

From: **Roger Gough, Cabinet Member Children, Young People and Education**

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To: **Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 22 June 2017**

Subject: **Review of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education 2017-21**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper:

Summary: This report is provided to the Cabinet Committee annually and sets out for Members the progress made in implementing the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education in delivering the necessary schools places for Kent and other provision for SEN, Early years and post 16 education and training.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to note the progress achieved and the issues identified for further development, and consider the report prior to the next version of the Commissioning Plan in autumn 2017.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent sets out how the County Council, as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision, will provide sufficient good quality provision across all types and phases of education, in the right locations, to meet the demands of increased pupil numbers and parental preferences. The Plan is updated annually.
- 1.2 This mid-year report reviews the progress over the past year in implementing the Plan's priorities. It covers:
 - Progress in implementing the expansion of school places;
 - Review of forecasting accuracy;
 - Progress against our targets;
 - Progress in implementing the review of school places for SEN pupils;
 - Progress and achievements in relation to Early Years provision; and
 - Progress and achievements in relation to post-16 commissioning.
- 1.3 In summary, this Review demonstrates that:
 - Commissioning and implementing the planned number of new school places for September 2017 has been successful with 7 of the 9.5 forms of entry at

Primary level being delivered. Much of the remainder was not brought forward as local demand did not materialise in full or there was capacity in neighbouring planning areas. As for Secondary 12FE (an increase of 2FE) of provision was delivered.

- Further progress has been made on delivering our commitment to rebuild or refurbish our Special schools with a further project being completed and the final three being in construction. This programme, together with the redesignation of pupil numbers has provided just fewer than 800 extra places in Special provision since 2012.
- Our forecasting methodology is accurate to within the +/- 1% target. Reception Year pupils were 0.1% under forecast, all Primary school pupils in line with the forecast, Year 7 pupils 0.1% under forecast and all Secondary school pupils 0.6% over forecast.
- Surplus capacity in the Primary school sector is at 5.6% in Reception Year and is 4.6% across all Primary school year groups. This is broadly in line with the 5% surplus place target. The surplus Primary school places in the districts vary from -0.8% in Dartford to 8.1% in Sevenoaks.
- Surplus capacity across the Secondary school sector is at 7.5% in Year 7 and at 9.6% across all years. This is above the 5% surplus capacity target and will reduce as the larger Primary school cohorts move into the Secondary sector. The surplus capacity in Year 7 places varies across travel to learn areas with the range being 3.0% in Canterbury and 15.0% in Dover. A similar picture can be seen across Years 7-11 with the range being 3.8% in Canterbury and 15.3% in Dover. The pressures in Canterbury will be alleviated in 2017-18 with the addition of capacity at The Canterbury Academy, The Spires Academy and Barton Court Grammar School.
- 87.2% of parents secured their 1st preference Primary school place for September 2017. This is in line with the target of 87%. The picture was slightly different for Secondary school places with 81.4% securing their 1st preference against the target of 83%. However, just shy of 300 more pupils secured their preferred Secondary school than in the previous year.

2. Progress in Expanding the Number of School Places

2.1 Figure 2.1 summarises the places identified in the 2017- 21 Commissioning Plan as needing to be delivered by September 2017, and compares this to the places delivered¹ by May 2017. This shows that 2.5FE of the Primary places identified as needed were not delivered. This was due to a variety of reasons as outlined in Figure 2.2. The Secondary plans were delivered, with an additional 2FE commissioned in Tunbridge Wells and 70 Year 7 places in Thanet as demand was higher than anticipated.

Figure 2.1: Comparison of need identified by September 2017 with places delivered by May 2017

	Primary			Secondary	
	Permanent Year R	Temporary Year R	Temporary Years 1-5	Permanent Year 7	Temporary Year 7
Need identified	9.5FE	150	30 Yr. 2 30 Yr. 3	10FE	0

¹ Delivered in this context includes places that have been agreed for 1-9-17 but may not be in place at the moment.

	Primary			Secondary	
	Permanent Year R	Temporary Year R	Temporary Years 1-5	Permanent Year 7	Temporary Year 7
in Plan					
Places delivered	7FE	90	30 Yr. 2 30 Yr. 5	12FE	70
Difference	-2.5FE	-60	-30 Yr. 3 +30 Yr. 5	+2FE	+70

2.2 Figures 2.2 and 2.3 set out the variations between what we planned to commission and what we have commissioned for September 2017. Included in the variations are “needs” that have not been commissioned, alternatives, and additions.

Figure 2.2: Variations from the commissioning intentions for delivery by September 2017 - Primary Provision

District	Planning Area	To be Commissioned by 2017-18	Variation	Reason	Impact
Dartford	Dartford North	30 Year 3 Places	Not Commissioned	Current indication is that it will not be needed	None at present. The situation is being monitored. Provision may need to be added in year.
	Dartford Rural South	0.5FE expansion	Commissioned in the Gravesham Rural planning group.	Additional 0.5FE put in a local school in an adjoining planning area which the AEO believes will be sufficient to cover rural demand for both Dartford & Gravesham	Positive -places available for local children.
Gravesham	Gravesham West		1FE expansion	Commissioned	Additional 1FE commissioned in Gravesham West, providing local places.
	Northfleet	1FE new provision	Not commissioned for 2017/2018	The original 2017 opening date of The Hope Free School was determined by the ESFA. They have subsequently deferred the opening until 2018	None. 2017 forecasts indicated a small dip in the otherwise upward trend line. Actual numbers suggest that the cohort number is lower than forecast.
	Higham / Cobham & Shorne	0.5FE expansion	Not commissioned	Demand is increasing in the planning area, but the demand is not centred near a single school. Some of that demand is	Reduction in families receiving 1 st preference of school in this planning area.

District	Planning Area	To be Commissioned by 2017-18	Variation	Reason	Impact
				out-of-county. Expansion opportunities in the planning area are very limited.	
Maidstone	Maidstone North	60 Year R Places	30 places commissioned.	30 places were enough to place pupils on National Offer Day. There is 7% surplus capacity across the town.	No impact on parental choice as there is sufficient capacity.
Shepway	Folkestone West	30 Year R places	Not commissioned	Application numbers lower than forecast.	No impact on parental choice as the school which would have offered the extra places was under subscribed.
Thanet	Ramsgate		30 Year 5 places added at Dame Janet Primary Academy	Local demand for Year 5 places increased.	Places available for local children.
Tonbridge and Malling	Larkfield and Leybourne	1FE at Valley Invicta Primary in Leybourne	Not commissioned	Surplus capacity in the adjacent Snodland planning group accommodated the shortfall from Larkfield and Leybourne. This was because places in Snodland schools were closer to the pressure than Leybourne, despite being in separate planning groups.	Places available for local children

Figure 2.3: Variations from the commissioning intentions for delivery by September 2016 - Secondary Provision

District	To be Commissioned	Variation	Reason	Impact
District	By 2017-18			
Thanet		30 Year 7 places added at Ursuline College 30 Year 7 places added at Royal Harbour Academy 10 Year 7 places added at St. Georges CE Foundation School	Demand for Year 7 places higher than forecast.	Places available for local children.
Tunbridge Wells	2FE	4FE additional provision was commissioned through temporary expansion of existing schools.	Actual numbers higher than anticipated.	Places available for local children.

- 2.3 There continues to be a growing number of academy schools operating in Kent. Figure 2.4 lists the maintained schools that have converted to become an academy, academies which have transferred to a new sponsor, and new free schools.

Figure 2.4: Academies created since September 2016

Area	School	Date	Promoter	Status
Thanet	The Charles Dickens School	01 March 2017	Barton Court Grammar School Academy	Converted
Tonbridge & Malling	Leybourne, St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School	01 March 2017	The Tenax Schools Trust	Converted
Maidstone	The Lenham School (was Swadlams)	01 March 2017	Valley Invicta Academies Trust	Converted
Gravesham	Westcourt Primary School	01 February 2017	The Primary First Trust	Converted
Swale	Richmond Academy	01 January 2017	The Stour Academy Trust	Transfer
Swale	Thistle Hill Academy	01 January 2017	The Stour Academy Trust	Transfer
Dartford	Knockhall Academy	01 January 2017	The Woodland Academy Trust	Transfer
Shepway	Martello Primary	01 January 2017	Turner Schools	Transfer
Shepway	Morehall Primary	01 January 2017	Turner Schools	Transfer
Ashford	St Michael's CEP School	01 December 2016	Tenterden Schools Trust	Converted
Ashford	Tenterden CEJ School	01 December 2016	Tenterden Schools Trust	Converted
Ashford	Tenterden Infant School	01 December 2016	Tenterden Schools Trust	Converted
Swale	Halfway Houses Primary School	01 November 2016	The Island Learning Trust	Converted
Swale	Minster In Sheppey Primary School	01 November 2016	The Island Learning Trust	Converted
Shepway	Brenzett CE Primary School	01 October 2016	Aquila (Diocese of Canterbury Academy Trust)	Converted
Dover	Temple Ewell CEP school	01 September 2016	Aquila (Diocese of Canterbury Academy Trust)	Transfer
Maidstone	Langley Park Primary Academy	01 September 2016	Leigh Academies Trust	New Academy

Dartford	Oakfield Primary Academy	01 September 2016	The Galaxy Trust	Converted
Dartford	Temple Hill Primary Academy	01 September 2016	The Galaxy Trust	Converted
Thanet	Upton Junior School	01 September 2016	Viking Academy Trust	Converted
Dartford	Horton Kirby Church of England Primary School	01 April 2017	Aletheia Anglican Academy Trust	Converted
Dartford	Stone St Mary's CE Primary School	01 April 2017	Aletheia Anglican Academy Trust	Converted

- 2.4 Figure 2.5 below sets out other changes to schools during the academic year 2016/17.

Figure 2.5: Changes to school status other than academisation

School(s)	District	Change	Date
Kingswood PS, Ulcombe CEPS and Leeds & Broomfield CEPS	Maidstone	Federated	1 April 2017
Homesdale and The Malling School	Tonbridge and Malling	Defederation	1 January 2017
Murston Infants and Juniors- now Sunny Bank PS	Swale	Amalgamation	1 September 2016
Ifield School and Kings Farm PS	Gravesham	Federated	1 September 2016.
Aylesham PS and Vale View PS	Dover	Defederation	18 April 2017

3. Review of Forecasting Accuracy

- 3.1 The Plan sets out forecast roll numbers (by planning areas at Primary school level and by district at Secondary school level) across each District in Kent. In figures 3.1 to 3.4 below, the forecast 2016/17 rolls are compared to the actual rolls as at January 2017. Our target is to be accurate to within plus or minus 1% at County level. However, we use this benchmark for each district and for each phase. It can be noted that we significantly under forecast the Year R roll and the Year R-6 roll in the Dartford District. The almost doubling of housing completions in 2015-16 across the District, where there is already significant population movement, has impacted on the variance seen. A more detailed commentary outlining the likely reasons for variances between forecast and actual rolls will be completed once all the necessary datasets are available.

Forecasting Accuracy for Reception Year Numbers

- 3.2 Figure 3.1 sets out the accuracy of the Year R forecasts. It shows that for Kent overall, forecasts are accurate to within -0.1%. This is extremely accurate and continues to show the improvements in our forecasting models. However there are variations across the districts with 3 districts being accurate within +/-1%, 6 districts within +/-1 to 2% and 3 districts under or over forecast by more than +/-2%. This is similar to the previous year.

Figure 3.1: Comparison of Year R forecast v January 2017 roll

Area and District	Forecast Year R roll (2016/17)	Actual Year R roll Jan 2017	Difference (forecast less actual)	Over / under forecast (%)
East Kent	5,067	5,088	-21	-0.4
Canterbury	1,479	1,505	-26	-1.7
Swale	1,910	1,934	-24	-1.2
Thanet	1,678	1,649	29	1.7
North Kent	4,353	4,374	-21	-0.5
Dartford	1,467	1,548	-81	-5.2
Gravesham	1,458	1,438	20	1.4
Sevenoaks	1,428	1,388	40	2.9
South Kent	4,068	4,033	35	0.9
Ashford	1,594	1,597	-3	-0.2
Dover	1,266	1,256	10	0.8
Shepway	1,209	1,180	29	2.4
West Kent	4,809	4,819	-10	-0.2
Maidstone	1,919	1,958	-39	-2.0
Tonbridge and Malling	1,621	1,608	13	0.8
Tunbridge Wells	1,269	1,253	16	1.3
Kent Totals	18,297	18,314	-17	-0.1

Forecasting Accuracy of Primary School Roll Numbers

- 3.3 Figure 3.2 sets out the accuracy of the forecasts for Primary age pupils. Across Kent, the forecast was in line with actual rolls. This shows a very high level of accuracy. There are variations across the districts with 8 districts being within the +/-1% target, and 4 between +/-1 to 2%. This is similar to the previous year.

Figure 3.2: Comparison of Primary (Year R-6) forecast v January 2017 roll

Area and District	Forecast Primary roll (2016/17)	Actual Primary roll Jan 2017	Difference (forecast less actual)	Over / under forecast (%)
East Kent	34,300	34,417	-117	-0.3
Canterbury	10,254	10,391	-137	-1.3
Swale	12,724	12,775	-51	-0.4
Thanet	11,322	11,251	71	0.6
North Kent	28,894	28,873	21	0.1

Area and District	Forecast Primary roll (2016/17)	Actual Primary roll Jan 2017	Difference (forecast less actual)	Over / under forecast (%)
Dartford	9,751	9,923	-172	-1.8
Gravesham	9,514	9,468	46	0.5
Sevenoaks	9,630	9,482	148	1.5
South Kent	27,702	27,602	100	0.4
Ashford	10,726	10,773	-47	-0.4
Dover	8,482	8,425	57	0.7
Shepway	8,494	8,404	90	1.1
West Kent	32,294	32,329	-35	-0.1
Maidstone	12,573	12,647	-74	-0.6
Tonbridge	10,985	10,989	-4	0.0
Tunbridge Wells	8,736	8,693	43	0.5
Kent Totals	123,189	123,221	-32	0.0

Forecasting Accuracy for Year 7 Pupils

- 3.4 Figure 3.3 sets out the accuracy of the Year 7 pupil forecasts. Across Kent there were 22 more pupils than forecast in Year 7, which is a very high degree of accuracy. There are variations across the districts with 3 being within the +/-1% target, 5 districts being between +/-1 to 2% and 4 districts over +/- 2%. This is an improvement on the previous year where only one district was within the +/-1% target (Swale), 5 were between +/- 1 to 2% and 6 were over +/-2%.

Figure 3.3: Comparison of Year 7 forecast v January 2017 roll

Area and District	Forecast Year 7 roll (2016/17)	Actual Year 7 roll Jan 2017	Difference (forecast less actual)	Over / under forecast (%)
East Kent	4,601	4,568	33	0.7
Canterbury	1,554	1,541	13	0.8
Swale	1,629	1,628	1	0.1
Thanet	1,418	1,399	19	1.3
North Kent	3,376	3,399	-23	-0.7
Dartford	1,567	1,573	-6	-0.4
Gravesham	1,331	1,358	-27	-2.0
Sevenoaks	479	468	11	2.4
South Kent	3,583	3,575	8	0.2
Ashford	1,339	1,382	-43	-3.1
Dover	1,205	1,143	62	5.4
Shepway	1,039	1,050	-11	-1.1
West Kent	4,884	4,925	-41	-0.8
Maidstone	1,954	1,925	29	1.5
Tonbridge and Malling	1,556	1,580	-24	-1.5
Tunbridge Wells	1,374	1,420	-46	-3.2
Kent Totals	16,445	16,467	-22	-0.1

Forecasting Accuracy of Secondary School Roll Numbers

- 3.5 Figure 3.4 below sets out the accuracy of the Year 7-11 pupil forecasts. Across Kent these were 0.6% higher than actual rolls. This shows a high level of accuracy. There are variations across the districts with 7 of the districts being within the +/-1% target, 4 between +/-1 to 2% and one over + 2%. This is similar to the previous year.

Figure 3.4: Comparison of Year 7-11 forecast v January 2016 roll

Area and District	Forecast Secondary roll (2016/17)	Actual Secondary roll Jan 2017	Difference (forecast less actual)	Over / under forecast (%)
East Kent	22,070	21,850	220	1.0
Canterbury	7,486	7,445	41	0.6
Swale	7,662	7,608	54	0.7
Thanet	6,922	6,797	125	1.8
North Kent	15,761	15,638	123	0.8
Dartford	7,391	7,323	68	0.9
Gravesham	6,185	6,184	1	0.0
Sevenoaks	2,185	2,131	54	2.6
South Kent	17,283	17,207	76	0.4
Ashford	6,553	6,628	-75	-1.1
Dover	5,796	5,698	98	1.7
Shepway	4,934	4,881	53	1.1
West Kent	24,138	24,106	32	0.1
Maidstone	9,366	9,307	59	0.6
Tonbridge and Malling	7,612	7,632	-20	-0.3
Tunbridge Wells	7,160	7,167	-7	-0.1
Kent Totals	79,253	78,801	452	0.6

4. Progress in Achieving Our Targets

- 4.1 The targets which relate to providing sufficient school places are set out in 'Vision and Priorities for Improvement', and are reproduced in Figure 4.1 below.
- 4.2 Maintaining sufficient surplus capacity in schools across an area is essential both to meet increased demand and to enable parental preferences to be met. We strive to maintain at least 5% surplus capacity in school places in line with demand and parental preferences, each year.
- 4.3 Figure 4.1 shows that surplus capacity in Reception classes across Kent is at 5.6% and for all Primary aged pupils it is 4.6%. This is broadly in line with the 5% target. Four districts are operating below 5% surplus Year R capacity, four at between 5% to 7% surplus, and the remaining four districts operate above 7% surplus capacity. Across all Primary School year groups (Reception to Year 6) seven districts are operating below 5% surplus capacity, two at between 5% to 7% surplus, and the remaining three districts operate above 7% surplus.

- 4.4 Figure 4.1 shows that surplus capacity in Yr. 7 across Kent is at 7.5%. Across Years 7-11 it is at 9.6%. We expect to see increased numbers of Primary aged pupils transfer to Secondary schools over the next few years, thus surplus capacity will return to an effective operating level. Four travel to learn areas have less than the 5% target surplus places in Year 7 (Dartford, Gravesham and North Sevenoaks travel to learn area, Canterbury, Shepway and Thanet). Across Years 7-11 one area has surplus places below the 5% target, this being Canterbury.

Figure 4.1

Targets	January 2017	% Year R	% Yrs. R-6
Maintain at least 5% surplus Primary School capacity in each District.	District Ashford Canterbury Dartford Dover Gravesham Maidstone Sevenoaks Shepway Swale Thanet Tonbridge and Malling Tunbridge Wells	6.3 5.2 1.5 7.8 2.6 2.8 10.6 8.1 4.0 8.4 5.2 6.2	4.6 5.2 -0.8 7.9 0.8 4.1 8.1 5.0 3.5 4.5 4.8 7.5
	Kent	5.6%	4.6%
Maintain at least 5% surplus Secondary School capacity in each travel to learn area.	Area Dartford, Gravesham & N. Sevenoaks. S. Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Tunbridge Wells. Maidstone & Malling. Ashford Canterbury Dover Shepway Swale Thanet	4.5 8.5 12.4 8.6 3.0 15.0 4.4 5.1 4.3	8.0 9.1 13.3 10.8 3.8 15.3 9.1 10.2 6.8
	Kent	7.5%	9.6%

- 4.5 We set targets for the percentage of families securing their first preference school for entry in September 2017. For Primary schools the target was 87% and on Offer Day 87.2% of parents secured their first preference.
- 4.6 For Secondary schools the target was 83% and 81.4% of parents secured their first preference. This was the same as in the previous year, although just shy of 300 more pupils secured their preferred school.
- 4.7 The target for first and second preferences for both Primary and Secondary schools was 95%, with 95.3% securing their first or second preference in a Primary school and 91.7% of parents securing their first or second preference at a Secondary school.

5. Progress in implementing Changes to Provision for SEND Pupils

5.1 There have been considerable achievements through the delivery of our current Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy, particularly around implementation of the Children and Families Act. The most important objective of the strategy was to ensure that children with SEND are getting a good education and achieving good progress.

Our achievements have included significant culture change, ensuring the Council moves ahead rapidly with conversions of statements to Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and undertakes assessments within a tighter 20 week framework. KCC has also invested to improve and expand Special schools; with greatly improved accommodation.

5.2 All Special schools in Kent were rated as Good or better by Ofsted and nearly all of the children with SEND were going to a good or outstanding school. Attainment and progress rates improved for children with SEN. However, whilst progress rates have improved in Primary schools, and compared more favourably with other similar children nationally, KS4 and GCSE progress rates were below national comparisons for children with SEN. The number of children with autism and speech, language and communication difficulties continued to increase. Going forward, the aims are to continue to improve attainment levels and ensure the right provision is in the right place.

5.3 The County Council's capital programme continues to prioritise the commitment to ensuring sufficient Special school places in high quality environments. Since the Plan for 2017-21 was written, a further Special school project has been completed, Foreland (East Kent), and the final projects are in progress on site:

- Five Acre Wood (West Kent) – The project is a complex redevelopment of the existing Five Acre Wood site, which has been dependent on agreements with third parties. The refurbishment works within the existing school; the extensions to hall, reception and kitchen; and the main new build extension have been completed. The final phase, which includes some internal remodelling and development of some external areas, is ongoing.
- Portal House School (South Kent) – The project involves the redevelopment of the existing Portal House site, with significant new build and remodelling of part of the existing building. The project is being completed in two main phases. Phase 1, the provision of new teaching accommodation and administrative areas as well as some external work, is planned to be completed by August 2017. Phase 2, the provision of a new sports hall, changing and vocational teaching spaces, is planned to be completed by August 2018.
- Ridge View (West Kent) - New build school on a new site. The project is planned to be completed for September 2017. Alongside this, additional plans have been put in place to create a satellite of Ridge View, which will provide additional classes at the relocated Woudham All Saints Primary School for 2017/18. Construction works for the new school buildings are ongoing.

- Wyvern School (South Kent) - Additional Year R and Key Stage 1 pupils have been admitted from September 2016. The associated capital expansion project consists of additional class bases, a new studio hall, ancillary spaces and additional external spaces, including further parking. The construction is progressing well and is planned to be completed by September 2017.
- Meadowfield School (East Kent) – Phases 1 and 2 have been completed, providing the school with three additional class bases and a hygiene suite. It is planned to permanently increase the designated number of the school from 209 to 270. This permanent increase is dependent on finding a solution to provide the school with additional classrooms, specialist/practical rooms and facilities and storage.

5.4 Increasing the designated number of places available

As at September 2016 there were 3,832 Special school places available. This is an increase of just under 800 places since the first Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent was published for the 2012-17 period.

- 5.5 Following the completion of an education statutory process, 24 additional places have been created at Oakley School (Tunbridge Wells) increasing the designated number of places offered from 218 to 242 from 1 September 2017. This increase is to facilitate an observation and assessment provision for up to 24 nursery children. It is anticipated that this provision will accommodate children between aged 3 and 4 years who claim the free entitlement funding and children eligible for the two year old funding. Including these additional places, the designated number of Special school places for September 2017 is 3,856.

5.6 Specialist Resource Provision (SRP)

For many pupils, appropriate early intervention and suitable support is available in mainstream Primary schools. However, when they reach Secondary age, an increasing number require Special school provision. Analysis of current placements shows a marked reduction in the proportion of pupils accessing mainstream school after Year 6. 55% of Primary aged pupils with SEN are successfully placed in mainstream with 45% needing a Special school placement. Of those Primary pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in mainstream schools, only 3% are placed in an SRP. At Secondary age, the proportion in mainstream drops significantly to 40% with 6% of those requiring placement in a mainstream SRP to access support. 60% of Secondary aged pupils with an EHCP are taught in Special schools.

Three new resourced provisions opened in Primary schools in September 2016. Two were for pupils with ASD (Martello Grove PS, Shepway and Langley PS, Maidstone). The third was for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (Thistle Hill PS, Swale). Four new provisions are due to open in September 2017. Two will support pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (Finberry, Ashford and Holborough Lakes, Tonbridge and Malling). The third will be for pupils with ASD (Kings Hill, Tonbridge and Malling) and the fourth for pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (Cherry Orchard PS, Dartford). The opening of the provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs at Leybourne Chase PS is yet to be agreed. It was

disappointing that there has been a delayed start to admission to the SRPs in the new academies at Kings Hill, Leybourne and Holborough Lakes.

5.7 Special School Satellite Provision

We now have satellite provision for four of our Profound, Severe and Complex Needs (PSCN) Special schools linked to Oakley, Five Acre Wood, Ridge View and St Nicholas schools. These satellites are based on mainstream school sites. Pupils who attend are on the rolls of the Special schools concerned, but pupils integrate into the mainstream schools' classes, with support, where this is suitable and appropriate for the individual pupil.

We have commissioned satellite provision linked to Ridge View School (Tonbridge & Malling), which is set to open on the Woudham All Saints CEP School site during the 2017/18 school year. The new provision will grow incrementally over time and will eventually provide for up to 48 Primary aged pupils with moderate to complex learning difficulties. The accommodation will provide 4 fully integrated SEN class bases and associated resourced staff areas, group therapy and hygiene rooms.

5.8 Independent/non-maintained placements

Where the needs of individual pupils cannot be met in Kent maintained Special schools, placements are commissioned in the independent non-maintained sector (sometimes referred to as 'Out of County'). Whilst the overall number of children and young people with EHCPs has increased by 16% since January 2016, the proportion of children placed in this sector has decreased for the second year running, from 7.5% of all pupils with an EHCP to 7%.

5.9 New Free Schools

The County Council receives no financial support from Central Government to increase Special school capacity. We are therefore, entirely dependent upon our own resources or the Government free school programme to increase capacity. Under current statutory guidance all new schools must be free schools. On 12 April 2017 the Government announced the outcome of 'Wave 12' applications for free schools, including approval for one new Primary Special school and one additional Secondary Special school within Kent. However, it must be noted that the average time in pre-opening of a school is approximately 26 months and we therefore do not expect the provision to open until September 2019. As ASD continues to be the most prevalent need type, Special free schools catering for this group of pupils is most welcomed. Approved free special schools are:

Bearsted Academy – Secondary Free school (West Kent)

The Bearsted Academy free school is in response to our identified need for high functioning Secondary aged ASD pupils in the Maidstone area. We have previously set out our intention to commission up to 144 places for pupils aged 11-19 years old (120 KS2-KS4, 24 KS5).

Aspire Free School – Primary (East Kent)

This provision is on track to open in the 2018/19 academic year.

5.10 In the KCP additional provision was identified as being needed as follows:

Location	Need	Position as of June 2017
Swale (Isle of	A 120 place provision for pupils	No wave application at

Location	Need	Position as of June 2017
Sheppey)	7-16 years with a designation of Behaviour and Learning on the Isle of Sheppey (Swale District). We would envisage that the school would be prepared to work collaboratively with other schools on the Isle of Sheppey and provide support to schools across the Swale District.	present. This remains a significant priority due to the high numbers of pupils transported (70+) from the Isle of Sheppey to Bower Grove Special school in Maidstone and the cost of alternative placements for Primary aged pupils who meet the Bower Grove criteria (£358K pa).
Dover	Up to 168 (120 KS3-KS4, 48 KS5) place provision for pupils aged 11-19 years with a designation of Profound Severe and Complex Needs in Dover District	No wave application at present. This still remains a priority as existing specialist provision in Dover has exceeded places available and the nearest Special school provision is in Shepway.
Dartford, Gravesham or Sevenoaks	Up to 210 (150 KS3-KS4, 60 KS5) place provision for pupils aged 11-19 years with a designation of Profound Severe and Complex Needs in the North of the County.	No wave application at present. This remains a priority as existing special schools serving the districts are larger than average.

6. Progress in implementing Changes to Provision for Early Years

6.1 The Early Years and Childcare element of the Commissioning Plan included the following key issues/actions:

- The take up of free for 2 places had continued to rise across the County.
- All districts continued to have surplus early education places with the exception of Gravesham.
- Surplus provision in a district can mask a deficit of places at a planning group level. Particular issues were noted in four planning areas within Swale, Maidstone and Gravesham districts. An update on the progress in providing places in these planning areas is noted in Figure 6.1.
- Six bids were submitted to the DfE Early Years Capital Fund to increase places in key locations with each bid being successful. These bids are noted in Figure 6.2. Two of the bids were in Gravesham and have increased the provision by 100 places in that district and by 244 places across the county.

Figure 6.1: Update of progress in providing places in planning areas with a notable deficiency of places

Planning area	Progress in ensuring provision
Isle of Sheppey	There have been no developments or closures in the Isle of

Planning area	Progress in ensuring provision
	Sheppey (Eastchurch and Warden Bay planning area) since the last KCP. However, Eastchurch CEPS's maintained nursery class (Little Owls) are now registered for Free For 2 children. There has been an enquiry from the new Thistle Hill School regarding opening a nursery, this development would be welcomed but is dependent on securing a source of capital funding.
Shepway and Parkwood, Maidstone	Langley Park Primary Academy opened in September 2016 and includes new nursery provision for 3 and 4 year olds. The nursery provides full day care and offers 30 places.
SW Gravesend	There have been no developments or closures in the SW Gravesend planning area; however, there are two new nurseries planned in the neighbouring planning areas of Gravesend East and Gravesend North which may help to meet the demand for places in Southwest Gravesend.

6.2: Successful bids to the DfE Early Years Capital Fund

District	Locality for Development	Early Years DfE Capital Funding applications submitted
Canterbury	Canterbury City	St. John's C E Primary School: Bid agreed to fund the expansion of the existing nursery from 26 to 52 places
Dover	Aylesham	Aylesham Youth Centre site: Bid agreed to fund a new 60 place provision
Gravesham	Northfleet South, Coldharbour, Riverview	Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend: Bid agreed to fund a new 40 place provision. Gravesend Rugby Club: Bid agreed to fund a new 60 place provision
Shepway	New Romney	Abacus (Grounds of St Nicholas Primary Academy), New Romney: Bid agreed to fund the expansion of existing nursery from 48 to 60 places
Tonbridge & Malling	Kings Hill	Valley Invicta Primary: Bid agreed to fund a new 40 place provision

6.2 Issues moving forward

There continues to be a growing need for places arising from housing developments which cannot always be met through the local school or PVI provision that is available. When a new Primary school is delivered within a development, according to the EFA baseline design, a nursery space is included. This will typically offer 26 full time equivalent places which, in reality, is not enough to mitigate the demand for places.

Moving forward KCC will need to consider how the shortfall of preschool places could be met and whether this may have to be through developer contributions.

7. Post-16 Commissioning

7.1 The Post-16 commissioning element of the Commissioning Plan 2016/20 included the following current priorities:

- Raise Attainment
- Target support to vulnerable young people
- Improve and Extend Vocational Education
- Increase Participation and Employment

7.2 Raise Attainment- Post 16 Outcomes

- A Level Average Point Score per entry achieved by students in Kent schools is 30.9 which is in line with the national average of 30.8 and equivalent to a C grade. Kent is ranked fourth out of its statistical neighbours
- Academic results include A Level, AS Level, International Baccalaureate, International Baccalaureate Career Programme and extended project qualifications. In 2016, the Average Point Score per entry achieved by Academic students in Kent schools is 32.2 which is above the national average of 31.0 and equivalent to a C+. Kent is ranked second out of its statistical neighbours and 27th out of 150 local authorities nationally for this measure.
- The Skills and Employability Service has developed packages in English and maths to support students in making progress in numeracy and literacy. These have been piloted with schools and FE colleges to test marketability and effectiveness.

The Skills and Employability Service has supported the premise that schools should evaluate which qualifications should be offered at key stage 5 for the profile of their learners. For many students in high schools A levels and academic qualifications are inappropriate and even positive progression to a low grade has little currency. Through the use of the most appropriate qualification it should be possible to reach an average C+ or a Distinction in either applied general or technical qualification.

7.3 Target support to vulnerable young people

Outcomes and actions in this area include the following:

- 3.0% of 16-17 year old pupils were NEET as of January 2017. This was above the 2.5% target but a reduction of 3.3% compared with the previous year. The destination of pupils recorded as 'not known' was 3.2% compared to 5.45% in January 2016. This is a significant improvement due to increasing the capacity of the Tracking Team within Skills and Employability and the focused work of services across the Directorate and its partner organisations.
- We have ensured focused activities are in place in all districts to identify those

young people who are likely to become NEET and those young people who are NEET. These activities are coordinated within the districts through the District Participation meetings which meet monthly.

- We have implemented an integrated and high quality data system to track all 16-18 year old learners across all KCC services.
- We are developing focused, collaborative and integrated working, not only between services within KCC, but also between KCC, schools, FE Colleges and work based learning providers. This has included focused work and interventions for the most vulnerable groups, which includes Children in Care, SEND, Young Offenders, Teenage Parents, and Elective Home Educated.
- We are providing high quality personalised pathways with positive destinations across all districts. A particular focus was to ensure vulnerable learners have the necessary support to progress into appropriate pathways, internships, supported employment, or apprenticeships.
- The Skills and Employability Service have held discussions with FE college SENCOs and staff with responsibility for vulnerable learners to identify how KCC and the colleges can work together to improve progression pathways and the transition between settings for vulnerable learners. Also work has been undertaken with Adult Social Care to develop a model that reduces the deskilling of SEND young people once they have left education. There are 2 pilots taking place in Kent to model practice for the future.
- The Skills and Employability Service work with providers to develop innovative approaches to 14 – 19 Programmes to develop the employability skills of young people, particularly for vulnerable learners to narrow the gaps in attainment so they can achieve positive destinations at 18. Examples of these are:
 - Four applications to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for specialist post 16 institution status to widen the offer to SEND young people to give them more post 16 options. Supajam (music and media), Skillnet (music and arts), Liberty Training (employability skills) and Brogdale CIC (grounds maintenance, horticulture, retail and customer service skills).
 - Work with Early Help to put together EET activities for teenage parents based in Children Centres
 - Supporting Skills Training UK (STUK) who have the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funded contract to deliver in Kent to ensure that they add to, not duplicate provision, which is already available in areas where we have identified a need.
 - Partnership working with Virtual Schools Kent (VSK) and the Care Leaver team to ensure that there are suitable Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) engagement activities available.
 - A SEND and Vulnerable Learner Group with FE representation was established to develop ways of reducing the number of SEND NEETS and constructing high quality progression pathways.

7.3 Improve and Extend Vocational Education

Figure 7.1 shows the increase in uptake of applied general and technical education qualifications showing that schools are now offering both an academic and technical pathway at age 16 in line with the guidance set out in the DfE Post 16 Skills Plan. Further work is needed with individual schools to improve KS5

progression for students with just below 40 KS4 points who are able to achieve a distinction in applied general qualifications.

Figure 7.1: Uptake of applied general and technical education qualification

Students	Vocational	Technical	Applied General	Total
2016		693	2843	3536
2015	2573			2573
2014	2583			2583

7.4 Increase Participation and Employment

Key to the success of the Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy is meaningful engagement with employers. This has been successfully promoted through developing a Guild Model, which is a partnership between employers and education providers. The Guilds provide an interface between local employers and education and training providers, which focus on developing young people's aspirations, attitudes and achievements in preparation for accessing progression pathways, particularly in the growth employment sectors. The following 8 Guilds have been created in response to the classification of certain sectors as having 'priority status' either within Kent or the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) region these are:

- Sciences
- Creative and Media
- Land-Based Industries
- Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing
- Construction and the Built Environment
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Health and Social Care
- Financial Services

7.5 Careers Education, Support and Apprenticeships

- The Skills and Employability Service continues to run a strong network to support the delivery of Careers Education.
- Providers have had the benefit of the Kent Careers Framework which supports the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) offer in organisations and an audit tool which measures the development of employability within the institution.
- The Skills and Employability Service have commissioned a Careers Enterprise coordinator, who is partly funded by the Careers Enterprise Company. Tristram Hooley, from the University of Derby and now a director of that company, was commissioned by the Service to examine careers education in Kent's coastal schools, a sub set of schools nationally drawn into the DFE's attention. Schools were assessed on the Gatsby criteria, a set of principles developed to identify

excellent CEIAG practice. Outcomes of this research suggested a varied response to employer engagement and the careers enterprise coordinator's role is to link 20 schools, in this case, to an enterprise adviser to facilitate employer engagement and enterprise activities. 16 schools have signed up to the scheme and 10 schools have been matched with an adviser.

- The West Kent Partnership has recently put in a bid for an enterprise network.
- The Kent Choices 4 U (KC4U) live event was attended by 2589 young people from across Kent and Medway. The KC4U website enables young people to search and apply for courses online.
- Kent Supported Employment has helped 316 vulnerable learners with physical disabilities, ASD and learning difficulties move into a variety of sustainable employment outcomes over the last year including 58% into paid sustainable employment,
- By July 2016 over 3000 young people aged 16 to 18 had started an apprenticeship across Kent, which is the highest number achieved for this age group.
- Schools, FE colleges and work-based training providers continue to work with young people with the support of KCC. Two new websites have been developed to help young people make informed choices around apprenticeships (www.apprenticekent.com) and provide support to improve their employability skills (www.readytoworkkent.co.uk)

8. Issues emerging from the ESFA Wave 12 Free School announcements and the impact on Capital Funding

- 8.1 KCC has supported the DfE policy position of increasing the number of Free Schools, as aligned to the Commissioning Plan which demonstrates the Basic Need they are intended to address. Unfortunately a number of Free School projects which had been factored into our plans (as the only way of balancing demand with the available funding) are now unlikely to come forward in the required timescales. The impact of delays to the previous round of Free Schools is already being felt and the failure to open Wave 12 projects on time will result in an insufficient number of school places in some parts of the county over the next three years unless other action is taken. Announcements on Wave 12 bids were made later than expected during Easter and there remains a complete lack of clarity on both the timing and nature of Wave 13. This latest round should have opened in March but may not now do so until autumn this year, as a result of the general election, and under a revised process which may revert to addressing 'diversity' and play more to the creation of new selective provision than simply addressing basic need for places in all schools.
- 8.2 The ESFA and Ministers have reiterated that the statutory duty to provide sufficient places rests with the LA and that KCC will therefore need to take mitigating action. In the last three months senior KCC officers have written to, spoken and met with more than 40 ESFA officials. At each of the meetings we have raised our considerable concerns over funding, the performance of the ESFA in relation to project delivery, the revised policy stance adopted in relation to future projects and the implications of the Wave 12 announcements and the delay of Wave 13

8.3 Our discussions have focussed predominantly on those schemes that are most urgently needed to create places for 2018, 2019 and 2020. Our most pressing concerns include:

- The ESFA decision to substantially revise its policy approach to site acquisition which means it now refuses to make any “speculative” land purchases, as defined by any project for which a sponsor has not been selected.
- The ESFA’s newly articulated assumption that where a Wave process does not result in a sponsor being selected the onus will fall to the LA to run a competition process outside of the wave process. There is no obvious current source of funds to meet the resulting site purchase and build costs which all fall to KCC under this process. To compound this neither is there sufficient time in which to bring forward projects via this route in order to ensure permanent school buildings are delivered in the necessary timescales. This is an issue we initially raised with the ESFA two years ago.
- There is a lack of urgency being displayed by the ESFA. They clearly have not appreciated the impact of the current policy positions, and are seemingly impervious to the additional level of complexity which they have introduced. The ESFA appear ill-prepared to navigate the complex local planning processes in Kent, which has already impacted upon their delivery of new free schools in Tonbridge and Maidstone and resulted in a reduction in capacity at Jubilee School in Maidstone

8.4 The recent Wave 12 decisions coupled with subsequent discussions with the ESFA have only reinforced our concerns. Of the 13 projects we had expected to be secured in this particular round, 7 were approved, 5 rejected and no sponsors came forward for the remaining project. As a result there are now 6 additional ‘projects’ for which KCC may have to run a competition process. The associated timescales make this very difficult, as first raised with the ESFA in early 2015. The projects in question are:

- Tunbridge Wells Secondary – 6FE – Sept 18
- Thanet Secondary – 4FE (of 8FE) – Sept 19
- Dartford Secondary (Ebbsfleet Alkerdene)* 4FE (of 8FE) – Sept 20
- Warden Bay Primary – 1FE – Sept 19
- Shorncliffe Primary* – 1FE (1 of 2FE) – Sept 19
- Dartford Primary (Ebbsfleet Green)* – 1FE (of 2 FE) – Sept 19

Three of the above projects (marked with an asterisk) are almost entirely funded through Developer Contributions but this is not the case for the Thanet and Tunbridge Wells Secondary schools or Warden Bay Primary school. These three are not built into the agreed capital programme and therefore represent a major budget pressure and service risk for the County Council. Fluctuating demand levels on the Isle of Sheppey may mean that we are able to manage without a new school at Warden Bay in the shorter term, a position we will continue to monitor. We face the perverse scenario at Shorncliffe of holding signed s106 agreements and could therefore afford to build the school save for the absence of a sponsor; the case for the school in the immediate future having been somewhat undermined by the RSC’s decision in January 2017 to allow Morehall Academy to expand.

- 8.5 Added to this the DfE has already signalled that the majority of the seven approved projects will not be delivered ‘on time’, in permanent buildings. The ESFA holds the view that it is unreasonable to expect Academy Trusts to open in temporary accommodation. In the rare instances where this does happen it is only with the express agreement of the Trust and where the ESFA agree that there is “an overwhelming and compelling reason to do so” which overrides their standard policy position. KCC is therefore left with the additional difficulty and expense of managing and funding the fallout from this position. This comes further to the Wave 11 project in Maidstone (VIAT sponsored 6FE Secondary School) where KCC may face significant costs for the above reasons. These costs have not been accounted for within the agreed capital programme or revenue budget.
- 8.6 For Kent families this means that the information we provide this September on admissions for 2018 may be no more than pointing them to the various Trusts (or suggesting they contact the ESFA themselves) saying that they need to monitor their websites for news as to whether these schools will actually open. Clearly this is an unsatisfactory position.
- 8.7 Assuming the seven approved projects do go ahead broadly as planned then the cost to KCC of building the other six schools listed above (assuming a successful competition process) could amount to £90m including land acquisition and construction costs. This could reduce to £81m if we are able to manage without a new school at Warden Bay. The additional cost of any temporary arrangements arising from late delivery by the ESFA of the seven Free Schools they have approved is estimated at £34m - £37m, excluding any possible revenue costs such as additional Home to School Transport. These figures assume that the Academy replacing Pent Valley Secondary school in Folkestone will open as planned, albeit there are already doubts emerging here too despite it being the easiest of all the projects for the ESFA to deliver.

9. Next Steps

- 9.1 The focus in future years will increasingly be on delivering the additional Secondary school places required as pressure moves into this sector.
- 9.2 Pressure remains to control the cost of providing the additional capacity required. Concerted efforts to ensure KCC is joined up in its requests for developer contributions will continue.
- 9.3 Analysis of the impact of operating small levels of surplus capacity is required to evaluate whether this is disproportionately impacting on any group with protected characteristics.
- 9.4 We will continue to lobby the ESFA and Secretary of State over the place planning issues and funding shortfall highlighted above, whilst trying to identify contingency arrangements and options for covering the funding shortfall that we now face.

10. Recommendations:

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to note the progress achieved and the issues identified for further development, and consider the report prior to the next version of the Commissioning Plan in autumn 2017.

11.1 Vision and Priorities for Improvement:

[Vision and Priorities for Improvement](#)

11.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2015-2019:

[Kent Commissioning Plan 2016-20](#)

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