

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

To be allocated by
Democratic Services

For publication

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) *result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or*
- b) *be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:*
 - *the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;*
 - *significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.*

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Proposal to permanently expand Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Abbey Place, Faversham, ME13 7BQ from 150 to 180 places for September 2023.

Decision:

- i. agree to increase the funding allocated to expand Queen Elizabeth Grammar School from £5m to £5.4m through providing £0.4 million additional funding from the Basic Need capital budget.
- ii. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts / agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- iii. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts. Variations to contract value to be no more than 10% above the capital funding agreed by the Cabinet Member without requiring a new Record of Decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2021-25 identified the need to commission additional capacity in the Canterbury and Faversham selective planning group. The Commissioning Plan for 2022-26 forecasts indicate a deficit of up to -44 Year 7 places for 2023 and a continual need throughout the plan period

The increase in the number of births from 2008 to 2012, inward migration and house building has increased the forecast need for both non-selective and selective school places in the Faversham and Swale secondary planning areas.

There are four schools in the Canterbury and Faversham selective planning group: Barton Court Grammar School, Simon Langton Girl's Grammar School, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School. Simon Langton Girls Grammar school has recently been rebuilt through the DfE Priority School Build Programme. Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys

has a current build programme to facilitate their expansion to 5 forms of entry and Barton Court Grammar school was expanded to 5 forms of entry in 2017 and is at capacity on their site.

The report taken to the Children and Young People's and Education Cabinet Committee on 11 January 2022 agreed to the allocation of £5m in capital funding from the Basic Need budget. The proposal has since been developed further by the school and the cost for the project has now been revised following detailed feasibility and adjustments. The cost has increased from £5 m to £5.4m and the additional funding of £0.4m is due to the increase in cost of materials and labour.

Financial Implications

The additional capital allocation of £0.4m will enable the delivery of a programme providing the additional general and specialist classrooms required to meet the additional pupil place need.

The school will receive increased revenue 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 online. At present this is at a value of £6,000 per classroom.

Legal implications

The funding allocation is subject to a contractual agreement between KCC and the Trust to offer of 180 Year 7 places from September 2023. The school's current published admission number (PAN) is 150.

Queen Elizabeth Grammar School will be required to complete and submit a fast track Business Case to the ESFA regarding the expansion of the school by 1FE.

The provision of sufficient school places is a statutory duty and contributes to the Strategic Business Plan Priorities to ensure that "Children and Young People in Kent get the best start in life.

Equalities implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced and the assessment identified the following positive impacts:

- Sufficient year 7 places will be provided for September 2023 intake.
- Year 7 pupils will be able attend Grammar school provisions in their locality
- More pupils will be able to attend a good or outstanding school.

No adverse impacts were identified during the assessment.

Other Alternatives Considered and risks if decision isn't taken.

The neighbouring planning group, Sittingbourne selective planning group also have a deficit of year 7 places and both Grammar schools are currently expanding to meet the need in the area and therefore would not be able to accommodate students from Faversham.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Children's and Young People Cabinet Committee consider the decision on (date)

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

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

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signed

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date