

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

**To:** Richard Long, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

**Subject:** Proposal to temporarily expand The Westlands (Secondary Academy) School by 1.5FE (45 places) for September 2021

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** CYPE Committee 29 November 2018

**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 or an alternative solution should the site not become available within the required timeframe. The additional 45 temporary places at Westlands Secondary Academy are in addition to those provided for 2019 and 2020 and referred to in the CYPE report of the 29 November 2018. The additional year of temporary capacity is required to ensure that sufficient Year 7 places are available for entry in September 2021.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Member is asked to: -

- (i) Agree to the allocation of £1 million for the temporary expansion of Westlands Secondary School by 1.5FE for September 2021 Year 7 entry.

**Introduction**

1.1 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24 identifies the need to commission additional capacity in the Swale District for Year 7 secondary school places from 2019. Additional capacity was secured through a temporary expansion of Westlands Secondary Academy by 45 places for September 2019 and September 2020 Year 7 entry. September 2021 shows a projected deficit of 74 places. There is a need to secure a permanent solution to the secondary place pressures from September 2023 onwards when the size of the pressure increases and is more sustained.

1.2 By 2021-22 a deficit of -74 places is predicted for Year 7 across the Sittingbourne non-selective and Isle of Sheppey non-selective planning areas, rising

to -132 by 2023-24. These figures do not include any spare capacity required for in-year admissions, or growth related to housing from any new developments.

### Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

	2018-19 capacity	2018-19 (A)	2019-20 (F)	2020-21 (F)	2021-22 (F)	2022-23 (F)	2023-24 (F)	2024-25 (F)	2025-26 (F)	2025-26 capacity
Faversham Non-Selective	210	-3	-11	-4	-20	-2	-17	3	12	210
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	390	137	116	103	70	88	60	55	77	390
Sittingbourne Non-Selective	780	-26	-85	-97	-144	-101	-192	-138	-147	765

### 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 The Sittingbourne School and Fulston Manor School have been approached to see if either could take an additional temporary 1 form of entry for September 2021 to meet the total need for that academic year.

2.3 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. Alternative options will be explored in case this is not possible.

## 1. Financial Implications

### a. Capital

A record of decision on the capital allocation of £1.96m was signed by the Cabinet Member on the 6 December 2018. This funding was 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 is 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. The additional investment of £1m would extend this offer of a minimum of 330

places for a further year (2021 to 2022 academic year) and the contractual agreement with the Trust would be adjusted to reflect this.

## **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.

## **2. 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.

### **6.2 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 for a further year to meet demand.

## **7. Conclusions**

7.1 Without the additional Secondary Capacity at The Westlands School for 2021, there will not be sufficient Year 7 places available in Sittingbourne to meet demand. This would result in children having to travel to other districts or planning groups for

their education and would further increase transport costs for KCC. The nearest planning group that is likely to have capacity in 2021 is Maidstone.

## 8. Recommendations

**Recommendation(s): The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Member is asked to:**

- (i) Agree to the allocation of £1million to the temporary expansion of Westlands Secondary School by 1.5FE for September 2021.

## 8. Background Documents (plus links to document)

8.1 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>

8.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision

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

8.3 Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee report dated 20 November 2018 and Record of decision for decision number 18/00061

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2211>

## 9. Contact details

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