

**From:** Matt Dunkley, CBE, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

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

**Subject:** Proposal to temporarily expand The Westlands (Secondary Academy) School by 1.5FE from September 2019

**Decision Number:** 18/00061

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Decision Number:** N/A

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

**Electoral Division:** Swale West - Mike Whiting

**Summary:**

This report sets out the need for additional secondary school capacity in Sittingbourne, pending the establishment of a new 6FE secondary school on the Quinton Road housing development site later in the Plan period. The additional 45 temporary places at Westlands Secondary Academy are required to ensure that sufficient Year 7 places are available for entry in September 2019 and September 2020.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to:

- (i) allocate £1.96 million to the temporary expansion of Westlands Secondary School by 1.5FE.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-22 identifies the need to commission additional capacity in the Swale District for Year 7 secondary school places from 2019. The majority of the deficit is the Sittingbourne area with a deficit of up to 90 places in 2019 and 85 places in 2020. From 2021 the deficit is forecast to increase to 218 places.

1.2 The table below sets out the school population figures and forecasts for Year 7 and Years 7-11 in the Swale district.

	2016-17 capacity	2016-17 (A)	2017-18 (F)	2018-19 (F)	2019-20 (F)	2020-21 (F)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2023-24 capacity
Year 7	1,715	85	73	25	-90	-85	-218	-101	-242	1,745

Years 7-11	8,472	796	677	503	228	4	-299	-473	-740	8,725
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1.3 The draft Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2019-23 also identifies the need to commission additional capacity in the Sittingbourne non-selective planning group. The planning areas for Swale secondary provision are now as follows: Faversham non-selective, Sittingbourne non-selective and Isle of Sheppey non-selective, Faversham and Canterbury selective and Sheppey and Sittingbourne selective.

1.4 By 2020-21 a deficit of -123 places is predicted for Year 7 rising to -266 by 2023-24. The tables below set out the school population figures and forecasts for Year 7 and Years 7-11 in Sittingbourne and Sheppey Secondary planning areas:

Year 7	2017-18 capacity	2017-18 (A)	2018-19 (F)	2019-20 (F)	2020-21 (F)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2024-25 (F)	2024-25 capacity
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	390	124	113	92	87	48	56	26	17	390
Sittingbourne Non-Selective	765	-35	-35	-104	-123	-187	-160	-266	-217	765
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	240	-12	8	-42	-47	-70	-61	-91	-80	240

Years 7-11	2017-18 capacity	2017-18 (A)	2018-19 (F)	2019-20 (F)	2020-21 (F)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2024-25 (F)	2024-25 capacity
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	1,950	636	589	567	514	436	351	263	185	1,950
Sittingbourne Non-Selective	3,630	-14	-102	-252	-391	-619	-806	-1,026	-1,123	3,825
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	1,230	-3	-9	-68	-135	-214	-286	-380	-413	1,200

## 2. Background

2.1 The increase in the birth rate, inward migration and house building has increased the forecast need for school places. The pressure on secondary school places showing in Sittingbourne is also exacerbated by large numbers of children travelling off the Isle of Sheppey for their secondary education. Surplus capacity in Oasis Isle of Sheppey Academy will help to offset the deficit in Sittingbourne but parental preference, school performance and the cost of transporting Sittingbourne pupils to Sheppey must also be taken into consideration. Even with the capacity on the Isle of Sheppey, there is still a need to provide additional secondary school places to meet rising pupil numbers.

2.2 Sittingbourne Community College and Fulston Manor School have already expanded and are unable to expand further.

2.3 A curriculum analysis and initial feasibility was undertaken on Westlands Secondary Academy. This identified that Westlands would be able to take an additional 45 pupils if accommodation that had been taken out of use due to its

poor condition could be reinstated or replaced. Discussions have been held with Swale Academy Trust and they have agreed to provide a minimum of 45 additional Year 7 places on a temporary basis for September 2019 and September 2020. Therefore, the pressure in Sittingbourne can only be managed through adding the temporary places at The Westlands School, investigating the possibility of Sittingbourne Community College providing some temporary Year 7 places/bulge classes, should this be required, and allocating places for Oasis Isle of Sheppey Academy.

- 2.4 The shortfall of Year 7 places is expected to increase further from September 2021. KCC is planning to meet this deficit through bringing forward a proposal for the permanent expansion of The Westlands School, subject to future consultation and planning and adding temporary places in agreement with the other Secondary schools. It is recognised that any permanent expansion proposal would have to be closely linked to the new roads proposed as part of the Wises Lane development. This would allow a reconfiguration of the main entrance of the school which would be reoriented to face the new development and enable access and drop-off arrangements that would support the additional pupil numbers.
- 2.5 The commissioning of a new all through school to include 2FE primary provision and 6FE secondary agreed with developers on the North Sittingbourne (Quinton Road) site has been delayed due to the housing development not coming forward according to the original timeline as set out within the Local Plan. It is hoped that that we will gain access to the site by 2021.

### **3. Financial Implications**

#### **a. Capital**

The capital allocation of £1.96m would be a funding contribution towards the total cost of replacement of a number of mobile classrooms on the Westlands site that had been taken out of use due to condition and health and safety concerns. This accommodation would otherwise not be useable as classrooms to meet the additional pupil place need. The funding allocation would be subject to a contractual agreement between KCC and the Trust to offer a minimum of 330 Year 7 places for September 2019 onwards. The school's current published admission number (PAN) is 285.

#### **b. Revenue**

The school will receive increased funding through their Delegated Budget. The rising rolls will be protected in line with KCC Growth Funding Policy. Revenue funding will also be allocated to enable the School to resource each new classroom as they come on line. At present this is at a value of £6,000 per classroom.

#### **c. Human**

The School will appoint additional staff as the need arises.

### **4. Vision and Priority for Improvement**

4.1 This proposal will help to secure our ambition “to ensure that Kent’s young people have access to the education, work and skills opportunities necessary to support Kent business to grow and be increasingly competitive in the national and international economy” as set out in ‘Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council’s Strategic Statement (2017 - 2022)’.

## **5. Delegation to Officers**

5.1 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 & Infrastructure Support will sign contracts on behalf of the County Council.

## **6. Views**

### **6.1 The Views of Governing Body/Swale Academies Trust**

The Governing Body and The Swale Academies Trust is fully supportive of this project.

### **6.2 The Views of the Local Member**

Mike Whiting Member for Swale West has been contacted for his comments on this project and as a Member of the Swale Academies Trust he has declared an interest in the project.

### **6.3 The Views of the Area Education Officer.**

Westlands School is an outstanding school which is a well-respected and popular school in the local area. The Area Education Officer fully supports the temporary expansion of Westlands School.

## **7. Conclusions**

7.1 Without the additional Secondary Capacity at The Westlands School from 2019, there will not be sufficient Year 7 places available in Sittingbourne to meet demand. This would increase the number of allocated school places, result in children having to travel to other districts or planning groups for their education and would further increase transport costs for KCC.

## **8. Recommendations**

### **Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to:

allocate £1.96 million to the temporary expansion of Westlands Secondary School by 1.5FE.

## **9. Background Documents (plus links to document)**

9.1 Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020.

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/increasing-opportunities-improving-outcomes>

9.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision

[www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision](http://www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision)

9.3 Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee report dated 13 October 2017.

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=894&MIId=7797&Ver=4>

## **10. Contact details**

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