

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Cabinet

DECISION NO:

16/00070

For publication

Subject: Education Commissioning Plan 2017 – 21

Decision:

Cabinet will be asked to agree to: approve the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2017 – 21**1, Reason(s) for decision:**

- 1.1 The Education Commissioning Plan is a five year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out how Kent discharges its statutory responsibility, as the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision, to provide sufficient early years, SEND, Primary and Secondary places and to ensure that there are appropriate learning pathways for pupils at post 16. It is also our responsibility to ensure that we have enough places in the right locations, to meet the demands of increased pupil numbers and parental preferences. It reflects the fact that the Local Authority role has changed to being the commissioner, as well as continuing to be a provider, of education provision. The Plan sets out the principles by which we determine proposals, and it forecasts the need for future provision. It also sets out plans to meet the commissioning needs which arise in each District in Kent, in more detail for the next two to three years.
- 1.2 This updated KCP for the period 2017-21 is a 'live' document which underpins our on-going dialogue and consultation with schools, District Councils, Diocesan Authorities and Elected Members, to inform the process of ensuring there are sufficient school places of good quality in the right locations, and other provision including childcare, for Kent children and families.
- 1.3 There have been significant increases in the birth rate, birth numbers and inward migration as well as other demographic changes over recent years, which require substantial increases in the provision of school places in the coming years. The yearly number of births in Kent increased by 24% in the period between 2002-12*. The number of births dropped in 2013, but has risen since. The number of Primary age pupils is expected to continue rising significantly from 119,943 in 2015-16, to 127,859 in 2020-21, which almost 8,000 extra pupils over the next five years. Beyond this point strategic forecasts suggest that the number of Primary pupils will continue to rise until 2030 at which point they will drop slightly. The number of Secondary age pupils (Years 7-11) in Kent schools is expected to rise significantly from 78,007 in 2015-16 to 93,749 in 2022-23. Beyond this point the longer term strategic forecasts indicate a continuing rise in pupil numbers.

*Source: Office of National Statistics (ONS)

2. Financial Implications:

- 2.1 The Local Authority as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision has a key role in securing funding to provide sufficient education provision in the County, particularly in schools. The cost of providing additional school places is met from Government basic need grant, supported borrowing by KCC and developer contribution monies. It is clear from the Medium Term Financial Plan (2016-19) that KCC is no longer in a position to undertake any further prudential borrowing to support new provision (as it has done in the past - notably with the Special

Schools programme – as shown in figure 3.1, column 3 below) as to do so would place the Council in breach of one of its key fiscal indicators that net debt should not exceed 15% of its net revenue expenditure. Delivery of the additional schools places will rely more than ever on an appropriate level of funding from Government and securing the maximum possible contribution from developers where appropriate.

2.2 The table below summarises KCC’s spending and phased spending on school places for the period 2010 – 2020.

Summary of spending on school places 2010-2020

Year	Cost by Funding Source				Total (£)
	Basic Need (£)	Council Borrowing and Funds (£)	Developer Contributions (£)	Other (£)	
2010-11	1,796,594	0	35,971	0	1,832,565
2011-12	7,860,135	0	2,865	0	7,863,000
2012-13	7,359,521	1,839,000	6,813,479	0	16,012,000
2013-14	14,052,384	1,545,000	703,198	62,888	16,363,470
2014-15	27,710,662	0	2,599,090	0	30,309,752
2015-16	79,569,970	28,181,399	8,596,322	325,000	116,672,691
2016-17	33,620,510	25,566,895	19,198,396	0	78,385,801
2017-18	43,031,376	26,255,213	30,145,846	0	99,432,435
2018-19	15,580,579	778,307	15,272,374	0	31,631,260
2019-20	6,050,000	1,050,000	0	0	7,100,000
Total	236,631,731	85,215,814	83,367,541	387,888	405,602,974

2.3 Government funding for ‘Basic Need’ is allocated on a formulaic basis assessed from information provided by local authorities about forecast numbers of pupils and school capacity. Such funding will only provide for predicted growth in numbers arising from changes in the birth rate and from inward net migration.

2.4 Our current estimate of the likely level of available funding (from all sources) when compared to our initial estimate of the costs of the provision that is needed to meet the pupil forecasts means that we face a potential funding gap of in excess of £100m across the period 2017-20. This will need to be addressed through negotiation with the DfE about the grant funding that is needed, as well as looking at the costs associated with individual schemes. We will have to find a way to close any funding gap and reduce costs. The level of funding for maintenance and modernisation of the existing estate is already at a low level, so KCC has little scope to divert existing other schools capital funding to support the development of new provision.

2.5 For new pupil places required because of new housing development it is necessary to look to other funding, specifically developer contribution monies.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Report to Education and Young People’s Services Cabinet Committee - 23 November 2016

To be added after meeting

Any alternatives considered:

Alternative projects to those identified in the KCP have been considered prior to publication.

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

Decision

The Cabinet approve the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2017-21

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Signed

Date