support is expected to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Swale district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 identified a significant pressure in Reception year places. The Commissioning Plan identified a need to provide additional places on the

Isle of Sheppey from September 2014 and Halfway Houses Primary School agreed a temporary 1FE expansion for September 2014 and admitted 90 children into Reception Year (30 additional children).

- 1.2 Halfway Houses Primary School was successful in its application to be rebuilt under the Government's priority school building scheme. The project is to be delivered by the EFA. Halfway Houses new school building will be rebuilt on the site of the former Danley Middle School. The EFA will be commencing the procurement process shortly and, subject to successful design and planning approvals, it is hoped that the project will be completed during 2016.
- 1.3 KCC wished to use the opportunity of the school being rebuilt to incorporate additional works via the Contract that were over and above the EFA's funding allocation, in order to provide an additional 70 places to take the school capacity from 560 Primary places to 630 Primary places (3FE). KCC has agreed the cost assessment provided by the EFA at the feasibility stage for the Additional Works and will contribute £1,384,353.56 plus VAT. KCC recognises this is an estimate and that the total cost of the Additional Works may be higher or lower than this.
- 1.4 The Department for Education issued new Regulations in 2013 (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013), and as a consequence of the changes introduced in these regulations, governing bodies of all categories of mainstream schools can now make changes to their schools including expansion (enlargement of premises) without following a formal statutory process. The EFA required consultation on the proposed expansion to be carried out before the procurement process commenced and the governing body of Halfway Houses Primary School carried out a public consultation on a proposal to permanently expand the school from 2FE to 3FE under the new regulations. This means that there is not a need to issue a public notice.
- 1.5 This report sets out the results of the consultation, which took place between 9 September and 7 October 2014. A consultation meeting for parents/carers, governors and members of staff was held on 25 September 2014.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 It has been agreed by the Governing Body to permanently enlarge Halfway Houses Primary School, increasing the PAN to 90 (3FE) for the September 2016 intake and eventually a total capacity of 630 places.
  - a. Capital – Kent County Council's contribution towards the priority school building scheme will be £1,384,353.56 which has been agreed with the EFA. This is an estimate and KCC has acknowledged that the final amount may be higher or lower. The EFA will work with KCC throughout the process to ensure that any contribution for Additional Works is minimised as far as possible.
  - b. Revenue – For a period of three academic years, the school will receive protection for an additional 30 Reception Year pupils at the rate of £2,727 per pupil. For each additional classroom, resulting from the expansion of the school, the sum of £6,000 will allocated towards the classroom setup costs.
  - c. Human – Halfway House Primary School will appoint additional teachers, as the school size increases and the need arises.

### **3. Kent Policy Framework**

- 3.1 These proposals will help to secure our ambition “to ensure every child will go to a good school where they make good progress and can have fair access to school places” as set out in the Education Commissioning Plan.
- 3.2 The ‘Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2013-18’ also identified a pressure on primary school places on the Isle of Sheppey. A new 2FE Primary School is being established at Thistle Hill, providing 60 permanent Reception Year places from September 2015. However, from September 2016 a deficit of 23 Reception Year places is predicted, unless the additional 30 places at Halfway Houses Primary school are provided.

### **4. Consultation Outcomes**

- 4.1 A total of 136 written responses were received by the governing body: 119 respondents supporting the proposal; 6 objecting to the proposal and 11 respondents were undecided.
- 4.2 A summary of the comments received by the governing body is provided at Appendix 1.

### **5. Views**

- 5.1 The view of the Local Member: Ms Angela Harrison was consulted.
- 5.2. The view of the Headteacher and Governing Body:  
Halfway Houses Primary School is an improving school with rising standards. The school is currently full in all year groups and receiving an increasing number of applications for both Year R and other year groups. The governing body therefore came to the decision following the public consultation that the school should permanently expand from two forms of entry to three forms of entry and increase the admission number from 60 to 90.

Rebuilding Halfway Houses Primary School as a three form entry school on the Danley site will provide the additional places and also an improved learning environment, with modern classrooms and facilities, which the children of Halfway Houses Primary School deserve. The governors believe that this will lead to an improvement in the children’s life chances for the future and support the governing body’s aim to turn their lives around.

- 5.3. The view of the Director Planning and Access and Area Education Officer:  
This is an inclusive and rapidly improving school that is growing in popularity and serves a community with a fast growing population. Halfway Houses Primary School agreed temporary 1FE expansion for September 2014 to help meet the demand for pupil places locally. Demand in this part of the Isle of Sheppey currently outstrips capacity and forecasts indicate that this increasing demand is likely to continue.

The Director Planning and Access and the AEO are of the belief that this enlargement is not only necessary, but the most cost-effective and sustainable solution to increased demand in the immediate area, particularly when considered alongside the planned rebuilding programme for the school.

## **6. Proposal**

- 6.1 The proposed expansion of Halfway Houses Primary School will increase the value of KCC's property portfolio by adding value to the school buildings.
- 6.2 The proposed expansion of Halfway Houses Primary School is not subject to KCC statutory decision making process for expanding the school.
- 6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the consultation. To date no comments have been received and no changes are required to the Equality Impact Assessment.

## **7. Financial Implications:**

- 7.1 It has been agreed by the Governing Body to permanently enlarge Halfway Houses Primary School, increasing the PAN to 90 (3FE) for the September 2016 intake and eventually a total capacity of 630 places.
  - a. Capital – Kent County Council's contribution towards the priority school building scheme will be £1,384,353.56 as agreed with the EFA. This is an estimate and KCC has acknowledged that the final amount may be higher or lower. The EFA will work with KCC throughout the process to ensure that any contribution for Additional Works is minimised as far as possible, but if this increases by more than 10% the Cabinet Member will be required to take a further decision to allocate the additional funding.
  - b. Revenue – For a period of three academic years, the school will receive protection for an additional 30 Reception Year pupils at the rate of £2,727 per pupil. For each additional classroom, resulting from the expansion of the school, the sum of £6,000 will be allocated towards the classroom setup costs.
  - c. Human – Halfway House Primary School will appoint additional teachers, as the school size increases and the need arises.

## **8. Delegation to Officers**

- 8.1 The Officer Scheme of Delegation; under Appendix 2 part 4 of the Council's Constitution, provides a clear and appropriate link between this decision and the actions needed to implement it. For information it is envisaged, if the proposal goes ahead, that the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support will sign contracts on behalf of the County Council.

## **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1 Forecasts for the Swale district indicate an increasing demand for Primary school places. This enlargement will add an additional 30 Reception Year places to the capacity per year, in line with priorities in the Kent Policy Framework, 'Vision and Priorities for Education and Young People's Services' and the 'Commissioning Plan for Education' (2013 – 2018).

## 10. Recommendations

The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the decision to:

- i. Allocate £1,384,353.56 from the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget, being Kent County Council's contribution towards the priority school building scheme which has been agreed with the Education Funding Agency (EFA), subject to any necessary additional works or necessary variations.
- ii. The Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services in consultation with the Cabinet for Education and Health Reform be authorised to negotiate with the EFA as to the necessity and cost of any additional work or variations identified, to ensure that any further contribution is minimised. Any agreements will not exceed current approved financial limits
- iii. The Executive Scheme of Delegation for Officers set out in Appendix 2 Part 4 of the Constitution (and the directorate schemes of sub-delegation made thereunder) provides the governance pathway for the implementation of this decision by officers. In this instance the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support is expected to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

## 11. Background Documents

10.1 Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/your\\_council/priorities\\_policies\\_and\\_plans/priorities\\_and\\_plan\\_s/bold\\_steps\\_for\\_kent.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/priorities_policies_and_plans/priorities_and_plan_s/bold_steps_for_kent.aspx)

10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-2018

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s43253/ItemD3KentEducationCommissioningPlan20132018final.pdf>

10.3 Education Cabinet Committee report– 27 September 2013

<http://kent590w3:9070/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=746&MId=5033&Ver=4>

10.4 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/Halfway/consultationHome>

## 12. Contact details

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# Halfway Houses Primary School



Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2014

To Whom It May Concern,

Following the four week consultation on the proposal to permanently expand the school by 1FE from September 2016, the full governing body met on 13th October 2014 to consider the responses received, which are summarised in the table below:

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers	87	5	11	103
Members of Staff	22	1	0	23
Governors	10	0	0	10
Other Interested Parties				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>136</b>

Comments from those in support of the proposal:

- It will make a good school even better!
- Worries over transition for pupils in Y5/6
- Great for employment and education!
- Add to the proposal the idea of a Nursery
- More school places are needed due to more housing being built – only school in area
- Great idea – all local families will be able to send their pupils to the school
- Good – but provision for parking for staff and parents is needed
- Up to date facilities is a must!

Comments from those against the proposal:

- I would strongly disagree that the current site can be expanded
- Too many children will have an impact on children's learning development
- More children means standards go down??
- The school will be far too big

A drop-in event was held at the school on 25 September so that parents/carers and other interested parties could have the opportunity to ask questions and give their views on the proposal. Approximately 14 parents/carers, members of staff, governors and other interested parties attended the event and spoke in support of the proposal. The event was also attended by representatives from the Local Authority and the Education Funding Agency. Having considered all the responses received the governing body unanimously agreed to proceed with the expansion and increase the admission number for Year R entry to 90.

Signed: ..... (Chair of Governors)

Headteacher: Mr. Ryan Driver.  
Assistant Headteacher: Mrs. Margaret Murray  
Assistant Headteacher: Mrs. Lindsay Fordyce  
Assistant Headteacher: Mrs. Lisa Elderfield  
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