

From: Richard Long, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Matt Dunkley Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

To: **Cabinet – 27 January 2020**

Subject: The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Decision Number: **19/00079**

Past Pathway of Paper: Presented to the Children’s, Young People & Education Cabinet Committee on 10 January 2020

Future Pathway of Paper: None

Electoral Division: All

This report provides the Cabinet with the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24 for approval.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is asked to approve the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent (KCP) is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out how Kent County Council discharges its statutory responsibility 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 our responsibility to ensure that we have enough places in the right locations and at the right time to meet the demands of increased pupil numbers and parental preferences. The Local Authority’s role has changed to being the commissioner, as well as continuing to be a provider, of education provision.
- 1.2 The KCP sets out the principles by which we determine proposals, and it forecasts the need for future provision. It also sets out in more detail plans to meet the commissioning needs which arise in each district and borough in Kent, during the next three to five years.
- 1.3 This updated KCP is a ‘live’ document which underpins our on-going dialogue and consultation with schools, district and borough councils, diocesan authorities, KCC Members and local communities, to ensure we meet our responsibilities.
- 1.4 The Children’s, Young People & Education Cabinet Committee endorsed the draft Plan on 10 January 2020 and recommended it be approved by Cabinet.

2. The demographic context

Information from the Office for National Statistics shows that in 2005 there were 15,613 live births in Kent (excluding Medway). The number of births rose each year up to 2012 when there was a baby boom of 18,147. Numbers have since fallen, to 17,062 in 2018.

The increasing number of births, which required us to add significant primary school places, is now being felt in the secondary sector. Between the 2018-19 and 2023-24 academic years we forecast secondary school rolls will rise by 11,984 pupils. This is equivalent to around 13 new 6FE secondary schools. Primary rolls are forecast to rise by 698 pupils across the same period.

3. Forecasting methodology

3.1 For the 2019-23 iteration of the KCP we published forecasts which included the additional pupil places required to support planned housing development as laid out in the 12 District/Borough Council Local Plans or their variants. This was to illustrate and evidence the total infrastructure needed if planned housing was built at the time, in the place and at the rate expected. While helpful, we have found that this approach has concentrated the additional provision needed into a shorter timeframe than that which will be reality, as housing sites and delivery rates do not always match the trajectories.

3.2 For this iteration, we have reverted back to using forecasts which adjust pupil cohorts for migration only. The commentary illustrates where provision linked to new housing will be needed.

4. Our Commissioning Intentions

4.1 The KCP 2020-24 identifies the need for additional permanent and temporary mainstream school and specialist places each year as follows. Additional provision will be secured through a combination of expanding existing schools and opening new ones.

Mainstream School Commissioning Intentions

by 2020-21	by 2021-22	by 2022-23	by 2023-24	Between 2024-28	Between 2028-2031	Total
Primary 2.5FE	Primary 2.5FE 60 Year 7 places	Primary 4.5FE 30 Year R places	Primary 3.3FE	Primary 26.6FE	Primary 11FE	Primary 50.5FE* 90 Year R places
Secondary 1FE 565 Year 7 places	Secondary 18FE 450 Year 7 places	Secondary 14FE 225 Year 7 places	Secondary 20FE 240 Year 7 places	Secondary 21FE 90 Year 7 places	Secondary 8FE	Secondary 82FE 1,570 Year 7 places

*All figures rounded to the nearest 0.5FE

Special School Commissioning Intentions

by 2020-21	by 2021-22	by 2022-23	by 2023-24	Between 2024-28	Between 2028-2031	Total
884 places	150 places	490 places	-	120 places-	-	1,644 places

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Local Authority has a key role in securing funding to provide sufficient numbers of pupil places in all education phases. The pressure on the County's Capital Budget continues to increase as secondary school demand grows. The cost of delivering school places is currently met from Basic Need grant from the Government, prudential borrowing by the County Council, Section 106 property developer contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy monies (CIL).
- 5.2 Government funding for 'Basic Need' is allocated on a formula based upon 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. The basis of allocation is supposed to be to add a third year of funding to a rolling three year funding allocation. However, at the time of publication we continue to await the confirmation of the Basic Need Funding from the 2018 round (for places needed in 2021) and have been informed that allocations for the 2019 and subsequent rounds will not be announced until after the next Comprehensive Spending Review.
- 5.3 The Government's decision to remove the 'pooling' restrictions on developer contributions is welcomed. This will assist in securing contributions for additional secondary school places. The Department for Education has issued guidance that local authorities should seek contributions to support nursery, sixth form, and special educational needs provision. The Council's guide to developer contributions being amended to reflect this. However, this will not support the lag in the funding streams and reduce the upfront capital costs that put the Council under so much financial pressure. As the pressure for new school places moves from the primary to secondary sector this issue will be exacerbated with, for example, a new 6FE secondary school costing in excess of £20m to deliver.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The final approved Plan will be published as soon as it has been agreed by Cabinet.

7. Recommendation(s)

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| 7.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24. |
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8. Background Documents

- 8.1 Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2018-21
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/education-skills-and-employment-policies/vision-and-priorities-for-improvement>
- 8.2 Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2019-23
<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/education-provision/education-provision-plan>
- 8.3 Equalities Impact Assessment.
An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed.

9. Contact details

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