

**EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES
CABINET COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 17th February, 2016

10.30 am

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**



AGENDA

EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES CABINET COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 17 February 2016 at 10.30 am Ask for: **Alexander Saul**
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Telephone: **03000 419890**
Maidstone

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting

Membership (16)

Conservative (8): Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole (Vice-Chairman),
Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr S C Manion, Mr M J Northey, Mr J M Ozog
and Mr C R Pearman

UKIP (2) Mr L Burgess and Mr T L Shonk

Labour (2) Mr G Cowan and Mr R Truelove

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr M J Vye

Church
Representatives (3) Mr D Brunning, Mr Q Roper and Mr A Tear

Webcasting Notice

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for the live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site or by any member of the public or press present. The Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed by the Council.

By entering into this room you are consenting to being filmed. If you do not wish to have your image captured please let the Clerk know immediately

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

A - Committee Business

A1 Introduction/Webcast announcement

A2 Apologies and Substitutes

To receive apologies for absence and notification of any substitutes present

A3 Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

To receive any declarations of interest made by Members in relation to any matter on the agenda. Members are reminded to specify the agenda item number to which it refers and the nature of the interest being declared

A4 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2015 (Pages 7 - 18)

To consider and approve the minutes as a correct record

A5 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2015 (Pages 19 - 26)

To consider and approve the minutes as a correct record

A6 Verbal updates

To receive verbal updates from the relevant Cabinet Members and Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services portfolio.

B - Key or Significant Cabinet/Cabinet Member Decision(s) for Recommendation or Endorsement

B1 Proposal to Close Pent Valley Technology College (Pages 27 - 58)

To receive the report by the Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services setting out the results of the public consultation on the proposal to close Pent Valley Technology College and asking the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations on a decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform report.

C - Other items for comment/recommendation to the Leader/Cabinet Member/Cabinet or officers

C1 Work Programme 2015 (Pages 59 - 64)

To receive the report from the Head of Democratic Services that gives details of the proposed Work Programme for the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee.

D - Monitoring of Performance

D1 SACRE Annual Report (Pages 65 - 90)

To receive a report from the Chairman of SACRE and the Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee.

E - FOR INFORMATION ONLY - Key or significant Cabinet Member Decisions taken outside the Committee meeting cycle

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
(01622) 694002

Tuesday, 9 February 2016

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 15 December 2015.

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole (Vice-Chairman), Mr L Burgess, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr S C Manion, Mr M J Northey, Mr J M Ozog, Mr C R Pearman, Mr R Truelove, Mr T L Shonk and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr R W Gough and Mr G Lymer

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Leeson (Corporate Director Education and Young People Services), Mr K Abbott (Director of Education Planning and Access), Ms G Cawley (Director of Education, Quality and Standards), Mr D Adams (Area Education Officer - South Kent), Mr J Nehra (Area Education Officer - West Kent), Mrs M White (Area Education Officer - East Kent), Ms S Dunn (Head of Skills and Employability) and Mr N Jordan (EduKent Manager)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

110. Apologies and Substitutes
(Item A2)

Apologies were received from Mr Tear and Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, Mr Oakford.

111. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
(Item A3)

No declarations of interest were made.

112. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2015
(Item A4)

RESOLVED that subject to the word "report" being amended to read "reporter" in paragraph 17 the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2015 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

113. Verbal updates
(Item A5)

1. The Cabinet Members, Mr Gough, Mr Hill and Deputy Cabinet Member Mr Lymer; and the Corporate Director, Mr Leeson, gave their verbal updates highlighting the following:

2. Mr Gough advised that the draft Policy on Elective Home Education Policy had been reviewed in light of concerns raised and the refreshed Policy was approved by Cabinet.
3. Further to Minute 100 paragraph (4) 2015 regarding the role of the Local Government Ombudsman addressing complaints by School Governors. Mr Gough advised that the Leader of the County Council, Mr Carter had written to the Minister Ben Watts who was now looking at the procedures of complaints.
4. Mr Gough referred to the letter he sent to all Members of the County Council regarding the complex position of The Royal School for the Deaf, Margate. He advised that there had been a positive response to find suitable alternative placements for 20 Kent Children.
5. Members noted that much of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy had been delivered although needs continued to grow.
6. Mr Hill explained that Phase I of Troubled Families had now finished. As a result 2500 families had been supported the challenge now was supporting 9000k families over the next 5 years with reduced funding and with the existing personnel. He concluded advising that a successful The Troubled Families Conference was held on 14 October 2015. Members would receive a report on progress of the Troubled Families at a future meeting.
7. A new Youth Club had been opened in Deal, which Mr Hill considered encouraging and important, in an excellent location next to the Local Sport Centre.
8. Members noted that Triangular Awards had a successful evening on 6 December.
9. Mr Lymer gave an update on the work and events carried out and attended by Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, Mr Oakford, since the last meeting of this Cabinet Committee. Mr Lymer advised that the Leader of The County Council, Mr Carter accompanied by the Corporate Director, Mr Ireland and the Cabinet Member, Mr Oakford attended a meeting with government representatives to discuss Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in Kent. There was an agreement reached for the dispersal of UASC children. KCC was also asked to comment on the draft Care of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and trafficked Children Bill.
10. Members noted following a review in September on the LILAC Standards six of the seven were passed.
11. Members noted that Mr Oakford had visited seven Kent Childrens' homes since the last meeting of this Committee. He was to attend the National Voice Corporate Parenting Week later in this year.
12. Mr Leeson gave his verbal update. He advised Members of the Ofsted outcomes as follows:

84% of schools were good or outstanding
84% Primary schools

83% Secondary schools

91% Special Schools

84% of Young People were being educated in a good or outstanding school.

13. This was an upward trend although there were variations across the county. He was encouraged by the 47 schools inspected since the start of this school year, 87% were judged to be good or outstanding. However there were variations in the performance of Primary schools. The best were in Ashford and Dover, with Primary schools performing less well in Gravesend. The variations in Secondary Schools across Kent were wide. All Secondary schools in Tonbridge and Malling were good or outstanding only four of the nine Secondary Schools in Dover were good or outstanding. Work continued to be carried out to support their improvement.

14. Mr Leeson referred to the tabled document "*Health Needs Education Services Prospectus*". The document sets out the organisation of the countywide service for The Health Needs PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) Service to meet the needs of Kent schools in all areas of the County. A full report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Cabinet Committee.

15. Mr Gough, Mr Hill, Mr Lymer and Mr Leeson responded to questions by Members as follows:

- a) Mr Gough advised that when an elective home education situation was judged to be unsatisfactory there were a wide range of interventions and the ultimate was to issue a School Attendance Order. The Local Authority had a responsibility to intervene where suitable education was not being provided. Mr Gough explained that the main concern was for a certain group that had poor attendance at school and those that had been excluded that had transferred to Elective Home Education. He was keen that this group did not drop out of education. Mr Leeson advised that this was a robust Policy that covered Kent's responsibilities.
- b) Mr Gough was thanked for the letter sent to Members regarding the Royal School for Deaf in Dover and appreciation was given to work carried out to support the Kent children involved. Mr Gough advised that KCC was aware of the financial pressures in the Summer of this year and had supported the Trust to secure a bank loan. The Care Quality Commission intervened to take the young adults out of the Trust's care and this precipitated the final outcome. He agreed to keep Members informed.
- c) Mr Hill advised that for the Troubled Families there had been 100% turnaround in the first phase. The government had now trebled the number of families that were to be helped to near 9000 with a reduced budget of £1800 per family. He considered that with reduced resources the services was going to be pushed to achieve its goals of this excellent scheme.
- d) A comment was made that the new Youth Club in Deal was situated in an excellent position and was welcomed. It was highlighted that there was still a need for Youth Clubs in deprived areas in Dover.
- e) Mr Lymer agreed that UASC needed to be assessed quickly and this should be achieved with the government's dispersal of those children.
- f) Mr Gough advised that unregistered schools were a matter for Ofsted.
- g) Mr Hill agreed to submit a report on Youth Activity to a future meeting of this Cabinet Committee.

16. RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the responses to questions by Members and the information given in the verbal updates be noted with thanks;
- (b) a report on Youth Activities be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee as requested; and
- (c) Members be kept informed on The Royal School for the Deaf, Margate.

114. Proposed changes to Wouldham All Saints CEP School (Tonbridge & Malling)
(Item B1)

1. The Cabinet Committee considered a report that sets out the results of the public consultation on proposed changes to Wouldham All Saints CEP School, Tonbridge and Malling.

2. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the proposed decision to issue a public notice to:

(i) Relocate Wouldham All Saints CEP School to a site adjacent to Hall Road and expand the number of places from 210 to 420 for 1 September 2017.

And, subject to no new objections to the public notice:-

(ii) Implement the proposals for 1 September 2017;

(iii) Allocate £7.95 million from the Basic Needs budget, which will be met in part by the capital receipt from the current Wouldham All Saints CEPS school site and £4.43 million from developer contributions;

(iv) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Governance and Law to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council; and

(v) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

115. Proposed alterations to Ridge View School (Tonbridge)
(Item B2)

1. The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee received a report on the results of the public consultation of proposed changes to Ridge View School, Tonbridge.

2. The Area Education Officer, Mr Nehra, advised that this decision was linked to item B1 the decision for Wouldham All Saints CEP School, Tonbridge and Malling, on this agenda. The current site, Ridge View School, Tonbridge, accommodated 112 and the new Yeoman's Field, off Lower Haysden Lane, Tonbridge site would be able to accommodate the current designated number 180. A Ridge View School Satellite

provision would be established at Wouldham All Saints CEP School, necessitating the increase in designated number to 228 places across the two sites.

3. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member to Issue a public notice to:

- (i) Relocate Ridge View School to a site at Yeoman's Field, off Lower Haysden Lane, Tonbridge for 1 September 2017;
- (ii) Establish a Satellite provision of Ridge View School at Wouldham All Saints CEP School for 48 students with moderate to severe learning difficulties from 1 September 2017; and
- (iii) Increase the designated number of places offered at Ridge View School, from 180 to 228 for 1 September 2017.

And, subject to no new objections to the public notice:-

- (iv) Allocate £14.5m from Special School Review budget and £2.3m from the Targeted Basic Need budget, superseding decision 14/00098 taken on 2 September 2014;
- (v) Implement the proposals according to the dates identified above;
- (iv) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Governance and Law to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council; and
- (vi) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

116. Proposal to increase the Designated Number at Grange Park School, Wrotham
(Item B3)

1. The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee considered a report on the results of the public consultation of proposed alterations to Grange Park School, Wrotham.

2. The Area Education Officer, Mr Nehra, advised that there had been no further responses received after the consultation. There were two responses one for and one against the proposal.

3. RESOLVED that:-

(a) The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform to issue a public notice to:

- (i) Increase the designated number of places at Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Kent, TN15 7RD from 79 to 100 places from 1 April 2016.

And, subject to no new objections to the public notice:-

- (ii) Implement the proposal according to the date identified above.

117. Proposed expansion of Hoath (Community) Primary School
(Item B4)

1. The Cabinet Committee considered a report on the results of the public consultation on the proposal to commission a 2FE enlargement of Hoath Primary School, Canterbury.

2. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform to:

- (i) Issue a public notice to expand Hoath Primary School from 63 to 105 places, increasing the published admission number to 15.

And, subject to no objections being received to the public notice

- (ii) Expand the school.

- (iii) Allocate £950,000 from Education & Young People's Services Capital Budget.

- (iv) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of ; Governance and Law, to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council; and

- (v) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

This decision is conditional upon planning permission being granted

- (vi) Should objections, not already considered by the Cabinet member when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

118. Proposal to expand Wyvern School, Ashford
(Item B5)

1. The Cabinet Committee considered a report that sets out the results of the public consultation on the proposal to expand Wyvern School for September 2016.

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposed decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education

and Health Reform to issue a public notice to permanently increase the designated number of Wyvern School with effect from 1 September 2016

And, following the ending of the public notice period:-

- (ii) Approve the permanent increase the designated number of Wyvern School to with effect from 1 September 2016
- (iii) Should objections, not already considered by the Cabinet Member when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision would be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

119. Proposal to Consult on the Closure of Pent Valley Secondary School

(Item)

1. The Chairman agreed to consider Item E1 in the unrestricted part of the agenda as the information was now in the public domain.

2. The Corporate Director, Mr Leeson, introduced the report giving a brief history of events that lead to the difficult decision to consult on the closure of Pent Valley Technology College, a decision that had not been taken lightly. There had been a steady decline in academic results and with parents losing confidence in the schools performance there had been a steady reduction in pupil numbers. A warning had been issued to the school by the Local Authority in 2014 regarding its performance and the governing body was required to commission executive leadership to the school, Swale Academy Trust, which had improved attendance and provided quality teaching. Looking medium term and longer term this was unsustainable and swift action needed to be taken. There was also an Ofsted inspection which resulted in the school being put in Special measures which impacted the school further. Mr Leeson said that for the future projections for the Pent Valley school's area would need three to five forms of entry. There would need to be new sponsors by 2018 to secure the best pathways for those children in the area.

3. Mr Leeson responded to questions by Members as follows:

- a) Mr Leeson advised that 10 years ago during the Labour Government additional funding was allocated to specialist schools. The actual content varied and in recent times it was difficult to point to specialism to warrant the term "specialist".
- b) Mr Leeson agreed that the closure of Chaucer School, Canterbury was well managed. He considered that with local schools support it was possible to manage the process well to secure good outcomes for the pupils and parents.
- c) Mr Leeson said that the preference was to retain the site for specialist provision by gaining the sponsorship of a Free School with technology/digital specialism qualification.
- d) A comment was made that it would have been helpful to have a photograph of the school for those who did not know the area.
- e) Mr Leeson said that the school needed a fresh start so would not use the same name. He expected the offer of the new school to be different and attractive for the parents of Folkestone area.

f) Assurance was given that the consultation would comply with the Gunning Principles.

4. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the comments and responses to questions by Members be noted; and

(b) with reluctance the Cabinet Committee for Education and Young People's Services endorsed the recommendation that a public consultation be undertaken on the proposal to close Pent Valley Technology College to Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13 with effect from 31 August 2016, and close to all pupils from 31 August 2017.

120. Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2016-18

(Item C1)

1. The Cabinet Member, Mr Gough, introduced a report that provided the Cabinet Committee with the opportunity to comment on the Education Commission Plan 2016-2020 prior to final approval by Cabinet on 25 January 2016.

2. Mr Gough highlighted that the number of Primary aged pupils in Kent mainstream schools was expected to continue to rise significantly until 2021-22. The number of Secondary age pupils in Kent Mainstream schools was now rising and was expected to increase. Much of the additional provision would be achieved by expanding existing schools. This rise in pupils was also linked to new housing developments eg Dartford. Mr Gough advised that the current cohort in Primary school would move up to Secondary school nearing 2018. Mr Gough referred to page 105 of the report that detailed the position on capital funding highlighting that the delivery of the additional school places would reply an appropriate level of funding from central government and securing the maximum possible contribution from developers where appropriate. It was estimated that there would be a funding gap of £100m across the period of 2016-19, therefore the financial pressures remain. Representation had been made by the Leaders of the County Council Mr Carter and Mr Gough to challenge Kent's allocation of Basic Need funding. KCC had received £167m in basic need and targeted basic need capital for the period 2014/15 to 2017/18. Information on the allocation for 2018/19 was likely to be published from the DfE in January 2016. Members noted that KCC would not be in a position to undertake any further borrowing to support new provision as this would place the Council in breach of one of its fiscal indicators that net debt should not exceed 15% of its net revenue expenditure.

3. Mr Gough referred to the Special Educational Needs and those with Disabilities Strategy that was developed in response to the rising demands The Autistic Spectrum pressures continued and was greater than projected. The delivery of the proposals in the Strategy was on target. Progress would be reported in the Commissioning Plan to a future meeting.

4. The Director of Planning and Access, Mr Abbott, advised that the pressure of the Primary and Secondary did not diminish and would peak from 2020-2022. There would need to be particular attention given to the pressures for places in Dartford, Gravesham and the Isle of Sheppey. The financial position would be made clearer in January 2016.

5. Mr Gough, Mr Leeson and Mr Abbott noted comments and responded to questions as follows:

- a) Members welcomed the report and noted the continued pressures for Primary school places due to the increase in the birth rate and migration to Kent.
- b) Mr Gough considered that the developer contributions were not “heroic” and that with significant development an assumption was made that we put in a bid for a developer suitable contribution although this was not always smooth.

6. Mr Gough advised that he could provide the data regarding the SEND Kent schools outside the meeting. He advised that more work would be carried out on out of county placements. He said that Kent had delivered what it said it would but the demand had risen. Mr Leeson explained that more SEND provision was being established in Kent Schools than in the past. The current proposals included 426 additional places and 430 special resources. This came at a high cost and had to be provided with the existing Basic need allocation. He said that it was important for Kent to continue to be on top of the need for SEND, especially Autism Spectrum Disorder.

7. The Cabinet Committee noted that an update on the SEND Strategy Review would be submitted to a future meeting of this Cabinet Committee in 2016.

8. Mr Leeson thanked all Kent schools that had expanded their schools over the past years helping to deliver additional school places on time. There were to be more challenges made of the Kent school estate.

9. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the responses to questions by Members be noted; and

(b) the Cabinet Committee endorsed the Commissioning Plan prior to the final version being considered and approved by Cabinet on 25 January 2016.

121. Early Years and School Performance in 2015 - National Curriculum Test and Public Examination Results *(Item C2)*

1. The Cabinet Member, Mr Gough, introduced a report that provided a summary of the Kent Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Assessments, Key Stage1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) standard Assessment Tests (SATs) and GCSE and post 16 results for 2015.

2. Mr Gough highlighted the following points. He was pleased to advise that the KS2 was now cemented in the progress of past years and the attainment gap was now closing and being sustained. He explained that KS4 formed a complex picture with the changes made in the last year to the curriculum. The turbulence continued but the test results remained above the national average. There were huge variations in the Kent schools’ attainment performance, although the figures were still

not complete, the figures in January and February for KS4 showed a mixed picture with a decline in the trend for average point score (APS) for students. The reduced gaps in attainment for those children in care were welcomed. Free school meals continued to be given attention although it was a good news story overall.

3. The Director of Education, Quality and Standards, Ms Cawley, gave a short brief on the report and highlighted the priorities for improvement as follows: (i) Early Years and Free school meals – need to share best practise; (ii) KS4 - Look at outcomes for all vulnerable groups; (iii) Post 16 –Those on Free school meals were endanger of becoming NEETs. There was a need for an appropriate strategy to manage this.

4. Mr Gough, Mr Leeson and Ms Cawley responded to questions as follows:

- a) Ms Cawley advised that the Virtual School Kent was due to consult with schools and other stakeholders to ensure the most effective use of Pupil Premium. In addition, the Governance Team will be offering guidance to Governing Bodies on the use of the Pupil Premium in schools.
- b) A comment was made that this was a very good report showing the success and concerns. Congratulations were given to Ms Cawley and her Team for their work.
- c) A comment was made that the VSK was using the PP exactly how it should be used and this should be shared with Kent mainstream schools.
- d) Ms Cawley stated that much research has happened over the years to address the gender attainment gap. Improvements can be made through the use of appropriate teaching methods.
- e) A comment was made that overall results were going in the right direction although there were concerns with Free School Meals. It was the school view that they had spent half of the PP to improve the quality of children with a teaching assistant used to give children one to one teaching. Ms Cawley said it was about quality first teaching. She suggested less expensive options such as giving feedback to children; use peer mentoring older pupils to work with younger pupils, they both gain. There was guidance for schools and headteachers on the use of the PP which included case studies, this identified strong behaviours and teaching management to remove barriers, raising self-esteem, confidence and the need to work with parents.
- f) Mr Leeson considered that the gender gap was not inevitable. Schools needed to track every pupil and provide sufficient teaching to see the attainment gaps close.
- g) Referring to the Sutton Report he questioned whether the fund being used to its best advantage considering that Kent schools received £50m PP but there was less than 1% difference in attainment levels.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the comments and responses to questions by Members be noted;
- (b) the improvements in 2015 in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 be noted; and

- (c) the areas that still require improvement and the priorities for action to ensure that further improvement is achieved in 2016 be noted.

122. Education and Young People's Services NEET Strategy and Action Plan 2015/16
(Item C3)

1. The Head of Skills and Employability Service, Ms Dunn, introduced a report that sets out the context and ambitions of the NEETs Strategy and Action Plan 2015/16. She highlighted the target to reduce to 1% NEETs by January 2017. There were currently 500 NEETs ie 4.9%.

2. Mrs Dunn noted comments and responded to questions as follows:

- a) Members congratulated Ms Dunn and her Team for the collaborative work carried out in tackling the issues of NEETs.
- b) Comments were made about the targets for NEETs; that it was right to have ambitious targets and if 2% was reach instead of 1% would be welcomed.
- c) It was considered that children were vulnerable in year 12 and they often floundered and the school should be responsible to ese the transition. Ms Dunn agreed that the transfer could be problematic and there was now an increased focus on that cohort. Meetings were being held with school. Year 11 pupils who were disengaging were a priority.
- d) A comment was made that it was difficult to encourage children back to education and training once they had left school.
- e) A comment was made that this was an important piece of work and the data communication gathering was critical on Youth Hubs and the Pupil Referral Units. Mr Leeson advised that this was a big challenge nationally too. The NEET figures had reduced although there may be many not picked up in those figures. To meet the target everyone needed to play their part including the district and borough councils.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the comments and responses to questions by Members be noted; and
- (b) the NEETs Strategy and Action Plan for 2015/16 be endorsed.

123. Performance and progress of EduKent
(Item C4)

1. The Director of Planning and Access, Mr Abbott, introduced a report that gave an update on the progress of EduKent over the last two years and an outline of future developments. Mr Abbott referred to the graph in paragraph 3 in the report that showed the significant increase in income over the past two years with income levels reaching £36.3m in 2014/15. The sum was three and a half times higher than in 2009/10 when EduKent was established. Mr Abbott concluded that EduKent needed to retain and increase its market share.

2. The Officers were thanked for the report which was considered a success story.
3. RESOLVED that the progress of EduKent be noted.

124. Work Programme 2016
(Item C5)

1. The Cabinet Committee considered an update on the proposed Work Programme for 2016 and suggested the following topics to be included for consideration at the next agenda setting meeting:
 - Update on Elective Home Education
 - Progress report on Troubled Families
 - Update on Youth Service
 - Half Yearly report on the Commissioning Plan
 - Revised SEND Strategy
 - VSK consultation on the Pupil Premium
 - How KCC worked with the Kent Youth County Council
 - Working with Kent businesses
2. RESOLVED that the suggested topics detailed above be included in the revised Work Programme; and the report be noted.

125. Performance Scorecard
(Item D1)

1. The Cabinet Committee considered a report on the performance management framework a monitoring tool for the targets and the milestones for each year up to 2018 set out in the Strategic Priority Statement, Vision and Priorities for Improvement and service business plans.
2. RESOLVED that the revised and expanded Education and Young People's Services performance scorecard which had been designed to reflect the expanded scope of the work of the Directorate to include Early Help be noted.

126. Secondary Provision in the South Kent Area
(Item E1)

See paragraph 119 above.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

**EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES CABINET
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 21 January 2016.

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole (Vice-Chairman), Mr L Burgess, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr S C Manion, Mr M J Northey, Mr J M Ozog, Mr C R Pearman, Mr R Truelove, Mr T L Shonk and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P J Oakford, Mr R W Gough and Mr P M Hill, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Leeson (Corporate Director Education and Young People Services), Mr K Abbott (Director of Education Planning and Access), Ms F Kroll (Director, Early Help and Preventative Services), Mr J Nehra (Area Education Officer - West Kent), Mr D Shipton (Head of Financial Strategy), Mr I Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent), Mrs M White (Area Education Officer - East Kent) and Mr A Saul (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

127. Introduction/Webcast announcement
(Item A1)

128. Membership
(Item A2)

1) The Chairman confirmed the Mr Brazier was no longer on the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee and that there was currently a vacancy.

129. Apologies and Substitutes
(Item A3)

1) Apologies had been received from Mr Roper.

130. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
(Item A4)

1) There were no declarations of interest.

131. Verbal updates
(Item A5)

1) There were no verbal updates from Mr Gough or Mr Hill.

2) Mr Oakford gave the following verbal updates;

- a) There had been a decline in migrants arriving in Kent over the winter months. He confirmed this was due to French borders tightening since the atrocities in Paris in 2015.
- b) At the time of the meeting there were a total of 1390 UASC in KCC care, approximately 929 of which are under 18. Mr Oakford reminded members that their allowance will change as they UASC age, the pressure on KCC will therefore increase as time goes on.
- c) In regards to assistance in responding to the recent increase of UASC in Kent not one single young person has gone to another Local Authority's care. One other Local Authority offered to take a child from KCC care on the condition they are below the age of 5. As no UASC in KCC care is below the age of 5 this offer cannot be taken.

3) Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, gave the following verbal updates;

- a) National GCSE results had been released the day prior to this meeting. Mr Leeson further confirmed Kent has continued to do well above the national average. In particular the combined achievement for English and Maths was very high. Kent was also above the national average for all Performance Indicators in regards to GCSE.
- b) In regards to the Ofsted annual report in December it was explained Kent had been achieving far better in Secondary Schools in being ranked 51st nationally. Kent was ranked 109th for Primary Schools. Overall 83% of Kent students were attending a good or outstanding school.

4) Mr Oakford gave the following information in response to questions raised and comments made by Members;

- a) He confirmed he has met with Kent MPs and they were lobbying on KCC's behalf to get further assistance from national government in responding to the amount of UASC in KCC's care.
- b) He further informed the Committee that extra wording was being put into the Immigration Bill that will give the Secretary of State the authority to direct other Local Authorities to take UASC from KCC's care. This was currently going through parliament and KCC would receive more support when this legislation is in place.

132. Proposed enlargement to Hextable Primary School

(Item B1)

1) Ian Watts, Area Education Officer (North Kent), introduced the report proposing the enlargement of Hextable Primary School. He explained that the consultation showed that a significant proportion of the issues the public had with these proposals was around highways and congestion. Alongside the proposal a new parking and drop off point was intended to alleviate congestion issues and accommodate the concerns raised in the consultation. Mr Watts advised that he envisaged planning for the new parking and drop off point would begin in the two months following the meeting.

2) The Chairman confirmed the Head teacher, Chair of Governors and Area Education Officer all support the proposal.

2) RESOLVED that the decision be endorsed by the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee.

133. Proposed enlargement to Seal Church of England Primary School

(Item B2)

1) Ian Watts, Area Education Officer (North Kent), introduced the report proposing the enlargement of Seal Church of England Primary School. He explained the school was around half way through a very extensive transformation plan. He advised that all the key issues cited could be address as described in the report.

2) The Chairman confirmed that the local member for this school, Nick Chard, has concerns over traffic issues following this enlargement but is otherwise supportive of the proposal. The Head teacher, Chair of Governors and Area Education Officer also all supported the proposal.

3) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposed decision.

134. Expansion of Singlewell Primary School from 1FE to 2FE

(Item B3)

1) Ian Watts, Area Education Officer (North Kent), introduced the report proposing the expansion of Singlewell Primary School. He brought members attention to the serious pressures in the Gravesham area on providing enough school places and that there was a clear demand for this. Mr Watts also confirmed staff at the school were happy with the plans and local Members did not oppose the decision.

2) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorse the proposed decision.

135. Proposed increase in secondary school capacity in East Kent

(Item B4)

1) Marisa White, Area Education Officer (East Kent), introduced the report asking to allocate £14.2m from the budget to increase capacity in four Secondary schools in East Kent. She explained there was a clear need for capacity in these schools. A potential new drop off point opposite Sittingbourne Community College was also being considered to alleviate congestion.

2) A view was expressed that was no question as to the pressure for additional spaces at Sittingbourne Community college and that local members should be fully consulted on traffic mitigation outside the school.

3) RESOLVED that the recommendations are considered and endorsed.

136. Proposed amalgamation of Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School, Hunt Road, Tonbridge TN10 4BB

(Item B5)

1) Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer (West Kent), introduced the report on the proposed amalgamation of Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School. He explained they were already closely connected through a soft federation arrangement. The result of the consultation was positive towards the proposal with 64 of the 75 responses in favour to date.

2) Mr Nehra explained to members that there may be some final responses to the consultation which would be advised to members in writing.

3) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorse the recommendations.

137. Proposed changes to South Borough Primary School (Maidstone)
(Item B6)

1) Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer - West Kent, introduced a report seeking approval on the proposed decision to allocate money to fund an expansion South Borough Primary School, Stagshaw Road, Maidstone. The Chairman clarified that the Head Teacher supports the proposal and that the Equality Impact Assessment didn't highlight any issues.

2) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorse the proposed decision.

138. Proposed Co-Ordinated Schemes For Primary And Secondary Schools In Kent And Admission Arrangements For Primary And Secondary Community And Voluntary Controlled Schools 2017 /18
(Item B7)

1) Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform, introduced the report on the outcome of the consultation on admissions arrangements and the proposed scheme for transfer to Primary and Secondary schools in September 2017. Mr Gough asked the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee to endorse these prior to taking them before Cabinet.

2) RESOLVED that Members endorsed the recommendations prior to determination by Cabinet.

139. Budget 2016-17 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-19
(Item C1)

1) Simon Pleace, Revenue Finance Manager, introduced the Budget 2016-17 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-19 report which focused on the budget for areas covered by the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee's remit.

2) Mr Pleace confirmed that the Dedicated Schools Grant settlement for Kent County Council was received on 17 December 2015 and, as expected, it contained no increase for inflationary pressures. He confirmed that the Local Authority is receiving increasing feedback from schools and early year's providers that they are finding it more and more difficult to find year on year efficiency savings to offset these annual

inflation pressures. These difficulties are compounded if you are a school with low pupil numbers.

3) In regards to savings Mr Pleace explained that in total £7.5m worth of savings are proposed from the Directorate, with £600k coming from increased income.

4) Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, went on to explain that the Directorate would have to focus resources and effort on where it would have the greatest impact with the further £7.5m being cut from the Education and Young People's Services budget. He expressed a view that more income can be generated around key areas by working in innovative and different ways. He also brought attention to the fact his Directorate had achieved considerable savings of £7.6m in the current financial year by integrating services across Early Help and Preventative Services.

5) Mr Cowan, substitute for Mrs Cribbon, expressed a view that education being considered a protected service by Government was contradictory with them allowing Local Government cuts which impact on local education budgets.

6) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee noted the Budget 2016-17 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-19.

140. Education and Young People's Services Strategic Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2016-2019
(Item C2)

1) Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, gave an update on the Education and Young People's Services (EYPS) Strategic Vision and Priorities for Improvement (formerly Education Bold Steps) for 2016-2019 and an assessment of progress and achievements against key targets in 2014-2015. He explained he had high expectations for achieving their ambitious targets.

2) In response to questions raised and comments made Mr Leeson gave the following information;

- a) Although levels of registration at Children's Centres are at a high 78% actual engagement remains at 47%. Members were reassured that responding to this was a priority for the Education and Young People's Services Directorate and that Officers were determined to increase engagements with Kent's families in the most need.
- b) Mr Leeson gave further detail on the High Needs Funding policy which national government had introduced last year for children in receipt of more than £6k of help. It was confirmed the process by which applications for this funding has now been streamlined.
- c) In regards to NEETs all relevant data is summarised in the. Last year fewer than 5% of young people were NEET. Mr Leeson confirmed the aim was for this to be reduced to 3.5% over the course of 2016.
- d) The exclusion outturn figure for 2015 had been 109. This showed a decrease in exclusions from Secondary and increase in exclusions from Primary.

3) RESOLVED that Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee note the report.

141. The Impact on Kent Schools of Migration and Increases in Pupils with English as a Second Language on Kent Schools
(Item C3)

1) Mr Gough introduced a report giving further information on the migration of school aged children into Kent and considers the impact this is having on the need for school places. He explained the report focused on the growth of English as a second language in Kent schools and covers a relatively recent period. Attention was also brought to Kent's coastal strip where the recent growth in the number students with English as a second language had occurred earlier.

2) Mr Gough confirmed there were many positive results detailed in the report. Evidence suggests that these students tend to develop quickly. There is also additional support in place for these students as they integrate into Kent schools.

3) David Adams, Area Education Officer (South Kent), explained that there was a great variation in this growth by area of Kent.

4) Mr Adams was congratulated by Members for the quality of this report.

5) A view was expressed that Kent County Council should publicise this good work to raise public awareness.

6) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People Services Cabinet Committee note the report.

142. The Impact of Universal Infant Free School Meals
(Item C4)

1) Marisa White, Area Education Officer for East Kent, introduced a report on the cost, progress, challenges and impact of Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM.) She brought members attention to comments from schools that had been detailed in the report. It was also highlighted that there had been a slight drop off in parents applying over the last year.

2) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee note the report.

143. Early Help and Preventative Services: Strategy and Three Year Plan 2015-2018
(Item C5)

1) Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, introduced the report setting out the Strategy and Three year Plan 2015-18. He explained that a key part of this plan was having a greater impact in supporting special Children's Services.

2) Mr Hill and Mr Oakford both expressed a view that this was a very positive report and strongly supported the paper.

3) In response to questions raised and comments made Mr Leeson explained that encouraging parents to make use of Children's Centres was one of his Directorates priorities in the Strategy and Three year Plan for 2015-18. In particular Health colleagues are taking a proactive approach to encouraging parents to use the Children's Centres. Libraries are also being pursued to ensure they have available information about these services.

4) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee note the report.

144. Cabinet Members' priorities for business plans 2016-17
(Item C6)

1) Mr Gough introduced the report presenting his Cabinet Member priorities for business plans 2016-17. He gave the following information;

- a) Much of the content will reflect mainstream business.
- b) The delivery of the commissioning plan remains a priority. Mr Gough confirmed this has been given more attention than anything over the previous year and is of great importance to him. He also stated that so far it has been delivered successfully.
- c) Further integration with Health was also a priority. Progress has already been made in this, for example in the delivery of speech and language therapy.
- d) Responding to the rise in need types, in particular Autism, has been included this year as a priority.
- e) Continuing to build on collaborative work with Kent Association of Head Teachers is also a priority.

2) Mr Hill gave the following information on his Cabinet Member priorities for business plans 2016-17;

- a) The recommissioning of the Youth Service would be a priority.
- b) Focusing on troubled families would also be prioritised to respond to the greatly increased volume of troubles families Kent County Council are working with.

3) Mr Oakford gave the following information on his Cabinet Member priorities for business plans 2016-17;

- a) He would be focusing on achieving targets set out in the Early Help Strategy.
- b) A key objective remains reducing the amount of children going into care. There is much prevention work to achieve this goal which is both better for the young person and their family as well as more affordable where the budget is concerned.

4) A view was expressed that a report on multi academy trusts and processes in which they operate would be of use to the Education and Young People's Services Committee. Mr Gough agreed that there would be merit in such a report.

5) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee had noted and commented the Cabinet Members' priorities for business plans 2016-17.

145. Work Programme 2016
(Item C7)

1) Members expressed an interest in a report on collaborative work between High Schools and Grammar Schools and further information on a letter distributed regarding KCC's strategy should more schools than anticipated become academies in the near future.

2) RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2016 be agreed.

From: Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills

To: Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee
17 February 2016

Subject: Proposal to Close Pent Valley Technology College

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee
15 December 2015

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: All Shepway divisions

Summary: This report sets out the results of the public consultation on the proposal to close Pent Valley Technology College.

Recommendation(s):

The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on:

- a) the decision to close Pent Valley Technology College to all year groups except Years 10 and 12 in August 2016, and to all year groups on 31 August 2017;
- b) whether any exceptions should be made to the County Transport Policy or whether individual circumstances should be considered by the usual appeal process;
- c) retaining the Pent Valley Technology College site, on its return to KCC, for future educational need; and

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Pent Valley Technology College is a Secondary school in the Cheriton area of Folkestone. It has a published admissions number (PAN) of 180 pupils in Years 7-11 with a total capacity of 900 pupils, plus the sixth form. On commencement of the public consultation on a proposal to close the School (6 January 2016) there were 417 pupils on roll in Years 7-11, and 158 pupils in the sixth form.
- 1.2 The School was inspected by Ofsted in January 2013 and was judged to be 'Good'. Since this date there has been a significant drop in standards leading the Local Authority to issue a Formal Warning Notice to the Governors in February 2015. This required the governors to take specified actions to improve the school and to secure new executive leadership. Recent GCSE results show that there has continued to be a decline in attainment and results in 2015 declined to 15% of students achieving 5 GCSE's graded A* - C, including English and Maths (compared to 53.8% National Average and 57.3% Kent Average). This is below the results achieved in any year since 2004, and far below the Government's floor target of 40%. Only one third of pupils at Pent Valley made expected progress in either Maths or English compared to 72% nationally (in English) and 66% (in Maths). Since April 2015 the School has been well led and managed by

The Swale Academies Trust on behalf of the Governing Body and the Local Authority. The Local Authority has recognised that the leadership of Swale Academies Trust has achieved significant improvements in a short amount of time. However, while the improvements are good for the pupils currently at the school, the progress achieved will not be enough to mitigate the issues outlined below that have led to the proposal to close Pent Valley. The Local Authority is still of the view that the the school would be judged inadequate if inspected by Ofsted.

- 1.3 The School has become less popular with parents. Many parents now choose to send their children to other schools. In 2010 the number of pupils in Years 7-11 was 1026; as at October 2015 it was 417 pupils. The pupil numbers have fallen year on year, with smaller intakes being admitted annually (see Table 1 below). The current Year 11 is the largest cohort (122 pupils), the smallest cohort is the current Year 7 with 43 pupils. For September 2016 only 54 first preferences were received. Since the consultation on closure the number of first preferences has dropped to 26. The School has an admission capacity of 900 pupils for Years 7-11 and therefore is operating at 46% of its capacity as of October 2015. That will decrease to 36% in September 2016 if the school remains open. Table 2 below shows future forecast numbers for the School, which shows continued decrease until 2019-20.

Table 1: Pent Valley Technology School Roll 2010-2016

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Total 7-11	Total 7-13
2010-11	145	180	224	234	243	151	127	1026	1304
2011-12	125	152	181	220	230	123	99	908	1130
2012-13	117	128	163	173	215	125	108	796	1029
2013-14	87	109	127	169	177	139	94	669	902
2014-15	58	84	110	130	165	126	95	547	768
2015-16	43	63	79	110	122	85	73	417	575

Information from Planning Provision Toolkit 2015

Table 2: Pent Valley Technology School Forecast Roll 2016-2020

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Total 7-11	Total 7-13
2016-17	71	43	63	79	110	63	57	366	486
2017-18	78	71	43	63	79	57	48	334	439
2018-19	74	78	71	43	63	41	43	329	413
2019-20	83	74	78	71	43	33	31	349	413

Information from KCC Management Information

- 1.4 Similarly to Years 7 to 11, there has been a significant decline in the number of pupils accessing Post-16 places in the sixth form at Pent Valley and this is forecast to continue (see Table 3 below). The percentage of pupils who choose to transfer into the sixth form from Year 11 is low with around 50% transferring into Year 12, and 40% staying from Year 11 through to Year 13. This has impacted on the Post-16 curriculum that can be offered.

Table 3: Pent Valley Post-16 Roll Numbers 2011-16 and Forecast Roll 2016-20

	Actual Numbers					Forecast Numbers			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Year 11	227	214	173	162	122	110	79	63	43
Year 12	118	99	121	99	85	63	57	41	33
Year 13	89	100	83	80	73	64	48	43	31
Year 12-13 roll total	207	199	204	179	158	127	105	84	64

1.5 As school budgets are predominantly based on pupil numbers, annually the School has needed to respond to a fast diminishing budget. It will need to do so for each of the next few years, as larger cohorts leave, and smaller Year 7 cohorts are admitted. This has impacted on the curriculum offer, support for pupils, and we see the situation becoming more challenging for the School if it were to remain open. The School has a sizeable budget deficit which is not sustainable. This was previously reported as £552k, but the 9 month monitoring shows the predicted year end position being a deficit of £2.136m. This is projected to rise to £3.7m by August 2017. This deficit has arisen despite significant action during the past few years to reduce costs. The declining school budget will be insufficient to sustain the current staffing levels, and the necessary reductions in staffing will impact further on the curriculum. Delivering a broad and balanced, high quality curriculum in the circumstances is likely to prove impossible.

2. Proposal

2.1 The published proposal was to close Pent Valley Technology College to all pupils except Year 10 from September 2016 and to all pupils from September 2017. During the consultation period we received representations regarding the impact of this on Post 16 pupils who would be part way through a two year examination course. We agreed to look again at whether it was possible for Years 12 and 13 pupils to remain until September 2017 to complete their courses. This will now happen. All students will remain for their second year studies for Years 12/13. The only exception is Hair and Beauty, but this will be delivered at Folkestone Academy. Pupils and parents have been written to advising them of this information.

2.2 This report sets out the results of the public consultation, which took place between 6 January 2016 and 3 February 2016. A public meeting was held on Monday 18 January 2016.

2.3 The Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform is asked to make a decision immediately after the Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee. We feel that any delay in the decision will lead to further uncertainty for all associated with Pent Valley.

2.4 The Local Authority recognised that this proposal would cause concern to parents, carers and pupils at Pent Valley. In order to reduce the uncertainty KCC approached schools within the locality to identify alternative places in the relevant year groups. The Admissions Code (December 2014) places a duty upon the Local Authority to collaborate with schools to secure provision for pupils in the area in the event of a potential school closure. At the same time as the consultation parents and carers of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 were provided with an offer of an alternative school place at either Folkestone Academy or Brockhill Park Performing Arts College, should Pent Valley close. This offer was made according to the 'nearest appropriate school' to

each pupil's address. A summary of places offered is shown in Table 4 below. Parents and carers have been given until 30 April 2016 to accept or reject their child's offer, by which time it is anticipated a decision about the future of Pent Valley will have been made.

Table 4: Offers Made to Pupils on Roll at Pent Valley School

School	Ofsted	Total	7	8	9
Folkestone Academy	Good	148	34	47	67
Brockhill Park	Good	30	9	12	9
Total		178	43	59	76

- 2.5 Annual reviews are being undertaken for the seven pupils in Years 7 to 9 in Pent Valley who have statements of SEN/Education, Health Care Plans. Through these reviews, the future school placement of these pupils will be discussed with parents. Final decisions will be made in the normal way.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 a. There are no Capital implications.
- b. Revenue – The estimated costs of closing Pent Valley Technology College are £5.9m. The most significant element of this cost is writing off the predicted £3.7m debt of the School. The remaining sums relate to redundancy costs, securing the site, terminating service contracts, and retention payments for staff remaining until August 2017. The figure also includes providing pupil level funding for Folkestone Academy and Brockhill Park Performing Arts College. We are currently in discussion with the Education Funding Agency as to whether they will meet this cost (£1m) as both schools are academies.
- c. Human – The School currently employs 162 staff. If the proposal is implemented, all staff will be made redundant. This will happen from 31 August 2016, except for 24 teachers and 36 support staff who will have deferred redundancies until 31 August 2017.

4. Vision and Priorities for Improvement

- 4.1 These proposals will help to secure our ambition “to ensure every child can go to a good school where they can make good progress and every child can have fair access to school places” as set out in ‘Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2015-2018’.
- 4.2 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2015-19 identified that in Shepway District the total Secondary school numbers continue to fall until 2017, when 21.5% of places will be vacant. As rolls rise in the subsequent years surplus capacity will reduce to 10.9% by 2023.

5. Consultation Outcomes

- 5.1 A total of 41 written responses were received, 1 supported the proposal, and 40 opposed it. There was also a paper petition against closure with 227 pupils' signatures.
- 5.2 A summary of the comments received is provided at Appendix 1.

- 5.3 A summary of the views and comments given at the public consultation meeting is attached at Appendix 2.
- 5.4 A second petition is live and will not close until 18 March 2016. At present there are 84 signatures. The final number will be reported to the Cabinet Member.
- 5.5 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the consultation. One person commented that the number of pupils with Additional Education Needs at Pent Valley was higher than was recorded in the initial report to Members on the 15th December 2015. The numbers reported were the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. We recognise that a further 23% of pupils have additional educational needs. KCC officers are working closely with Pent Valley staff and staff at receiving schools to ensure that, should there be a decision to close Pent Valley, pupils with additional needs are appropriately supported.
- 5.6 A summary of the issues raised during consultation is provided below. Full details are in the appendices. These include the following points:
- The school should be given more time to continue the journey of improvement.
 - The school is needed. It is illogical to close it and re-open the site in a few years.
 - KCC should financially support the school and pay off the debt.
 - The proposal will be disruptive to pupils, especially those in the sixth form.
 - Sixth form pupils should be able to remain to conclude their courses.
 - It is unfair that families will have to meet travel costs if they do not like the school allocated, or if their child is in the sixth form. KCC should provide travel assistance to these pupils and those who will have further to walk to their allocated schools.
 - KCC is simply planning to sell the site for housing.
 - Loss of parental choice.
 - Pupils with SEN need a smaller school environment. The alternative schools do not adequately support pupils with SEN.
 - The school is performing well. It is unsurprising pupils with English as an Additional Language are not attaining 5 A* - C graded GCSEs including English and Maths.
 - Future forecasts may not be the reality. There is localised housebuilding.
 - The other schools will be overfull and this will affect standards.
 - Pupils' progress will be negatively impacted if they have to change school.
 - Folkestone Academy finishes at 5pm, which is too late.
 - Pupils will be bullied in their proposed new schools.
 - The needs of the children are being ignored.

6. Views

6.1 The views of the Local Members

Cllr H Birkby- Folkestone West: I think KCC acted far too late to save Pent Valley. They are supposed to be professional, they should have seen this long before they tried to do something. Too little, too late! They haven't given the new leadership time to turn things around. To me it's a fait accompli.

Cllr C Waters- Romney Marsh: No comment

Cllr S Carey- Elham Valley: I regret the closure but accept that the current pupil numbers make the School's future unsustainable.

Cllr F McKenna- Folkestone North East: Why are we not getting behind the new Head Teacher and her team and giving them full support they need. East Kent College in Folkestone is a good example of what we can achieve when we give them our support. We should not be closing Pent Valley Technology College.

Cllr M Whybrow- Hythe: The current situation reflects very badly, I believe, on KCC and will ultimately see another educational establishment going out of local authority control. While the history cannot be overturned, KCC should have acted much earlier to put in the new management team and seek to turnaround the School's situation.

While there is a deficit and this will increase due to the low pupil numbers at present, there has been no insight into how this projected deficit compares with all of the costs that would be incurred with the School's closure (redundancies, moth-balling the site, maintaining staff for one year for Year 12s, transport and uniform for relocating pupils etc.).

I believe that a better route would be for the 'significant improvements in a short period of time' (KCC's own words, of course) to be built upon not thrown away. There should be a concerted effort by all stakeholders to seek additional funding and rally round the management team, staff, pupils and their families.

We know there will be a strong demand in the medium-term for secondary school places in Shepway and it would be much better to have a revived, local authority controlled Pent Valley than a new academy.

The other point I would make is that, being aware of consultation best practice, I think there is a lot of evidence that the decision has already been made (including in the messages, slides and language used at the consultation meeting on 18th January at the School) and that this consultation could therefore be successfully challenged.

6.2 The View of Folkestone Town Council

Folkestone Town Council has expressed their opposition at the proposed closure of Pent Valley School. Having faced a difficult time during the last few years with the decline in pupils the Authority, Kent County Council, are proposing to mothball a school that was beginning to improve with increasing first choice numbers. In the next few years a growing number of primary school children will hit the secondary sector which the Authority has acknowledged.

6.3 The View of the Governing Body:

The Governing Body responded to the consultation. The complete response is included in Appendix 3. The section below is the introduction to their response.

Kent County Council's proposal to close Pent Valley Technology College was met with considerable disbelief, shock and dismay by the Governing Body, staff, parents/carers, students and the local community in December 2015, particularly as KCC had stated quite clearly in June 2015 (six months previously) that the School would not close. While, as a Governing Body, we understand a number of the reasons put forward to consult on the School's closure, we are very unhappy with the speed at which the actual closure is taking place, even before the consultation period is over!

After due consideration we have decided neither to uphold nor oppose KCC's proposal to close the School. It is evident that, although a consultation is taking place to ensure KCC follows its statutory duties, most of the work involved in closing the School is already underway – staff have left, a number of students have already transferred to other schools, redundancy notices are imminent and Year 6 parents have, understandably, voted with their feet and selected other schools for their children. In other words it is a “done deal”. Despite this we would like to put on record that as a Governing Body we originally agreed unanimously to oppose the closure, as is our legal right. However, following a number of veiled threats including that of removal as a Governing Body by KCC or that Ofsted would be “called in” if we were to oppose the closure and, as a result, some considerable soul searching and reflection, we have decided to abstain. To remove us as a Governing Body and establish an Interim Executive Board, unfamiliar with the School, would incur considerable administrative time, energy and cost to the tax payer and if Ofsted were to visit Pent Valley then further unnecessary costs would be incurred. Furthermore neither scenario would be in the best interest of staff, parents/carers, students or the local community.

As a Governing Body we recognise that our first responsibility is to the staff, parents/carers and students and it is important that we remain in situ for the duration of Pent Valley Technology College's life. We are members of the public who for a variety of commendable reasons have invested much of our own free time to help turn the School around over the past year. We are passionate about the School and we want to see that it provides the best possible education to the students that remain until July 2017.

6.4 The View of the Area Education Officer:

Closure of a school is always the last resort. Nevertheless the County Council has a moral and legal duty to ensure that pupils receive a good standard of education and a broad and balanced curriculum in a school that can thrive due to the number of pupils. We have recognised the improvements to behaviour, attendance, teaching and management arrangements made under the leadership of the Swale Academies Trust, however these will not deliver improved results in a way, and in a period of time, that would impact on parental confidence and numbers. Parents are not choosing to send their children to Pent Valley, thus the funding of the school will reduce to a level where the viability of the school becomes untenable. The Swale Academies Trust has agreed to support the pupils remaining at Pent Valley during 2016-17 so that they are able to complete their GCSEs or sixth form qualifications. Forecasts show that there will be a need for places in Year 7 from 2018 and it is the opinion of KCC that Pent Valley Technology College school should close in August 2017 and a Free School should open on the Pent Valley site in September 2018, allowing a fresh start for the pupils in this area of Shepway.

6.5 It is assumed that if Pent Valley closes, the Secretary of State for Education will determine that the land and buildings currently owned by the Governing Body will revert to KCC. In this event these assets will need to be retained. Should a free school promoter come forward, the assets would be subsequently leased for 125 years.

6.6 During the public meeting it was agreed that we would look again at the issue of travel assistance. Some parents expressed concern that their child would have further to walk to school, or would be returning in the dark. They believed this to be unfair, and felt KCC should provide travel assistance. Some also believed it

unreasonable that if the School closed and they send their child to a school other than that allocated, they may not be eligible for travel assistance.

- 6.7 Currently, eight pupils receive travel assistance to Pent Valley because it is their nearest appropriate school, and the home to school distance is over 3 miles. Based on the allocations in Table 4, the number would rise to forty pupils receiving travel assistance in the event Pent Valley closes (29 of those attending Brockhill Park, and 11 attending Folkestone Academy). Currently 27 pupils attending Pent Valley receive travel assistance under the low income family criteria. This number would reduce to a maximum of 21 in the event Pent Valley closes. All other pupils live less than 2 miles from their allocated school. 78 of the 178 pupils allocated new schools live closer to those schools than they do Pent Valley.
- 6.8 The parental concerns about travel costs for Post 16 pupils has been addressed by modifying the proposal to enable Post 16 pupils to complete their courses at Pent Valley.
- 6.9 Ordinarily, home to school transport will be provided in accordance with Kent County Council's published policies, with individual cases being considered on their merits via the appeal process. Members may wish to consider whether, in view of the circumstances, to recommend an exception should be made to the transport policy to provide free travel to those displaced pupils who would not normally receive free travel. Three groups are identified:

- Those under 2 miles from their nearest appropriate school, but the distance is further than the current home to school distance to Pent Valley (54 pupils):

Costs:	Year 1	£32,400
	Year 2	£32,400
	Year 3	£16,800
	Year 4	£ 6,000

- Those living between 2 and 3 miles from their nearest appropriate school who may not meet the low income family criteria (12 pupils):

Costs:	Year 1	£7,200
	Year 2	£7,200
	Year 3	£2,400
	Year 4	£ 600

- Those seeking alternative schools which are not their nearest appropriate (cannot be determined at this stage).

Costings of any exception will be approximately £600 per pupil per year. Members will also wish to be mindful of setting precedents.

7. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s): The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on:

- a) the decision to close Pent Valley Technology College to all year groups except Years 10 and 12 in August 2016, and to all year groups on 31 August 2017;
- b) whether any exceptions should be made to the County Transport Policy or whether individual circumstances should be considered by the usual appeal process;
- c) retaining the Pent Valley Technology College site, on its return to KCC, for future educational need.

8. Background Documents

8.1 Vision and Priorities for Improvement

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/29074/EYPS-Vision-and-Priorities-for-Improvement.pdf

8.2 Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2015-19

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/education-skills-and-employment-policies/education-provision>

8.4 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment.

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/pentvalley/consultationHome>

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1– Summary of Written Responses

9.2 Appendix 2 – Consultation

9.3 Appendix 3 – Response from the Governing Body

10. Contact details

Report Author:

- David Adams
- Area Education Officer – South Kent
- 03000 414989
- david.adams@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:

- Keith Abbott
- Director of Education Planning and Access
- 03000 417008
- keith.abbott@kent.gov.uk

Proposal to Close Pent Valley School

Summary of Written Responses

Printed Consultation Documents distributed: 900
 Consultation responses received:

A summary of the responses received showed:

	In Favour	Opposed	Undecided	Totals
Staff	0	10	0	10
Parents	1	16	0	17
Pupils	0	5	0	5
Resident/Public	0	9	0	9
Totals	1	40	0	41

Comment in favour of the proposal

Parent

Pent Valley should have closed 5 years ago. I get no support with my child's educational needs. There is no homework. The school has not changed with new leaders.

Comments against the proposal

Parents

- The proposal is disgraceful. This school is a good school, with good pupils and should remain open.
- My daughter has made good friends which is not easy for her to do. Her spelling has come on leaps and bounds. Teachers are friendly and helpful. My daughter is worried that she will lose everything she has worked for if she has to go to a new school. We feel this is unfair on the pupils and they are being unfairly treated as this is beyond their control. Do you think it would have been better to have warned parents that this was in the pipeline so they could have chosen another school from the start rather than uprooting the pupils and disrupting their education?
- As KCC have removed catchment areas favoured schools have been filled allowing Pent Valley to be under used.
- The closure is for financial reasons only (valuable building land).there is no direct bus route to Folkestone Academy so I assume KCC will be responsible for my children's safety when walking home on dark nights.
- Low exam results were due to previous year- nothing to do with the improvements made. Progress has been made in a short time. The low pupil projections are not a necessarily a reality. There are two large estates being built. As the budget is largely based on pupil numbers there must be other ways to plug the gap. My son is happy for the first time in his school years. The school has a lot of potential. Not enough was done to re-present the school when the Head changed. Dover has 3 secondary schools with 1/2 the population of Folkestone and Hawkinge it is only fair to have 2 schools to serve this area. There is already pressure around Folkestone Academy with parking on pavements and chaos at school finish time. If a school is needed in 1-2 years then it makes sense to make Pent Valley work especially when a lot of money has gone into it.

Free schools and academies do not want SEND children. Where does that leave my son?

- Child is happy at the school. Why put children in to other schools that are full. Son is stressed and worried. People do not understand the stress on parents and pupils.
- The education of the children is more important than the money.
- Since Swale Academies Trust took over there has been a significant improvement in pupils' attitudes. Pupils are responding well to boundaries. I am really pleased with the teaching at the school and the support for my son following several family bereavements. There are 1200 new homes being built in the area. School places will be needed for these children. Folkestone Academy has 1,891 pupils and Brockhill Park must have reached capacity as they have only been allocated 30 pupils from Pent Valley. There is a need for a third school in the Shepway area as Folkestone Academy is a large school and their exam results at 41% 5 A*-C are only 1% above the government target. They need to concentrate on the pupil they already have otherwise it is likely they will not achieve the government target and this would be detrimental to pupils from Folkestone Academy and Pent Valley. Losing Pent Valley will leave only two secondary schools in the Shepway area. One closes at 5pm and the second is 5.6 miles away. I object to my son finishing at 5pm and having to walk home from a busy industrial estate at that time of night. The Year 7 provisions that both schools have set out in their admissions policy of 270 (Folkestone Academy) and 235 (Brockhill Park) pupils do not match the figures stated on the Consultation Proposal of 300 and 250 pupils which could lead to a shortfall of 45 pupils without a school place if Pent Valley was to close. Pent Valley is one of only two visually impaired units in Kent. As a smaller school it is ideal for students with SEND. To place them in a school as large as Folkestone Academy may cause them and other students problems. My son had special educational Needs. He attended Harvey Grammar and struggled in a school half the size of Folkestone Academy. Parents have not sent their children to Pent Valley because: behaviour has been a cause for concern, there was 'bunking off', there was the perception that there was a lot of eastern European and other non-English pupils in the school. Pent Valley has 165 non-English speaking pupils (20.8% of the pupils), Folkestone Academy 144 pupils (7.6%) and Brockhill Park 30 pupils (1.4%). This shows that Pent Valley has been seriously disadvantaged. Poor exam results- This is an area with Grammar Schools so the secondary schools will not do as well as pupils are cherry picked. Not enough emphasis is placed on the vocational subjects. Not all students are academic so it is unfair to penalise the school by saying vocational subjects are not important. All three schools have struggled to meet the government targets. There was not a lot of confidence in the former Headteacher. Grammar Schools setting their own test has impacted. In 2014 Folkestone Girls took 44 pupils on appeal that had not passed their test or the Kent Test. These pupils could have gone to Pent Valley. KCC were planning to invest £1.5m into the school so they must have confidence that there was a need for Pent Valley. Consider the wellbeing of the pupils especially those who will not thrive in a larger school with long school hours. This has devastated our family. I have to consider home schooling.
- My child is comfortable in his environment and achieving fantastic results. Closure will impact on his independence as working home 3 miles in the dark after 5pm is not supporting his safety. Sending him to a school he is not familiar with will confuse him at an important stage in his education and will not help his results. Other county's secondary schools are being supported with emergency funding until pupil numbers rise. Why is my son's education not as important?
- I choose Pent Valley because it's within walking distance from my house. Why should I now have to send my son across town to the academy? The Academy was never my first choice. My son is quite happy there, if us parents had the choice what school to

send our children to, why don't we get a choice to keep the school opened? It's not right that KCC is making a decision that interferes with my son's future. KCC make decisions on tax payers' money, me and my husband pay our taxes, so why not let tax payers make some decisions for a change. Think of the children and the impact this will have on them, I attended parents evening on Thursday and I had nothing but good reports from the teachers about my son.

- Pent Valley school has so much to offer the people and children of Folkestone it's a great school which my son loves going to. We visited many schools for our son; none were as well presented by the teachers and head as Pent Valley. KCC has a duty to keep it open otherwise there will be only one secondary school in Folkestone. This gives parents no choice. Many professionals have told us it wouldn't be damaging to a child as ours with autism as it's seen as an oppressive environment also its OFSTED report was so bad.
- My son is in Yr. 7. We chose Pent Valley for him after visiting it as well as Brockhill School and Folkestone Academy. We did not choose Brockhill because of the journey on the bus every day and as a family we did not think Folkestone academy would be suitable because of the 5pm finish and many other things as well. I have a daughter in year 6 and wanted her to go to Pent Valley too. News of the possible closure was extremely upsetting for me and my son too. My son has been offered a place at a school he does not want to go to. This is affecting my son and he is very upset. I believe that the move to another school will affect him and his work and well-being. This is the same for everyone at the school in years 7, 8, 9 and 12. The children have the right to education but what is happening affects the right to an education where they are happy and where they will learn best. I oppose the closure of Pent Valley because of the detrimental effect it will have on my son and everyone else's child who goes there. Folkestone needs a choice of secondary schools.
- I have children in year 11 and year 7. The school has supported my son in year 11. My son in year 7 has settled in well. I should have been told of the possible closure before making the decision about which school to send my son to. He has been given a school he does not wish to go to.
- We disagree with the proposal to close Pent Valley. Our son attends Pent Valley, he is now in year 9. Our son has a condition called Osteogenesis Imperfecta (Brittle bone disease). He is under the Osteogenesis Imperfecta team at Great Ormond Street hospital. His bones are very fragile and he has suffered numerous fractures after very little trauma. He has had twelve operations to insert/replace metal rods into the bones in his legs. He uses a wheelchair, also a walking frame to transfer from his wheelchair to the toilet, etc. As you can appreciate, he is very aware of his safety, he is very mature for his age and knows it only takes one person to accidentally bump into him and he could end up in hospital, therefore he takes a long time to settle into new surroundings with new people, and only feels more assured when he knows that the people around him are used to him and are fully aware of his condition and limitations. As he has now been attending Pent Valley for nearly three years the staff and pupils are now used to his needs. He has had a statement since he was at nursery school. He receives excellent support at Pent Valley and they have been fantastic at accommodating his individual needs. When he has had to be absent due to recovering from operations the school have supplied work and a tutor to visit and keep him up to speed, they also brought a couple of friends round to visit him, they always go that extra mile! He starts school ten minutes later than other pupils to avoid the hustle and bustle of the corridors etc. for his own safety, he also finishes earlier for the same reason. He has to have an adult with him at all times when moving about the school. He enters the school through the leisure centre, where he is greeted by two young members of staff that are also wheelchair users, what an inspiration they are to him at the start of every school day!

His LSA comes to meet him and accompanies him into class. He thrives in small groups and obviously becomes anxious in large volumes of people, which is one of the reasons he is more comfortable at a smaller school. We chose Pent Valley for a number of reasons, the main one being our son had visited and expressed that he wanted to attend there, it is also very close to home which is very important as we could be called in at any time. Due to the support he receives, he has progressed with his learning and is doing very well, if a class becomes a little boisterous, the LSA takes him to the AEN department where he can complete his work in a more calm and safe environment.

- My daughter is now attending Pent Valley and is currently in Year 9 she is doing extremely well and has the most caring and supportive teacher. Folkestone Academy year 9's have started taking their GCSEs, I find this quite worrying that the pupils from Pent Valley are expected to join the Folkestone Academy in September to nicely slot in to their options and way of school life, it's not very acceptable as you want your child to do their very best at school but only to have a major setback that this will be. I find it very difficult to believe that the closure of this school is backed by the council. Us parents were made aware of the proposed closure a couple months ago and were also made to feel that it was a 'failing' school and also the results of last year's exam results were among the lowest in the South East. I also find this very disturbing and untrue, I felt like we were being told a pack of lies as I know for a fact that since Miss Gibson (acting head) took over the school from April last year that the school were making good progress. Cheriton is currently having 2 big housing estates being built and feel that this has to benefit the school greatly as obviously the population of children are only going to rise dramatically, surely having this school stay open is even more important to the local area. I also understand that the other secondary schools who are arranging to accommodate all pupils from Pent Valley are already at full capacity so how on earth are they going to cope with having another half of school students joining them? Why is there no money to support Pent Valley in these uncertain times? Why is our council not bending over backwards to help our school like you should be? I am going to do everything in my power to help other parents and pupils that want to see this school stay open. It's vital that it does and in my opinion should be getting more support from yourselves. I do hope that this email is read properly and taken very seriously. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need to.
- My daughter is doing well at PV and some of this is down to the good work done by Swale Academy. The current Yr. 9 will I'm sure produce some very good exam results if allowed to continue at PV. I feel that moving them would have a detrimental effect on their learning. The other 2 schools work differently so our children would be disadvantaged from day one. Parents were not given a choice they were just allocated a space with no consideration as to which school would best meet their child's needs. The Folkestone Academy do not have fantastic exam results as it is so why send children there as the likely hood is with all the disruption a lot will under achieve. Why cannot KCC keep the school open for the current children or even from year 9 upwards as it will already have all the costs associated with saying open for Yr. 10-11? The children don't want to leave PV and it is already causing a lot of stress which is not good for their learning! KCC have a duty of care which they have and are failing in!

Pupils

- 227 pupils signed. No individual comments.
- Give the school more time to turn around.
- You have ruined my life keep PV open.
- Moving schools will affect grades and chances.

- It will cost KCC to close Pent Valley as there will be new uniforms, redundancies and refurbishments to pay for. The lack of numbers is the fault of KCC for allowing local schools to take in more pupils. Concerns that classes in Folkestone Academy and Brockhill Park will be overcrowded leading to 'difficulty in learning'. Students 'terrified' about moving to other schools. Students have received threatening messages from students in other schools. Students 'petrified' that they will be bullied. Grades will go down. Lower achievement at PV is due to the large number of EAL pupils and number of children with disabilities. Students with disabilities have been told they need to go to special school- 'don't feel part of an ordinary society, they feel intimidated and isolated'. Autistic pupils love the fact classes at Pent Valley are small and quiet. Teaching staff care about the pupils' future. The new leadership team have made a big difference and need a further chance.
- I will lose all my friends and have to start again. The number of pupil is my year, year 7, is fine. We will get good grades because there are fewer children to teach and less children mucking around in the classes.

Public

- Lack of choice if PV closes.
- The issues must be the standard of teaching in an impoverished area. Teacher not showing any enthusiasm or commitment. Too easy to close the school and dump the students into others, there should be a greater emphasis on getting to the root of the problem.
- Unfair to disrupt the children for two years then open a free school. The cost of placing other children would be better spent at Pent Valley. Housing will need more school places.
- Increasing population will need secondary school places. Closing Pent Valley will lead to a shortage of places.
- Illogical to blame closure on falling numbers when there will be a need to secondary school places in September 2018. The previous GCSE results predate the improvements made by the Governors in April 15. More time needs to be given for improvements to be seen. OFSTED 2013 was rate Good. Folkestone Academy is not universally well regarded. The greater size leads to less personal pupil contact. Many parents face problems with the expense of travel. The SEND facilities have won praise at Pent Valley (including the Visually Impaired Unit). This service is unlikely to be matched in the schools on offer. Other alternatives for these pupils are close to capacity or inconveniently distant.
- A move is disruptive for the children. Welfare should be the priority rather than short term financial gain.
- Budget efficiencies could be made at the leisure centre and will reduce the deficit. Where will a new school get pupils from?
- I am very disappointed at the way in which the 'consultation' has been conducted. It is clear that the decision has already been made to close the school. Closure will have a negative impact on pupils and their parents and carers and will be disruptive to their education. I am also deeply concerned that the only alternative school seems to be Folkestone Academy, which means there is no choice, so if parents wish their child to attend another school they will be forced to pay travel expenses, and I despair for parents of SEN children. I also find it puzzling that a considerable amount of money and resources were recently invested in improving the school and standards have greatly improved.
- Pent Valley provides a valuable education to the students it serves. In 2013 it was found by Ofsted to be Good in all areas. Despite failing to meet government imposed floor

targets Pent Valley has continued to provide a curriculum and education suitable to the needs to the pupils it has on roll. In a selective systems where the top 25% are sent to an alternative provision to apply these targets is unacceptable and to judge a school by them and threaten to close it based on this is also very short sighted. What people seem to fail to see is that for the population that attends Pent Valley they are often successful. In addition Pent Valley ensured that SEN and AEN students were given access to the curriculum wherever possible and that the EAL students were provided with access to curriculum opportunities and English language learning. The school made the decision to choose the curriculum which was right for their students rather than fitting the league tables and this did cause in harm in Government statistics however for the future of those young people and their life chances the right decision was made. Closure of this school would cause disruption to a number of vulnerable groups who have been well served by this school with staff who have the expertise and knowledge to work with them. Moving them to different schools will be of detriment to their educational achievements. If you look at the example of the closure of The Channel School for comparison, the final year of The Channel School saw no permanent exclusion and a 35% A* - C pass rate including Eng. and Maths. In comparison the first year of the Folkestone Academy saw over 30 permanent exclusions and a far lower A* - C pass rate of approx. 25%. It took a number of years for students to settle and succeed. KCC have stated they faith in the new management team in which case allow them the time needed to develop the school. On a financial matter I fail to see how it can be of benefit to close a school, run it for 1 year with just one year group and then allow a Free School to open. This sounds more like bowing to Government pressure of lack of Free Schools in Kent. Ideology should not supersede young people's futures. A free school is not the way forward, closing Pent Valley will lead to no KCC or Foundation schools at all in Shepway all will be academies or alike this is not parental choice this is marketisation in its worst form privatisation through the back door. I strongly urge the members of the cabinet to think again regarding the closure of the school.

- Folkestone area has a rising primary school role and by closing Pent Valley you will deny residents in Folkestone of a choice of Secondary School. By KCC's own admission Pent Valley is an improving school. Although budget deficit the authority knew that a drop in numbers would affect secondary sector for several years. The question is why the authority supported Pent Valley to spend money last year on decoration and improvements to the school for one year. The cost of mothballing and keeping the school open should be considered with the cost of keeping a smaller school on site open and improving allowing the settled pupils to stay at school and give parents a choice in Folkestone

Staff:

- Why would KCC spent £1.5m on the school when it was decided to close 4 months later?
- The education programme at Folkestone Academy is different as the year 9's there have started their GCSEs- either the FA pupils will be held back or Pent Valley students will struggle to catch up. Forcing children into a position that they do not wish to be in will cause them psychological harm resulting in stress, post-traumatic stress disorder and suicides. Folkestone Academy is oversubscribed now and classes are oversubscribed-how will this be a satisfactory solution? If KCC have a waiting list of secondary school pupils why are these pupils not pushed in the direction of Pent Valley? The number of pupils needing AEN provision is greater than the figures given in the report to the Education and Young Peoples' Committee. The authority is blaming poor teaching standards when this is not the case. I was bullied at a previous school and achieved well at Pent Valley. The yr. 12 students should be allowed to complete their courses. KCC

have not given the new leaders the time to excel and prove themselves. The forecast pupil figures are only projected and are pie in the sky. What about pupils waiting for placements and increases in pupils through immigration? The report figures do not add up. Where will the pupils come from for a free school?

- There are a huge cohort of students that are vulnerable, we do some great work with them and there is not another school in the area that can match the provision. Student welfare has not been taken into account. Students who have ASD do not cope with change, they will be completely distressed and it will affect their education. As a staff member who attended the school in 2000 I have seen the highs and lows. The school is on its way up with the local community opinion is turning round. The staff have been through a lot over the last three years, they are fighters and loyal to Pent Valley. The school has been at the heart of the community for 76 years, closing it would be closing a piece of history around Cheriton. Please take care when making the decision not for the staff but for the students as they are the most important people in this matter.
- My three sons have attended Pent Valley. The eldest 2 achieved well. My youngest son however was not so fortunate with his education due to the learning environment during his final school years here at pent valley. During this time I would never have promoted any friend/ relatives off spring to attend this school for their education unless they had SEND. Since May 2015 I would recommend this school to anyone. It is wrong to say we have such a huge deficit that this school can no longer continue to educate students. One must ask one's self why this deficit is in fact here. It wasn't the school that requested £1.8 million on making it look nicer over the summer months and thus making our deficit even worse. Schools are known go through 7 year cycles of being the best school in the area so why shut Pent valley just when we are proving it's our turn? I hope it never happens, but be it on the head of those responsible making the decision to shut this local school when a Cheriton student goes missing getting home on these cold dark nights from a later finishing and/ or a further afield school that they will be made to attend.

**Consultation on a Proposal to Close
Pent Valley Technology College**

**Monday 18 January 2016
7.00pm – Pent Valley Technology College**

In Attendance:	Leyland Ridings – Chair	County Councillor
	Patrick Leeson	Corporate Director – Education & Young People’s Services
	Keith Abbott	Director – Education Planning and Access
	David Adams	Area Education Office – South Kent
	Ana Gibson	Acting Headteacher – Pent Valley
	Derek Trimmer	Representative for Jonathan Whitcombe – Executive Headteacher

Purpose of the Meeting

To discuss the proposal that Pent Valley Technology College (PV) would close from September 2016 for all pupils except the present Year 10, and for all pupils from September 2017. This would allow the present Year 10 pupils to complete their final year of GCSE studies at Pent Valley, with some staff being retained to deliver the courses and provide the pastoral support needed.

Councillor Leyland Ridings welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Patrick Leeson (PL). PL detailed the proposal and the reasons why KCC now felt this was the only option for Pent Valley (PV). David Adams (DA) then outlined ongoing education proposals for the pupils of Pent Valley.

Name	Question	Response
Bethany Smith Student	<p>I am the Leader of the campaign against the closure of Pent Valley. Is this actually a conservative council wanting the value of the land above students’ welfare?</p> <p>Overcrowded classrooms are in the news. If students move how is this going to help them within their adopted environment? There will not be enough staff to make sure pupils are achieving well.</p> <p>Low grades. There are a large percentage of students at Pent Valley who do not speak English. Take those out of the 15% achieved and 98% of students achieved the grades they should have done. Pent Valley should stay open. Students are distraught at the possible closure.</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson - I give you my absolute assurances that KCC has no plans to dispose of this land other than for another school. We closed Chaucer School in Canterbury and we are retaining the land for educational purposes.</p> <p>David Adams - Both Folkestone Academy (FA) and Brockhill Park (BHP) have welcomed the opportunity to accept further pupils. They have worked hard with their proposals to ensure that Pent Valley pupils are integrated into their new environment.</p> <p>David Adams - Yes, there are students who don’t speak English but this isn’t the only reason we are in the situation we are in, nor is it a reason why results were 15% achieving 5 A*-C GCSE including English and Maths.</p>

Name	Question	Response
Member of the Public	KCC should use its emergency reserves to protect Pent Valley.	Patrick Leeson – We can't do that. Schools are funded through the DSG and there is no emergency reserve within that. You cannot use EAL as an excuse for the performance of the school.
Ben Wallis Staff	<p>I would like to thank Ana and her team who have come into this school and turned it around. You have proven it to the pupils – thank you.</p> <p>I am an ex-student, if it's a consultation, why are a number of our students moving in February? When they do move they will be put in separate classrooms, not be allowed to integrate with other students – GCSE's etc. Pupils will be bullied. The Leadership Team have given me the confidence to go to University. I will lose the opportunity to qualify as a PE teacher.</p>	David Adams - Parents do not have to move pupils now. There is the opportunity to move to BHP sooner if parents want that to happen. I made a comment at a previous meeting that I phrased badly and I apologise for that. Youngsters will not be segregated but they will need to be supported in their new environment. BHP will provide after school support to help youngsters in the transition and cover any gaps in their knowledge. FA will be taking significantly more youngsters, approximately 150. They start their GCSEs a year earlier and will need to make sure pupils are not disadvantaged. They will not be segregated in the school; it is just that in some core curriculum areas their interests may be best served by being educated as a discrete group.
Lucy Webster	<p>BHP and FA pupils have said PV students are not welcome in their school. It is all over Facebook.</p> <p>What will you do for Y13 and Y14? I am taking Applied Science, I have 1 year left and nowhere else teaches it. Where will I go? What are you going to do?</p> <p>Why can't you keep us on for one more year? What about travel costs?</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson – This is totally unacceptable and we will ensure that this doesn't happen. It is in the interests of both BHP and FA to make a success of this. When we closed Chaucer, pupils moved to other Canterbury schools, the experience was enormously successful.</p> <p>David Adams – I do recall talking to you at the last meeting. For students on bespoke course like yourself we will struggle to find you something where you can carry on doing the same course. I believe you have two options, Whitstable and Northfleet. We will need to discuss this with you at a 1:1 meeting to find the best resolution. We may not be able to match every student.</p> <p>Patrick Leeson – We have a duty</p>

Name	Question	Response
		<p>of care to you. DA is quoting KCC policy but I promise you we will look at this and you will not be left in the 'lurch'. If there is a travel cost this will be picked up. This is an exceptional circumstance. We thought we could provide the Post 16 step but if this is not the case we will ensure these youngsters will be taught here at Pent Valley. We will try to sort this out in the next few weeks.</p>
Parent	<p>I have 3 children at PV. There has been no information re GCSE students. Nearest option for my child is Broadstairs!</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson – Current Y10 will remain and be taught on site. Arrangements are in place and staff will be retained. KCC has secured the commitment of these staff to stay and teach Y10s.</p> <p>Ana Gibson – We will not leave Y10 students in the 'lurch'. Excellent teachers will be here, resources maintained and we are very confident that the results for Y10 students will be very good.</p>
Darrell Price	<p>You say you care about the students and yet you are putting them through more stress.</p> <p>Isn't there some form of help to keep this school open?</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson – I understand that this is difficult and that it will cause a lot of upset when students change.</p> <p>We will provide help with uniforms and transport. This is not enough to solve the deficit problem. There is no emergency funding; the only funding is from the Education budget which is for all schools.</p>
Mrs Maxwell	<p>I have a Y7 child with SEN but not statemented. FA will not do anything regarding SEN until Y9. PV offered everything and you're taking that away from us. My son won't be able to go to BHP, he can't travel that far. I don't want him to go to FA where he will be left in the system for 2 years – where do I send my child?</p> <p>Academies don't listen how will you help?</p> <p>Some children were excluded from PV and now our children will be meeting them again.</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson – every child who needs help should receive it when they need it. We will not accept a situation where a child will move to FA and not get the help they need straight away. I will keep a close eye on this. We will make sure that he is properly assessed for his needs. Can I ask you to come back to me that this is happening?</p> <p>We are contracting with FA to provide the support for pupils from PV and ensure they get the support they need.</p> <p>Those pupils who moved to other schools have improved their behaviour. FA is a very different school, Ofsted judged it as a good school.</p>

Name	Question	Response
Eric Segal Secretary of SE Kent Trades Union Council	I have had three daughters at PV. If you want to keep the school fight together. Let's put a democratically elected party together to fight these proposals, start lobbying and petitioning. If you're interest come outside and start taking names.	
Councillor Emily Arnold Folkestone Town Mayor	The Town Council passed a motion at its recent meeting to oppose the proposal to close the school.	Patrick Leeson – nobody wants to close the school. If there was an alternative we would not be proposing to close.
Louise Wallace	It's all about budgets. It's a forgone conclusion that PV will close. Why did PV get £1.5m last summer?	Patrick Leeson – this was for improving the accommodation and students here now deserved to have better. This made a difference for the pupils who are here now.
Angela Maxted	I am the HT at Cheriton PS. I have dealt with a number of distraught ex-pupils over the last few weeks. PV has always been a community school and been the focus of community events. It is said we will lose this as well. There is concern about going to other schools that have a different culture. Please make sure that information is available in all languages.	
Hod Birkby Kent County Councillor	Why did you get a team in from the Swale Academy Trust and not give them a chance? Are you going to sell off this land and what will happen to the playing field?	Mr Ridings – I Chair the EYPS Cabinet Committee and I can confirm that the land will be retained for education purposes and will not be sold.
B Robinson Parent	What will happen with Post 16's? The only way for my daughter to finish her course is by going to Broadstairs!	Patrick Leeson – It is not right that a student should have to travel as far as Broadstairs. We will make sure this doesn't happen. It may be we offer some Post 16 courses on site. Every young person is being approached individually to discuss their needs.
P Gane	You knew five years ago there was a dip in numbers. The FA expanded. Why weren't the numbers addressed over the last few years. What will it cost to close the school and mothball it? The playing field is at Coolinge Lane, it's not the playing field here on site. You are depriving choice, the FA or nothing.	Patrick Leeson – the school has suffered a serious decline in numbers, parents have been voting with their feet. The numbers have drifted away to other schools. Other schools that are academies are able to expand without the agreement of the County Council. The County Council is operating in an environment where we are no longer completely in charge of admissions. This is a National policy that we have to do our best to manage in the locality. We are giving a choice. There will

Name	Question	Response
		be a new sponsor for a new school on this site in 2018.
Parent	What about transport?	<p>David Adams – explained the County policy on transport.</p> <p>Patrick Leeson – agreed that individual cases would be considered due to the exceptional circumstances.</p>
Rebecca Redman Parent	<p>If PV was failing so badly why in 2014 did you allocate the FA to have 30 more children?</p> <p>Folkestone Academy do not include their SEN pupils in their results. Do you include SEN children in GCSE results?</p> <p>Children excluded from FA are now at PV. I thought children excluded from a school could not go back.</p>	<p>David Adams – Academies can admit extra pupils if they wish. The County Council has no control over this. FA has capacity. It used to have the 6th form on site but this has now moved to the Glassworks. This has created at least 250 places.</p> <p>SEN children on the roll of the school will count towards the GCSE results for the school. This applies to all schools.</p> <p>You are correct. A permanently excluded child cannot go back into the school they were excluded from. We worked with the individual schools to identify the issues and manage these.</p>
S Comber	<p>This school has been failing for a number of years. We brought this to the attention of officials. Now KCC are failing our kids. Are the Council proud that their school is failing? FA is achieving. Give the recent administration a year to turn the school around – would it still be inadequate?</p> <p>Why don't you wait for the GCSE results this year and then see if you should close the school?</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson – it is unacceptable that any school should be inadequate. Yes, this school has had an unacceptable history. KCC ensured the leadership team was changed. Swale Trust have done a good job and the quality of teaching has got better. However, this is in a short period of time and we still believe that if Ofsted were to come into the school tomorrow the judgement would be a failing school.</p> <p>I have had several conversations with Ana Gibson, there is improvement but not enough to secure significantly improved GCSE results in 2016. This is as a result of poor teaching in the past, which was not addressed.</p>
Kevin Lincoln	Why were parents not informed that KCC were concerned about the leadership of the school?	<p>David Adams – KCC did work with the leadership team and intervened when improvement was not there. This is not carried out in a public way as this would destroy parental confidence.</p>

Name	Question	Response
	<p>What in % terms does PV's deficit represent for KCC's education budget?</p> <p>Why not close year on year?</p> <p>Many of the Nepalese community do not speak English and this is disadvantaging this community. Give AG and her team a chance.</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson – all schools should have regular parents meetings, reports, annual reports available on schools websites. This information should have been widely available. My staff have been working with this school. There have been changes in terms of governance and leadership.</p> <p>Patrick Leeson – That isn't the issue. The issue is the money has to come from other Kent schools.</p> <p>Patrick Leeson – This is not feasible. There will be year on year reductions and limits on curriculum offer.</p> <p>Patrick Leeson – Ana Gibson and her team have made improvements. However, if we don't do anything the staff will have to be reduced, the curriculum will be cut and the opportunities for students will become less and less. I recognise that it sounds odd to close this school and then open a new school, but Pent valley is not viable in its current form and with such a deficit. The Government's policy is for any new school to be a free school.</p>
Mr Bullen	My daughter is in the first year of her 6 th form course and there is no other course available to her. She is being told she has to start again. You say you are going to look at this on a case by case basis. When will we find out what is on offer? She excelled at PV. She is in turmoil.	Patrick Leeson – if it is not possible for EKC to offer the provision required we will make sure that provision is made and we will fund it. If necessary we will consider continuing provision at this school. We are looking at this and will let you know in the next few weeks, we will try and do this as quickly as possible.
V Chapman	Money is being spent all over the place. Where is it coming from? You're throwing it everywhere else, uniforms, travel, why can't you put it into PV?	Patrick Leeson – funding moves with the pupil when they move. There is not enough funding to make sure this school has a sustainable future. It needs a fresh start. Travel and uniform costs are small in comparison. New school will open from the bottom up and grow.
Parent	<p>If the school continues in its current format, what will the debt be in two to three years' time?</p> <p>How long would it take to get the numbers up?</p>	<p>Patrick Leeson –3m plus.</p> <p>Ana Gibson – It would take at least 5 years to get the numbers up, to increase confidence in the school.</p>

Name	Question	Response
	Can we sacrifice Coolinge Lane?	<p>We would need 180 children not dribs and drabs. We need to be staffed and funded for this number per year group. It takes 5 years.</p> <p>Patrick Leeson - we cannot do that. It's a one-off payment. It wouldn't give you guaranteed funding year on year. A dramatic increase in numbers is the only answer.</p>
Neil Jones	I think my question has been answered in part about protecting the land here and the playing field in Coolinge Lane. You have given us assurances regarding the land, would you be prepared to covenant the land in perpetuity for education use.	<p>PL – I can't say we will covenant the land, as that would not be my decision that would be for KCC elected members. Land will be retained for educational use and will not be disposed of. It's a decision for KCC Elected Members. You have a formal assurance that the land and the building here will be retained for educational use.</p> <p>Leyland Ridings – I Chair the EYPS Cabinet Committee and there will be a formal recommendation from my Committee to the Cabinet Member that the land will be retained for educational use.</p>
Y12 Student	I started A levels this year. Why can't I stay here? I need a Yes or No. I need to complete the rest of my course but I will have to travel to Canterbury. This will cost £20 or more a week. Will you pay for travel costs?	<p>Patrick Leeson – I don't think it's reasonable to have to go Canterbury. We will do everything we can. Maybe the solution is not EKC. We will speak to you on an individual basis. It is our responsibility to find the right solution for you. You should be able to do your courses here.</p>
Parent	What happens to my son when I refuse his place?	<p>David Adams – I suggest you don't refuse the place yet. You are entitled to look at other schools and go onto their waiting lists. There will be some swapping as places are rejected. If you reject without securing another place, there is no certainty you will have a place. We have tried to re-assure parents there is a school place available and I accept some parents will not be happy with that place. Speak to our admissions team and talk this through. I am happy to arrange for our admissions team to come back into school in order for you to discuss your individual case.</p>
Mrs Penfold	Will you fund places elsewhere?	<p>Patrick Leeson – Yes.</p>

Name	Question	Response
Joe Fishlock	Hawkinge and Folkestone have twice the population that Dover has. Dover has 3 secondary schools. BHP serves Hythe and surrounding areas. How is that fair when not long ago residents living nearby FA were moaning about cars being parked on the pavements? How will the academy cope? What about future housing?	David Adams – I can't comment if your figures are right or wrong. We are aware of housing development. Housing is going on in every District across the County. The difference at the moment is that schools in Dover have more stable pupil populations; none are full apart from the Grammar schools, so vacancies are not concentrated in one school. This is not the same for Shepway. Numbers are declining in Pent Valley as parents have chosen locally to send their children elsewhere. The Academy has the physical space to cope.
Parent of Y7 Karen Smith	You knew last year this school was going to close and yet you let Y7s come here. You are proposing to pay for school uniforms and travel. For one year or for more years?	David Adams – We did not know this proposal would come forward; a decision had not been made at that point. The proposal went to Cabinet Committee in December and the decision was made to proceed to consultation. In respect of Transport KCC policy will be applied. DA ran through KCC policy and advised parents to discuss with the transport department. Uniform – KCC will fund one set of compulsory uniform where the items differ from PV's.
Claire Potts	Your presentation earlier mentioned a meeting with the Academy in January but there was no date. When will we know?	David Adams – we wrote to parents recently with dates at both BHP and FA. The Academy has written out to all parents . There was a meeting last week for pupils allocated BHP where parents attended and FA had their Year 7 parents meeting last week. If you think you have not received this letter please talk to me afterwards and we will make sure you get the letters.

David Adams ran through the consultation timeline.

Both David Adams and Patrick Leeson thanked everyone for attending.

Approximately 150 people attended the meeting.

RESPONSE FROM THE GOVERNING BODY OF PENT VALLEY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

Kent County Council's proposal to close Pent Valley Technology College was met with considerable disbelief, shock and dismay by the Governing Body, staff, parents/carers, students and the local community in December 2015, particularly as KCC had stated quite clearly in June 2015 (six months previously) that the School would not close. While, as a Governing Body, we understand a number of the reasons put forward to **consult** on the School's closure, we are very unhappy with the speed at which the actual closure is taking place, even before the consultation period is over!

After due consideration we have decided neither to uphold nor oppose KCC's proposal to close the School. It is evident that, although a consultation is taking place to ensure KCC follows its statutory duties, most of the work involved in closing the School is already underway – staff have left, a number of students have already transferred to other schools, redundancy notices are imminent and Year 6 parents have, understandably, voted with their feet and selected other schools for their children. **In other words it is a "done deal"**.

Despite this we would like to put on record that as a Governing Body **we originally agreed unanimously to oppose the closure**, as is our legal right. However, following a number of veiled threats including that of removal as a Governing Body by KCC or that Ofsted would be "called in" if we were to oppose the closure and, as a result, some considerable soul searching and reflection, we have decided to abstain. To remove us as a Governing Body and establish an Interim Executive Board, unfamiliar with the School, would incur considerable administrative time, energy and **cost** to the **tax payer** and if Ofsted were to visit Pent Valley then further unnecessary costs would be incurred. Furthermore neither scenario would be in the best interest of staff, parents/carers, students or the local community.

As a Governing Body we recognise that our first responsibility is to the staff, parents/carers and students and it is important that we remain in situ for the duration of Pent Valley Technology College's life. We are members of the public who for a variety of commendable reasons have invested much of our own **free** time to help turn the School around over the past year. We are passionate about the School and we want to see that it provides the best possible education to the students that remain until July 2017.

However we would like to make the following observations which we hope will be given due consideration by KCC:

1. GOOD FROM OFSTED:

Pent Valley Technology College received a 'Good' from Ofsted in January 2013.

2. PRAISED FOR ITS VOCATIONAL PROVISION

Pent Valley Technology College has prided itself on its vocational provision. Indeed it has been unique in the Folkestone area in offering both vocational and work related subjects alongside the traditional academic subjects. This has enabled students to follow a variety of pathways to gain relevant qualifications before entering the world of employment, or moving on to further or higher education. However, this position and the important alternatives it offered to academic achievement was dealt a significant blow by changes to the BTEC qualifications in 2014. (Ref: The Wolfe Report).

It was heartening to hear Sir Michael Wilshaw, Chief Inspector of Schools In England and Head of Ofsted, state recently (January 18, 2016) **that vocational provision should have a greater status nationwide** so that the talents of non-academic students are not wasted and he warned that the “one-size fits all” model leaves behind young people who do not succeed in exams.

To its credit Pent Valley has always felt it important to fulfil this vital need in the community and to equip its students for life and work, especially as its catchment area is one of high unemployment. Indeed, less than a year ago (March 2015) Pent Valley signed an agreement with East Kent College which was to ensure a better delivery of vocational subjects to students at both colleges. And this was supported by KCC:

Paul Carter, Leader KCC: *“Kent County Council is delighted to support this ground-breaking partnership which sees East Kent College and Pent Valley joining forces. In bringing together their specialisms, high quality teaching and resources, the school and college will transform technical curriculum pathways in the Shepway area.”*

3. GOOD GCSE RESULTS

Up until 2014 Pent Valley Technology College students were achieving good GCSE results.

Percentage achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and Maths GCSEs	2011	2012	2013
Pent Valley	40%	48%	40%

However, the School fell victim to the changes to the GCSE examination system, which were introduced at very short notice in 2014. This impacted hard on Pent Valley students (c.47% of students are on Free School Meals, 21% of students do not have English as their first language and 30% are Special Needs students) as it did on many LA supported schools across the county. (Ofsted Dashboard, Unvalidated November 2015 – Years 7-11).

4. GOOD REPUTATION FOR POST 16

Pent Valley Technology College has a good reputation in terms of its Post 16 outcomes with many of its students going on to study at university: indeed a record number of students in 2014 continued to university and higher education (around 50%).

Year	No of students continuing to university
2012	27
2013	33
2014	35
2015	32

It also has a good track record for vocational Level 2 courses and is proud to be the only secondary institution in the immediate area offering this option. Some students are able to spend three years in Pent Valley’s Post 16 provision and the variety of courses on offer has enabled them to follow a range of pathways to gain relevant qualifications before successfully entering the world of employment.

5. EXCELLENT SUPPORT FOR SEN AND VULNERABLE STUDENTS

Pent Valley offers excellent support and education to its SEN and vulnerable students (Special Educational Needs students: 12.39%, Pupil Premium students: 41.59%, Free School Meals students: 23.01%, English as an additional language students: 22.30% and Looked After students: 3%). Indeed, this has been recognised in the very recent past:

“Safeguarding arrangements are detailed and thorough and meet statutory requirements. The SCR is presented well and is accurate and senior managers ensure that staff undergo all relevant training.” Bill Stoneham, Kent LA, December 2014

Parents/carers with SEN or Vulnerable children have been highly vocal in their praise for the provision Pent Valley makes for their children. One mother (whose four SEN children have attended Pent Valley) stated at the recent Public Consultation meeting (January 18, 2016) that it was the *“perfect place for my children”*. Others have felt their children were in a safe and secure environment, were happy and in many cases achieving well.

6. 100% SUPPORT FROM THE STAFF FOR PENT VALLEY

Responses to a recent staff survey, undertaken by the Governing Body at the end of June 2015, revealed that 100% of the staff thought that the school was well led and well managed and that they were proud to be a member of staff at Pent Valley. 94% felt that behaviour was good. 88% felt that the leadership team was keen to help staff improve and appropriate provision was made for their professional development.

7. SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS AT THE SCHOOL

Since September 2014 the Governing Body has been working with the Senior Leadership of the School to improve outcomes for students, and in particular following the Warning Notice which it received in February 2015. In April 2015 a new Executive Head, Headteacher and Senior Leadership team were appointed and since then remarkable changes have taken place in the School including:

- ✓ **Attendance:** It is currently one of the top performing schools in the county with 95.7% reported by the Headteacher as at January 18, 2016.
- ✓ **Behaviour:** It has greatly improved. This was acknowledged in a Teaching and Learning Review (November 12 & 13 2015) undertaken by Kent LA.
- ✓ **Teaching:** It has improved in leaps and bounds. The most recent data reveals 58% of teaching is good and at the next review in March 2016 the Headteacher is confident that this will rise to 70%.
- ✓ **Learning:** As a result of improvements in behaviour and teaching, learning has also been improving and this was acknowledged in the Teaching and Learning Review (November 12 & 13 2015) undertaken by Kent LA.

In particular, Year 7 students are making good progress and Year 11 students are working well towards their GCSEs, with the Headteacher predicting 30% of students achieving an A*-C in English and Maths in the forthcoming exams, which is a superb turn around. (cf. 15% in 2015)

- ✓ **Attainment:** Students understand and feel proud of their achievements and this can be evidenced by the Progress Charts in the School corridor. Students think they are good and one student, when questioned, was adamant that although he was in the bottom section that he was going to work *“really hard”* to ensure he was moved up by the end of the term.

- ✓ **General atmosphere:** In the classrooms and in the playground there is a sense of calm and purpose. All are eager to improve and this has been witnessed not only by Governing Body school visits but also recognised in the Teaching and Learning Review (November 12 & 13 2015) undertaken by Kent LA: *“students say that high expectations of behaviour are more consistent throughout the school and staff say that they have more support in managing behaviour. There was significantly less off task behaviour seen during this review.”*
- ✓ **Improvement** Pent Valley has made substantial and significant progress in ALL AREAS as has been noted in In the Teaching Learning Review (November 12 & 13 2015). *“This is a much-improved school”*.

In short, the achievements by staff and students have been remarkable in a very short space of time - a mere six months. All the vital signs clearly demonstrate that Pent Valley has been moving in the right direction and at a rapid pace.

8. KCC ACTING IN HASTE

Following on from Point 7 it is clear that KCC has acted in haste by not allowing the School an adequate chance to demonstrate how it can improve and provide students with the education and options they need and deserve. It should be noted that other LA schools in the area have been given over two years to improve and are still showing a decline in their GCSE results.

9. VICTIM OF EXPANSION BY OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS

There is little doubt that Pent Valley has been a victim of the way in which Brockhill Park and the Folkestone Academy, as well as nearby grammar schools, have been allowed to increase their Year 7 intake in a completely unfettered and unregulated manner. Indeed, some have what could be deemed an aggressive expansion strategy e.g. Folkestone Academy 6th form transfer to new buildings. Again, unregulated.

Pent Valley has also been disadvantaged by KCC’s pre-empting of the School’s closure and enabling student transfers to other local schools.

By closing Pent Valley parental choice (a requirement of the Department of Education) is being limited even further than it is already in the locality.

10. WHY THE £1.5 MILLION REFURBISHMENT?

We fail to understand why KCC sanctioned a £1.5 million refurbishment over the summer period if it intended to close the School. However, we do concede that the money has been well spent and added to the positive atmosphere in the School.

11. WHY THE HURRY TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL?

What has changed in the last few months since the summer of 2015 that has altered KCC’s mind? In June 2015, we recall KCC stating categorically, at a Parent Meeting, that the School would not be closed.

If the Pent Valley brand is, as KCC says, “irrevocably broken” why did Swale Academies Trust agree to step in to support the School last March 2015 at very short notice and invest it with

excellent staff, considerable management time and commitment? They knew they could turn it around given sufficient time and have proved it already in just 6 months.

12. FINANCIAL VIABILITY – FIGURES DON'T ADD UP WHEN ONE CONSIDERS IT IS GOING TO COST APPROXIMATELY £5.9 MILLION TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL

The argument that the School is no longer financially viable is a strong one, and while we recognise that the School has a £2.14 million deficit (which includes a £1.5 million loan from KCC for the refurbishment), when one considers the costs involved in closing the School - including staff redundancy costs, new uniforms for students, transport costs for students, moth balling the building, and the costs to keep the School open until August 2017 - the figures don't seem to add up.

KCC estimates that it is going to cost c. £5.9 million to close the School as against the costs of keeping it open until the next uplift in Year 7 intake comes. Meanwhile it is happy to hand over c. £1 million to two local schools so they can accept Pent Valley students!

KCC appears to be playing two cards. On the one hand we are told that schools cannot have a deficit budget and that Pent Valley is not viable financially, based on the projected 2016 Year 7 intake. In addition, the cost of running Pent Valley for a number of years at a deficit will disadvantage every other Kent LA maintained School. But on the other hand KCC is happy to write off almost £6 million with the closure of the School!

13. WHY CLOSE A SCHOOL WHEN DEMAND FOR PLACES IS GOING TO EXPLODE?

The increase in demand for secondary school places is going to explode in the very near future in the Folkestone area. New primary schools are being built, and those that exist are full. More houses are being built which will result in more secondary school places being required. What is the rationale for closing a school which is currently in existence and improving and which would be in a position to accept students when required?

14. UTMOST CONCERN REGARDING PROVISION FOR SEN AND VULNERABLE STUDENTS

Sadly, KCC has not provided the Governing Body or parents with any robust assurances that our SEN and Vulnerable students will be catered for adequately at any of the proposed transfer schools, nor have they outlined how these students will be supported or how the transition will take place. This is of utmost concern for us, staff and parents/carers and was raised numerous times at the Public Meeting on January 18, 2016.

15. SIGNIFICANT CONCERN REGARDING POST 16 SUPPORT

Much emphasis has been put on GCSE attainment and how Year 11 will be managed in 2016/17 for those students who remain. However, little, if anything – until January 27 - appeared to be put in place for our 6th form students, a number of whom are hoping to sit exams in subjects which are not provided for at any other local school.

We are pleased by the reassurances from KCC that provision is now to be made for Year 13 at Pent Valley as this ensures that our 6th form students will be able to continue their learning on site and to pursue the subjects of their choice.

However, this process has created untold stress and upset for students and parents, and unnecessarily.

We sincerely hope KCC will take our observations on board and robustly adhere to the promises it has made to staff, parents/carers, and students in the past months including:

- ✓ Free travel to new schools for the duration of the students' schooling
- ✓ The school playing fields at Coolinge Lane will not be sold
- ✓ The existing school premises and land will be retained for educational purposes and not sold for redevelopment
- ✓ Year 13 students will be supported
- ✓ Folkestone Academy and Brockhill Park will be commissioned to have the right support for all SEN students who transfer from Pent Valley and that KCC will track their progress

We as a Governing Body are supporting the staff and students who have worked so hard over the past six months to prove that they can achieve great things and that:

THE PENT VALLEY SPIRIT IS FAR FROM BROKEN.

**SIGNED FOR AND BEHALF OF THE FOLLOWING GOVERNORS OF PENT VALLEY BY
PENELOPE JAMES, VICE-CHAIR**

Michael Chisnall, Chair
Penelope James, Vice-Chair
Keith Jones
Bernie Mayall
Daniel Stapley
Laurence Wells

Penelope James, Vice-Chair

Date: February 2, 2016

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

15/00114

For publication

Subject: Proposal to Close Pent Valley Technology College

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform I agree to:

Issue a public notice to close Pent Valley Technology College from September 2016 for current Years 7, 8, 9 and 11 from 31 August 2016 and for all years from August 2017.

And following the ending of the public notice period:

Approve the closure of Pent Valley Technology College from September 2016 for current Years 7, 8, 9 and 11 from 31 August 2016 and for all years from August 2017.

Should objections, not already considered by me when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for a proper consideration of the points raised.

Reason(s) for decision:

In reaching this decision I have taken into account:

- the views expressed by those attending the public consultation meeting on 18 January 2016, and those put in writing in response to the consultation;
- the views of the local County Councillors and the Governing Body of Pent Valley Technology College;
- the Equalities Impact Assessment and comments received regarding this; and
- the views of the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee which are set out below.

Financial Implications

a. Capital - Nil

b. Revenue – The estimated costs of closing Pent Valley Technology College are £5.9m. This includes writing off the predicted £3.7m debt of the School, redundancy costs, securing the site, terminating service contracts, and retention payments for staff remaining until August 2017. The figure also includes providing pupil level funding for Folkestone Academy and Brockhill Park Performing Arts College. We are currently in discussion with the Education Funding Agency as to whether they will meet this cost (£1m) as both schools are academies.

c. Human – The School currently employs 162 staff. If the proposal is implemented, all staff will be made redundant. This will happen from 31 August 2016, except for 24 teachers and 36 support staff who will have deferred redundancies until 31 August 2017.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation: <i>To be added after Committee meeting</i>
Any alternatives considered:
Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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Signed

Date

From: Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services

To: Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee – 17 February 2016

Subject: **Work Programme 2016**

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: EYPS Cabinet Committee – 21 January 2016
Future Pathway of Paper: Standard item to Cabinet Committee

Summary: This report provides updated details on the proposed Work Programme and seeks suggestions for future topics to be considered by the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee.

Recommendation: The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and suggest any additional topics for consideration to be added to future agendas and agree its Work Programme for 2016.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme has been compiled from items on the Forthcoming Executive Decision List; from actions arising from previous meetings, and from topics identified at agenda setting meetings, held 6 weeks before each Cabinet Committee meeting in accordance with the Constitution and attended by, the Chairman, Mr Ridings, Vice Chairman, Mrs Cole; and the 3 Group Spokesmen, Mr Burgess, Mr Cowan and Mr Vye.
- 1.2 Whilst the Chairman, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform, is responsible for the final selection of items for the agenda, this item gives all Members of the Cabinet Committee the opportunity to suggest amendments and additional agenda items where appropriate.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 At its meeting held on 27 March 2014, the County Council agreed the following terms of reference for the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee *'To be responsible for those functions that fall within the responsibilities of the Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services as well as some functions transferred from the former Communities Directorate and now located within the Education and Young People's Services'*. The functions within the remit of this Cabinet Committee are:

Preventative Services

- Integrated Youth Services includes Youth Justice, Youth Work (including Youth Centres and outdoor activity centres)
- Children's Centres
- Early Intervention and Prevention for children, young people and their families including Family CAF co-ordination
- Adolescent Services Social Work Assistants
- Inclusion and Attendance includes Education Youth Offending, Educational

Welfare, Inclusion Officers, Child Employment and Young Carers Co-ordination, Early Years Treasure Chest, Commissioned Services for early intervention and prevention

- Troubled Families

Education Planning and Access

- Provision Planning and Operations (includes school place planning and provision, client services, outdoor education and the work of the AEOs)
- Fair access Admissions and Home to School Transport (includes Elective Home Education, Home Tuition and Children Missing Education)
- Special Educational Needs Assessment and Placement Educational assessment processes for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (includes Portage and Partnership with Parents,
- Educational Psychology Service)

Education Quality and Standards

- Early Years and Childcare Safeguarding and Education
- School Standards and Improvement including Governor Services,
- School Workforce Development and Performance and Information,
- Skills and Employability for 14-24 year olds includes Kent Supported
- Community Learning & Skills

School Resources

- Finance Business Partners
- Development of delivery model for support services to schools
- Academy Conversion

2.2 Further terms of reference can be found in the Constitution at Appendix 2 Part 4 paragraph 21 and these should also inform the suggestions made by Members for appropriate matters for consideration.

3. Work Programme 2015/16

3.1 An agenda setting meeting was held on 27 January, at which items for this meeting's agenda and future agenda items were agreed. The Cabinet Committee is requested to consider and note the items within the proposed Work Programme, set out in appendix A to this report, and to suggest any additional topics that they wish to be considered for inclusion to the agenda of future meetings

3.2 The schedule of commissioning activity 2015-16 to 2017-18 that falls within the remit of this Cabinet Committee will be included in the Work Programme and considered at future agenda setting meetings to support more effective forward agenda planning and allow Members to have oversight of significant services delivery decisions in advance. The next agenda setting meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 22 March 2016 at 11:00 – 12:00 noon.

3.3 When selecting future items the Cabinet Committee should give consideration to the contents of performance monitoring reports. Any 'for information' or briefing items will be sent to Members of the Cabinet Committee separately to the agenda or separate Member briefings will be arranged where appropriate.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 It is vital for the Cabinet Committee process that the Cabinet Committee takes ownership of its work programme to help the Cabinet Member to deliver informed and considered decisions. A regular report will be submitted to each meeting of the Cabinet Committee to give updates of requested topics and to seek suggestions for future items to be considered. This does not preclude Members making requests to the Chairman or the Democratic Services Officer between meetings for consideration.

- 5. Recommendation:** The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and suggest any additional topics for consideration to be added to future agendas and agree its Work Programme for 2016.

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Work Programme

7. Background Documents

None.

8. Contact details

Report Author:
Alexander Saul
Democratic Services Officer
03000 419890
Alexander.Saul@kent.gov.uk

Lead Officer:
Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
03000 416647
peter.sass@kent.gov.uk

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**EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES CABINET
COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME 2016**

FORTHCOMING EXECUTIVE DECISIONS		
07/09/2015 to 31/03/2016		
Decisions to be taken under the remit of this Cabinet Committee	Lead officer	Decision Taker
Proposed expansion of Bysing Wood Primary School from 1FE to 2FE from September 2016 (DEFERRED)	Marisa White Area Education Officer (East Kent)	Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform
STANDARD ITEMS		
Item	When does the Cabinet Committee receive item?	
Final Draft Budget Reports	Annually (January)	
Commissioning Plan	Bi-annually (July/December)	
School Performance – Exam Results	Annually (November/ December)	
Performance Scorecard (including preventative Services for Adolescents)	At each meeting	
Strategic Priority Statement	Last submitted April 2015	
Post 16 Transport Policy Statement (to be published by 1 June each year)	Annually (April)	
Recruitment of Teachers – Annual figures	Annually (September)	
Annual Equality and Diversity Report	Annually (September)	
Work Programme	At each meeting	
Proposed Co-Ordinated Schemes for Primary and Secondary Schools in Kent and Admission Arrangements for Primary and Secondary Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools	Annually (March)	
ITEMS REQUESTED BY MEMBERS		
Item	Date requested	Cabinet Committee Meeting
The co-option of Teacher Advisers/Union reps.	25 July 2013	tba
SEND Mediation and Disagreement Resolution Services	16 December 2014	May
Decisions on proposed commissioning agreements	13 January 2015	tba
How the NHS works with the Education and Young People's Services Directorate (to include a list of the commissioned services) and how they are monitored.	8 July 2015	tba
Mr Leeson agreed to give Members	18 September 2015	tba

Appendix A

information to support their understanding on the new way the curriculum was being measured and reported as from next year. It was advised that School Governors would need support too.		
Mr Bagshaw agreed to supply the exact number of students that were receiving home to school transport, but advised that this figure was fluid.	18 September 2015	
Performance of Commissioned Youth Work Services/ Annual report – Request by Mr Vye	20 October 2015	March
Development of new Early Help and Preventative Services commissioning framework (EYP)	27 January 2016	tba

From: **Mr S C Manion, Chairman Kent SACRE**
Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills

To: **Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee – 17 February 2016**

Subject: **Draft SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) Annual Report 2014-2015**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: **SACRE meeting 23 November 2015**

Future Pathway of Paper: **Circulate to Kent schools**

Electoral Division: **All**

Summary: The Education Reform Act 1988, (amended by subsequent Acts) requires each SACRE to publish an Annual Report on its work. This report reflects the focus of SACRE meetings during the academic year 2013 – 2014, and the key local and national issues that have engaged the R.E. (Religious Education) community during this time. A key aspect of SACRE's role is to support the effective provision of R.E. and Collective Worship in schools. The monitoring of provision and standards in RE is reported on. This report contains advice and recommendations to the Local Authority which should be shared with schools and governing bodies in order to ensure that schools comply with their statutory responsibilities and provide the highest quality teaching and learning of R.E. and provision for Collective Acts of Worship for pupils in Kent schools. Additionally, this report highlights the inaugural meeting of a Kent Youth SACRE.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to **consider** and **endorse** the draft SACRE Annual Report 2014-15

1. Introduction

1.1 SACRE publishes an Annual Report to inform relevant parties, including schools, of the advice that SACRE has given to the Local Authority and of the actions taken to support RE and Collective Worship in schools using the Agreed Syllabus, that have resulted from this advice. The broad role of the SACRE is to support the effective provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship in schools through:

- Giving advice on methods of teaching using the Agreed Syllabus Religious Education;
- Advising the LA on the provision of training for teachers;
- Monitoring inspection reports on Religious Education, Collective Worship and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC);
- Considering complaints about the provision and delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship referred to by the LA;

2. **Financial Implications**

- 2.1 This report has no financial implications on the Council's capital and revenue budgets and spending plans.

3. **The Report**

3.1 **Relevant history and detail**

It is a statutory requirement for Kent SACRE to publish an Annual report of its activities and advice to the LA. This Draft Report has been prepared and was presented for consideration by members at the last full SACRE meeting on 23rd November 2015. SACRE members agreed that this report should be presented to the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee.

- 3.2 There are no **legal implications** by presenting this report.

- 3.3 There are no **equalities implications** by presenting this report.

- 3.8 No further information should be required in order for the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee to consider and note this SACRE Annual Report.

4. **Conclusions**

This report reflects the focus of SACRE meetings during the academic year 2015-2016, and the key local and national issues that have engaged the R.E. (Religious Education) community during this time. A key aspect of SACRE's role is to support the effective provision of R.E. and Collective Worship in schools. The monitoring of provision and standards in RE is reported on. This report contains advice and recommendations to the Local Authority which should be shared with schools and governing bodies in order to ensure that schools comply with their statutory responsibilities and provide the highest quality teaching and learning of R.E. and provision for Collective Acts of Worship for pupils in Kent schools.

SACRE anticipates that by asking the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse this report, not only will the work of SACRE be better understood, but also the recommendations and advice within this report may have a greater impact in schools.

5. Recommendation:

The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse the Draft SACRE Annual Report 2015-16

6. Appendix

6.1 Draft SACRE Annual Report 2014-2015

7. Contact details

Report Author:

Name and title **Mr Allan Foster, Consultant Advisor to Kent SACRE**

Telephone number **07591106082**

Email address **fosterallan@gmail.com**

Relevant Director:

Name and title **Gillian Cawley, Director Education Quality and Standards**

Telephone number **03000 419853**

Email address **Gillian.cawley@kent.gov.uk**

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To: All SACRE Members

Members, Kent County Council

Corporate Director, Education and Young People Services

Head Teacher / Chair of Governors all schools in Kent

NASACRE



**KENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

ANNUAL REPORT

2014 – 2015

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Opening remarks from the Chair of SACRE

Welcome to the 2014-15 Annual Report of the Kent SACRE. The SACRE has met three times during the academic year. We have continued our commitment to hold at least one meeting each year in a venue away from County Hall. This year's June meeting was hosted by Highworth Girls' Grammar School, an Academy in Ashford. This reflected SACRE's ongoing desire to engage with all schools (including Academies) in Kent.

The SACRE has had a full year working towards the priorities outlined in the Development Plan. One focus has been on developing a Youth SACRE. During this year, our colleagues at Canterbury Christ Church University, hosted a very successful inaugural event for Primary schools: "Knowing you; Knowing me". SACRE also hosted a Secondary event that was expertly facilitated by Lat Blaylock from RE Today. The focus for this event was the subject of Evil, a provocative topic that provided for positive exchanges between students

SACRE has continued to make efforts to engage with all schools to ensure their compliance with requirements to provide high quality Religious Education and opportunities for Collective Worship. SACRE has worked with the Kent Association of Head teachers in order to seek membership of representatives of Primary and Secondary head teachers. Through communications with national appointing bodies, SACRE has tried to quickly fill vacancies that arise in Group 1. We believe it is important that we have a membership drawn from the Faith Groups and the range of schools found locally as they help to ensure that the SACRE is reflective of the diversity found in Kent. SACRE continues to benefit from its partnership with the different faith groups, the Anglican diocesan education boards of Canterbury and Rochester and with Canterbury Christ Church University. We are also thankful for the support that is provided by our former AST colleagues. Not only are they each members or co-opted to SACRE, but they do provide a valuable link between Secondary Schools / Academies and ourselves.

SACRE would like to remind schools that Kent does not currently offer many opportunities for professional development in Religious Education. This, combined with the impact of the absence of RE from the English Baccalaureate in secondary schools, causes the SACRE great concern that Religious Education may not be apportioned the same importance as other subjects in the school curriculum. If, as a part of their monitoring cycle, schools identify RE or Collective Worship as an area that needs development, they need to look for their own bespoke training. The SACRE is grateful to Allan Foster, Consultant Adviser, who was funded by the Local Authority to support SACRE for the period covered by this report, for driving our work forward and keeping us abreast of developments in Religious Education nationally.

As Chairman, I would like to thank all those who serve on Kent SACRE, teachers, faith group representatives. The professional support of our consultant /adviser and the democratic support are also gratefully acknowledged. This team has worked very hard this year to provide support so that we are able achieve our aims despite challenges in a time of ongoing austerity. We are grateful for the ongoing support and interest of the Local Authority and for the active involvement of senior officers and Members in our activities. I believe that Kent SACRE is very well placed to face the challenges ahead as we continue to ensure that Religious Education and Collective Worship retain their rightful place at the heart of our schools.

Steven Manion

Chairman, Kent SACRE

INTRODUCTION

The 1988 Education Reform Act established the statutory requirement for all Local Authorities (LA) to establish a permanent body called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The Kent SACRE is an independent body which advises the LA on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship.

The Statutory Duties of a SACRE

All LAs are required to establish a SACRE.

A SACRE's main function, as set out in the 1996 Education Act is:

"To advise the Local Education Authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in County schools and the Religious Education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus as the Authority may refer to the SACRE or as the SACRE may see fit". (s.391 (1) (a))

Such matters include:-

"Methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers".

A SACRE also:

- Can require the LA to review its current Agreed Syllabus (s.391(3))
- Must consider applications made by a head teacher that the requirement for Collective Worship in County schools to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character shall not apply to the Collective Worship provided for some or all of the pupils in a particular school - "determinations". (s.394(1))

It is a legal requirement that the SACRE publish an Annual Report to inform relevant parties, including schools, of the advice that SACRE has given to the Local Authority and of the actions taken to support RE and Collective Worship in schools using the Agreed Syllabus, that have resulted from this advice.

The broad role of the SACRE is to support the effective provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship in schools through:

- Giving advice on methods of teaching using the Agreed Syllabus Religious Education;
- Advising the LA on the provision of training for teachers;
- Monitoring inspection reports on Religious Education, Collective Worship and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC);
- Considering complaints about the provision and delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship referred to by the LA;
- Asking the LA to review its Agreed Syllabus.

This report covers the work of the Kent SACRE during the academic year from September 2014 to August 2015.

Three full SACRE meetings were held during the period covered by this report. Details of SACRE Membership and attendance at meetings can be found in Appendix 3 and agendas and minutes of meetings can be found on the KCC website - www.Kent.gov.uk/SACRE.

The report is sent to the Head teachers/Chair of Governors of all schools in the county, The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE), and the Local Authority. The report is also available on the SACRE pages of the Kent website.

THE SACRE'S MISSION STATEMENT

Kent SACRE seeks to ensure that all pupils in our schools develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and morally, as well as socially, culturally and physically, so that they are able to understand themselves and others and cope with the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of living in a rapidly changing world.

Kent SACRE aspires to:

- Enhance the quality of religious education and collective worship in Kent schools, and
- Celebrate the religious and cultural diversity found in Kent

Our vision is:

For schools to be able to:

- provide challenging learning through the RE Curriculum;
- promote an inspirational and aspirational ethos through meaningful and engaging Collective Worship; and
- contribute to community cohesion by engaging the whole school community in an exploration of identity and community in the local, national and global context.

For the Local Authority to:

- place a high priority on the role of RE and Collective Worship in schools;
- aim to provide sufficient resource to support schools in the above;
- work in partnership with SACRE to build links between schools and local faith communities.

For SACRE members to:

- represent their constituents in the spirit of promoting educational RE and Collective Worship within statutory regulations;
- represent fairly the views of their constituents as far as this is possible;
- work with other members of SACRE to model and promote respect for and understanding of different beliefs and lifestyles and a universal search for what it means to be human.

Our Aims:

To work with the Local Authority to:

- place a high priority on the role of RE and Collective Worship in schools;
- aim to provide sufficient resources
- work in partnership with SACRE to build links between schools and local faith communities.

To support schools in:

- raising standards of pupil attainment in RE to equate to national expectations of performance levels in other core subjects
- developing the spiritual dimension of the school
- improving the quality of collective worship
- making appropriate provision to meet the needs of all pupils represented within their school community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Advice to the Local Authority (LA)

The SACRE advises the LA to bring this report to the attention of schools and governing bodies and, in particular, to highlight the following points:

- Following the introduction of the new National Curriculum in September 2014, schools will need to be aware that the existing statutory requirements of the Kent Agreed Syllabus (2012) are still valid. **Schools should use this syllabus as the basis of their R.E. curriculum planning.** The statutory requirements and the non-statutory guidance of this syllabus are available for download from the KELSI website.
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/curriculum-resources/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education>
- In all maintained schools other than Voluntary Aided schools or schools of a religious character, but including Voluntary Controlled Schools, **Religious Education has to be taught according to the Kent Agreed Syllabus. However, the Dioceses of Canterbury continues to recommend that all Church of England schools also follow the Agreed Syllabus and the Diocese of Rochester recommends that its Voluntary Controlled schools use the Agreed Syllabus;**
- **Academies are reminded of their statutory requirement to teach Religious Education in accordance with their Funding Agreement.** Academies in Kent are recommended to use the Kent Agreed Syllabus to ensure that they fulfil their statutory requirements;
- Following the presentation of the SACRE Annual Report to the County Council's Education and Young People's Services (EYPS) Cabinet Committee, Members had asked that a letter be sent to Sir Michael Wilshire (HMCI Schools) requesting that RE provision be considered as part of school inspection regime.
- In accordance with the expectations of the Kent Agreed Syllabus, schools are reminded of the **requirement to assess pupils' progress in Religious Education using the two Attainment Targets, and the eight point level descriptors.** The Agreed Syllabus Non-Statutory Guidance (Section 3) provides guidance on assessment and how to use the Level Descriptions for RE;
- **Secondary schools are reminded that Religious Education is a statutory subject and that all KS4 students should follow an accredited course as required in the Agreed Syllabus.**
- **All schools are reminded of their responsibilities to provide opportunities for daily Collective Worship.** The place of collective worship in schools is upheld by statute and has been so since 1944. The basic requirement is that all registered pupils shall take part in an act of collective worship every day. There are only two exceptions to this: parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and pupils in school sixth forms are permitted to decide for themselves whether to attend or not. The Education Reform Act (ERA) 1988 stipulates collective worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'; it is deemed to be fulfilling this description if it 'reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief, without being distinctive of any Christian denomination'.

- **SACRE guidance on Collective Worship** “Gathering Together – Policy & Practice for Collective Worship” is currently being updated and will be linked to the KELSI web page for RE.
- Schools need to be aware that only a limited **CPD programme for RE is currently being initiated by the LA**; instead schools are expected to identify and access their own training needs through local and national organisations;
- Senior Leaders and Governing Bodies are urged to ensure that **RE Subject Leaders/RE Co-ordinators are adequately supported** in terms of professional development, opportunities to monitor and evaluate the subject, opportunities to train and support colleagues and in having an adequate budget in order to help raise standards in Religious Education;
- Schools are reminded that the Teachers’ Standards (Part One:3) require all **teachers to demonstrate a good subject and curriculum knowledge** and this is crucial within RE in order that pupils develop clear and accurate understanding of different faith communities and world views. Schools are urged to access appropriate CPD to meet the needs of the staff teaching RE;
- Schools are recommended to **subscribe to “RE Today”** in order to access regular publications which provide teaching and learning resources, subject knowledge, access to CPD opportunities, and access to the RE Today web based resources.
- Schools are encouraged to **apply for the RE Quality Mark (REQM)**. Three levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold can be achieved and schools will be able to demonstrate their good practice in RE and have hard work recognised and rewarded (www.reqm.org);
- All teachers are urged to ensure that **tasks set for all pupils are appropriately challenging** and meet the needs of the learners. Again, this is a requirement of the Teachers’ Standards (Part One:1, 2 & 5);
- Schools are also urged to look at the range of activities provided for pupils. At all Key Stages there continues to be a difference in boys’ and girls’ attainment. **Teachers are asked to use strategies that are known to be more effective with boys** to try to narrow this gap;
- The SACRE encourages secondary teachers to look at **ways in which they might challenge pupils earlier on in Key Stage 3, especially in the development of reasoning and evaluative skills and in developing extended writing skills**. Evidence shows that where schools do this it impacts significantly on performance in GCSE examinations. (The Agreed Syllabus has guidance on skill development and on Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills as well as other advice on Teaching and Learning processes);
- Kent SACRE continues to work with KCC to ensure that essential and appropriate supporting materials and resources are made available on the Kent Education Learning and Skills Information (KELSI) web pages. Currently the Agreed Syllabus and Non-Statutory Guidance can be accessed here:
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/curriculum-resources/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education>

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SACRE'S WORK:

Meetings

The full SACRE has met on three occasions over the academic year. Group pre-meetings are held from 9:15a.m. The full meeting beginning at 9:30a.m. Meetings end at 12:30p.m.

(1) 25 November 2014 – County Hall, Maidstone

Mr R Gough, Cabinet member for Education and Health reform attended the meeting to take a question and answer session and discuss the relationship of the local Authority with RE in schools.

He had previously met a small group of SACRE members, which had resulted in a letter being sent to Mr Gove. He agreed to contact his successor, Nicky Morgan and highlight Kent's concerns about RE's place within the school curriculum and the difficulty of attracting quality specialist teachers to the subject.

Mr Foster presented the final draft of the 2013/14 Annual Report. Members noted the style had been made more reflective of the way Kent worked, having researched other Counties reports and noted greater emphasis had been given to Kent's mission statement.

The second secondary Youth SACRE event had taken place and been attended by thirteen schools. Lat Blaylock (edit of RE Today) was facilitator for the day. His theme was the presence of evil, which was explored by various creative methods, such as board games, drawing, story board, post-it notes to answer questions posted around the Council Chamber, stories and philosophies such as Nihilism. The teachers attended a very useful breakaway session facilitated by a couple of SACRE members.

Members agreed that they wished to build on the success of the day and organise another event the following year with an additional separate event for primary aged children in school years 5 and 6.

The usual standing items including an update of the Budget position, Development Plan and Overview of national and local developments were considered.

A working group to rewrite the Shaping the Spirit publication was appointed and the meeting concluded with an invitation to SACRE members to attend the forthcoming Kent and Medway HUB. Meeting.

(2) 10 March 2015 - County Hall, Maidstone

The first item for discussion was the Budget which was reported to be in a healthy position.

Members next debated the proposed Youth events to be held in 2015. Ideas to publicise and promote engagement with older students were considered, it was acknowledged that secondary schools often found it difficult to release students and teachers due to timetabling pressures.

The primary event 'Knowing You, Knowing Me' to be held on 20 May 2015 would be at Canterbury Christ Church University to give Year 5 pupils an experience of university campus. After registration and refreshment the day would begin with the opportunity to meet and greet other schools and then split into two groups; half would take part in a reflection workshop led by CCCU students and half would meet representatives of a faith different to their own. After lunch the two groups swap.

It was noted the event had proved to be hugely popular with 210 applications for 150 places.

The Shaping the Spirit working group had met and developed a briefing paper taking account of the publication of new guidance from the Dept. of Education on SMSC and British values. Eventually the revised document would be distributed via a link to all schools and added to the County Council's website.

The Development Plan had been revised to take account of the latest objectives:- establish the Conference to Review the Agreed Syllabus, REAct and timetabling of additional meetings required: development of SMSC Guidance for schools; and briefing meetings for Youth SACRE events.

Members were updated on current events, including the proposed NASACRE Trojan Horse aftermath conference, AGM and Executive elections, the Kent SACRE survey summary 2014 Report and that Mr Foster had responded on behalf of SACRE to the Dept. of Education's consultation on the new examinations. Finally it was noted that the Annual report had been presented to the County Council's Education and Young People's Services (EYPS) Cabinet Committee. Members suggested the KCC write to Sir Michael Wilshaw regarding the issue of RE being part of the Ofsted inspection.

The meeting concluded with a thought provoking interactive presentation from Miss Walters, a member of the Church of England group, about 'Preparing teachers to develop SMSC'.

(3) 17 June 2015 – Highworth Girls Grammar School (Academy), Ashford.

After the usual items on membership changes, matters arising from the previous minutes and a budget update members moved on to consider the RE Curriculum Review. Liz Pope, the Highworth teacher hosting the meeting gave her lively presentation "Insights from the Top; being part of the NATRE Executive."

The members debated how SACRE could best use the three aims of the Review:

- Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews
- Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions worldwide
- Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

The free Youth Primary SACRE event had taken place at CCCU, attended by 31 primary schools each with up to 4 pupils. Members received the positive evaluation report prepared by the CCCU faculty of Education Outreach team and were delighted with the events overwhelming success.

Mr Manion (SACRE Chairman) had written to the Cabinet member to request permission to start the review of the locally Agreed Syllabus with the aim of introducing a revised syllabus for implementation in schools by September 2017. Members volunteered to form a working party from each of the four constituent groups. Clarification of funding would be sought before the Conference could progress.

Following the NASACRE AGM it was noted NASACRE was promoting the idea of regional networking and collaboration. Two members, Mr Foster and Miss Walters had attended the "Trojan Horse" event and heard Alan Brine speak about Ofsted's review of schools in the Birmingham area and the issues in Tower Hamlets concerning possible undue influence by Muslim groups on Governing Bodies. Other speakers included Joyce Miller, Joy Schmack and Lesley Prior led a workshop concerning Collective Worship.

Mrs Paterson (Canterbury Diocesan Board Rep) had attended the last HUB meeting, where amongst other topics the REQM had been discussed, it was noted that Kent SACRE had

been pleased to support local schools with this. The Hub had been operating for a year and its format was being reviewed. After a reminder about the start of the month of Ramadan members agreed 2016 SACRE dates and the meeting concluded with the agreement to make a donation to the Academy in appreciation for hosting the meeting.

Kent Secondary Youth SACRE, November 18th 2014

Lat Blaylock (Editor of RE Today magazine) was facilitator for the day looking at the issue of Evil. “What does evil mean?” “What do we think is evil?” “What are the evils in the world today?” “Is religion evil and how does it fit into society today?”

These were some of the questions posed by Lat. He provided a range of examples and used a variety of creative methods; such as a board game; drawing; using Story Board (post it notes to answer questions which were posted around the Council Chamber); stories; and philosophies such as Nihilism, to encourage responses from students. This was a very active and thought provoking session.

The session concluded with a true story from Maputo, Mozambique. Bishop Dinis asked Christian Aid for a donation to swap bicycles and tools for guns to start a gun amnesty. This was enormously successful where weapons were handed in, but what to do with them? They were turned into works of art/sculptures by some local people. Lat asked the students to do the same with pictures of weapons and prizes were given for the most imaginative artwork.

Lat ended by stating that the “Golden Rule” exists in all faiths and shared statistics of various religious charities helping people throughout the world. This event was very well received by students and teachers in attendance. As a result, SACRE considered the value of hosting a similar event in the future, but referring to it as a ‘Secondary Conference for Young People.’

Kent Primary Youth SACRE, May 20th 2015 “Knowing me; Knowing you.” Hosted by Canterbury Christ Church University

This event had proved to be hugely popular with 210 applications for 150 places. After registration and refreshments the day began with the opportunity to meet and greet other schools and then split into two groups; half took part in a reflection workshop led by CCCU students and half met representatives of a faith different to their own. After lunch the two groups swapped around. Feedback from pupils and teachers indicated that this was a very successful and beneficial event that ought to become a regular event on SACRE’s calendar.

SACRE Development Plan

In 2014 and early 2015, SACRE reviewed its development plan to set out some areas of achievable activities over the coming years. Updates included initial thinking about the next review of the Kent Agreed Syllabus, in the light of recent national developments, and the future of Youth SACRE activities following the successful events that had been held previously. The focus for this plan is to ensure that statutory requirements are met. The 2014 – 2015 Development Plan can be found as Appendix 2, attached to this report.

Professional Administrative Support

The Local Authority provides support in the following ways:

- a dedicated clerk to support the Committee
- funding for a dedicated Consultant Adviser to support and advise SACRE
- an annual budget to support the running costs of Committee meetings and for the SACRE to perform its statutory functions
- space on KELSI web pages for RE and Collective Worship resources

ADDITIONAL SACRE ACTIVITIES

National Links

Kent SACRE is a member of NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) and representatives attend national meetings. A representative also attends the regional meetings for SACRE.

NASACRE AGM. 21st. May 2015. A very successful NASACRE annual conference was held. The Rt Hon Charles Clarke gave a great deal to consider in his keynote address and the seminar addresses from Prof Denise Cush and Mary Myatt provided thought provoking starting points for regional round table discussions.

NASACRE 'Trojan Horse' Conference. 20th May 2015

Alan Brine (former HMI with responsibility for RE at Ofsted) spoke about Ofsted's review of schools in the Birmingham area and also in Tower Hamlets where concerns about undue influence by Muslim groups on Governing bodies were causing concern. Other speakers included Joyce Miller who spoke about the aftermath of 'The Trojan Horse' and implications for schools; Joy Schmack fed back on her review of Ofsted school reports and the lack of helpful comment about SCSM development; and Lesley Prior led a workshop concerning Collective Worship and what was happening in some LEAs with regard to determinations.

Local and National Developments

During the period of this report, five Freedom of Information requests have been received. One of these concerned the serving of halal meat in school meals, and the teaching of "Islamic studies" and "British values" in schools, the other four were requests for information regarding the number of Collective Worship determinations that SACRE had approved.

SACRE, on behalf of KCC Education and Young People's Service, responded to the DfE consultation on the new GCSE and A Level examinations for Religious Education.

Lord Nash, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools, had written to all SACRES to encourage them to consider ways the locally agreed syllabus could help pupils to develop an understanding of Christianity, whilst also learning about the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

A working group met in early February to revise the Shaping the Spirit document following the publication of new guidance from the Department of Education on SMSC and British Values. It was noted that the previous document was out of date and contained expired links but in light of the latest Ofsted Framework for School Inspections guidance to schools on SMSC was essential. This new guidance would be made available to schools as soon as it is completed.

SACRE, in partnership with the Local Authority, continues to work behind the scenes to support schools as they fight to keep an exciting and stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum at the heart of what they offer to pupils of all ages. RE should be a significant part of that curriculum, because it creates opportunities for pupils to grapple with those deep and challenging questions about who they are, and what their place is in the rapidly-changing world around them. Kent pupils deserve the best RE that we can give them, because they are our future

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Locally Agreed Syllabus 2012

Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 requires Local Authorities to institute a review of the locally Agreed Syllabus five years after the completion of its last review. The last review process took place in 2011. The current syllabus, 'REact 2012', was required to be implemented in county schools from September 2012 and is being used successfully in many county schools. Feedback about the syllabus has been extremely positive. Academies, Independent and Free Schools in the County are invited to use the locally Agreed Syllabus. SACRE is now considering its approach to the next review of the locally Agreed Syllabus, and the extent to which it will utilise the recent Religious Education Council's Review of RE.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

During this year, with the support of KCC, a limited number of CPD opportunities were offered to schools. Additional local networking meetings have been held, and the emerging RE Teacher's Hub has held a number of meetings in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University and Teacher Associations.

SACRE does have concerns that schools do not seem willing to support CPD opportunities that involve costs. If schools are expected to support their staff with CPD opportunities provided by national bodies, e.g. NATRE, RE Today etc. then additional costs will be incurred.

MONITORING STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Ofsted Reports

SACRE has been considering, and analysing, OFSTED reports for Kent schools over the past year where there are references to RE and SMSC. This has helped in monitoring standards of RE. There have been very few issues raised for Kent school with regard to RE or SMSC.

School Self-Evaluation

The SACRE recommends that all subject leaders for RE in all schools should regularly evaluate the quality of provision in the subject to identify strengths and areas for development.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

TO DATE, LOCAL EXAM RESULTS AND ANALYSIS ARE AWAITED FROM KCC

GCSE

Full course GCSE Religious Studies entries rise, but number of schools with no RS students at all is increasing

The number of pupils in England and Wales taking GCSE Religious Studies full course has risen again this year, up 5.3% against 2014 to 283,756. This echoes the increase in A Level entries, which are up 6.5% this year compared with 2014.

However the removal of short courses from Department for Education (DfE) performance tables is having a serious and negative impact on the number of pupils choosing to take RS at GCSE level, with an increasing number of schools having no pupils at all taking the subject.

DfE performance tables do not take account of results in short courses. The GCSE short course RS, which had been very popular in the past and provided a reward for schools who provided RE for all, has suffered as a result. The short course is delivered at GCSE standard

but covers half the content of a full course and is therefore worth half a GCSE. Changes in entries for short courses have a disproportionately significant impact on RS: almost two thirds of all short course GCSEs taken in England and Wales are in RS.

The damage to take-up of the RS GCSE short course comes at a time when RS is otherwise a subject growing in popularity and when the government is rightly emphasising the importance for young people to have knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs. In addition, reforms to GCSE RS make it an increasingly attractive and rigorous subject, while increasing numbers of pupils are carrying RS on to A-level.

The key outcomes for Religious Education in England and Wales at KS4 in 2015 are as follows:

- There were 283,756 entries for the full course in GCSE RS, a rise of 5.3% from 2014 (269,494)
- There were 86,679 entries for the short course in GCSE RS, a decline of 26.8% from 2014 (118,481)
- There were 370,435 entries for GCSE RS (combined short and full courses), a decline of 4.5% from 2014 (387,915)
- In 2014 there were 1,197 schools making no entries for any RS qualification; a rise from 268 in 2010.
- 29.6% of entries for the full course in GCSE RS were awarded an A or an A*
- 11.8% of entries for the short course in GCSE RS were awarded an A or an A*

When RS GCSE entries in England over the past four years are compared to those in Wales (where the EBacc and the average point score at GCSE have not been adopted as school performance measures), the following patterns emerge:

England

Take up of the GCSE RS short course has fallen from 211,269 in 2012 to 68,890 in 2015 (-67.3%)

GCSE RS full course entries in England have increased from 216,182 in 2012 to 271,917 in 2015 (25.7%)

Wales

Short course GCSE RS entries have declined slightly from 19,182 in 2012 to 17,789 in 2015 (-7.3%)

RS GCSE full course entries have increased from 10,409 in 2012 to 11,839 in 2015 (13.7%)

Overall this means that compared with 2012 over 85,000 fewer pupils in England will complete key stage 4 this year having not gaining a qualification in Religious Studies (a drop of 20.3%).

This echoes research by the National Association of Teachers of RE (published in November 2013) that found that a third of community schools and over a third of academies without a religious character are still failing to meet their legal or contractual agreements to provide religious education for this key age group.

GCE 'A' LEVEL

The key outcomes of the 2015 A level results in England and Wales for Religious Education are as follows:

- 23,372 RS A level entries were recorded, an increase of 6.5% on 2014 and more than double the number in 2003 (11,132 entries were recorded in 2003)
- The number of entries for RS A level has increased by 110% since 2003, more than for any arts, humanity or social science subject (the nearest subject is Political Studies with an increase of 62%). Among all subjects, only Further Maths has seen more rapid growth than RS
- 23.9% of entries for RS A level were awarded an A or an A*
- There were 37,365 entries for RS at AS level, an increase of 3.5% on 2014 and more than double the number in 2003 (15,482 entries were recorded in 2003)

The contextual evidence shows the growing status of RS as a subject for Higher Education entry:

- The Russell Group of top universities has made it clear that RS A level provides 'suitable preparation for University generally'
- Both Oxford and Cambridge University include Religious Studies in the top level list of 'generally suitable Arts A levels'
- Applicants with Religious Studies A level were more likely to gain admission to study History at Oxford University in 2012 than those with A levels in many 'facilitating' subjects
- 20% of students admitted to Oxford University to study mathematics in 2012 had an RS A level (more than those with Economics, Physics and Business Studies A levels)
- Research from the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University on the comparative difficulty of different subjects at A level showed that RS was 'in the middle difficulty range, similar to Geography and more demanding than English'.

KENT results at GCE AS and A level 2015

SACRE would like to acknowledge the successes of Kent students and recognise the continued dedication of RE teachers across the county whose skill and hard work have supported students in their achievements.

A summary of the GCSE full and short course and of the GCE AS and A level results for 2015 (with comparisons with previous years) is in Appendix 1 (page 16).

Complaints about Religious Education

No formal complaints were received under Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding Religious Education in Kent schools.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Schools are reminded that the publication, "Gathering Together – Policy and Practice for Collective Worship" produced by the Kent SACRE in 2008, gives support as well as guidance on Collective Worship for Kent Schools. This is currently being updated, and will be linked to the KELSI web page for RE in the near future.

Determinations

The 1996 Education Act (section 394 – 1) empowers a SACRE to grant the request of a head teacher for alternative Collective Worship, where it is considered that the nature of a pupil population makes it inappropriate to be wholly or mainly Christian.

In the year of this report, the SACRE has not received any requests from schools for a determination.

Complaints Concerning Collective Worship

No complaints were received under Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding Collective Worship in Kent schools.

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Appendix 1

Examination Results 2015

Year	Exam type	Boys entries	Girls entries	Total entries	Kent % A*-G	Nat % A*-G	Kent % A*-C	Nat % A*-C
2011	GCSE Full Course	1703	2160	3863	98.4	98.4	77.7	73.2
2012	GCSE Full Course	1760	2181	3941	98.7	98.5	77.6	73.6
2013	GCSE Full Course	2128	2351	4479	98.7	98.3	74.5	72.4
2014	GCSE Full Course	2656	2991	5647	98.1	97.9	72.2	70.1
2015								
2011	GCSE Short Course	2907	3018	5925	94.8	94.9	50.9	51.8
2012	GCSE Short Course	2688	2876	5564	94.2	95.6	51.2	52.8
2013	GCSE Short Course	1796	2661	4457	95.5	95.0	59.2	53.9
2014	GCSE Short Course ****	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95.8	N/A	56.7
2015								
					Kent % A*-E	Nat % A*-E	Kent % A*-B	Nat % A*-B
2011	GCE AS	76	129	205	89.3	92	35.1	45
2012	GCE AS	80	132	212	94.2	92.5	44.6	44.8
2013	GCE AS	78	114	192	94.3	92.2	40.1	44.6
2014	GCE AS	80	118	198	78.1	86.4	23.4	27.1
2015								
2011	GCE A	192	349	541	99.6	98	59.5	56.9
2012	GCE A	182	309	491	99.8	98.6	56.4	55.9
2013	GCE A	189	302	491	99.6	98.8	54.2	55.3
2014	GCE A	184	329	513	99.8	99.8	49.3	53.4
2015								

***** Please note that GCSE Short Course data for 2015 results was not collected for Kent schools.**

Appendix 2

SACRE Development Plan 2013 - 2015

SACRE Development Plan March 2015

PRIORITY OBJECTIVE: Advise the LA on RE given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus

What?	and How?	Reporting	Resources	Legal Requirements
Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus for RE	Contacting a sample of 5% of schools encompassing a) primary b) secondary) across 4 geographical areas	Written report to SACRE which may or may not be included in the Annual Report	Consultant - 6 days	Advise the LA on RE given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus, and CW
Analysis of exam results	Compilation of local and national data	Written Draft report to SACRE Annual Report to NASACRE Annual Report to LA Education Cabinet Committee	Consultant – 2 days SACRE Chairman	Publish an Annual Report which is sent to NASACRE
Quality and provision of RE	Short Annual questionnaire to Chairs of Governors	Written summary to SACRE annually	Consultant – 4 days Admin. support	Monitor the provision and quality of RE
Provision and Compliance of Collective Worship	Short Annual questionnaire to Chairs of Governors	Written annual summary to SACRE	Consultant – included above Admin. support	Reporting to LA on CW in schools
Review of Agreed Syllabus for implementation Sept 2017	Plan for establishing Agreed Syllabus Conference Set out Timeframe for Review process	ASC and timeframe agreed by SACRE Principles for new KAS agreed by SACRE	SACRE members ASC members Consultant Budget for meetings and resources	To review locally Agreed Syllabus

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OBJECTIVE: Management of SACRE

What?	and How?	Reporting	Resources	Legal Requirements
Hold 3 meetings of SACRE p.a. plus 3 meetings of Chair's pre-briefing meeting	Booked in County Hall and Oakwood House Calendars	Agendas and Minutes Financial Budget Annual Report	Consultant – 6 days Admin. support Chair Membership	Hold meetings in public. Make Agendas and Minutes available to the public
Advise LA on RE and CW matters relating its functions	Annual Report Verbal/written reports/briefings	Annual Report Verbal/written reports/briefings	Consultant – 4 days Admin. support SACRE Chairman	Produce and Annual Report to advise LA

SACRE PRIORITIES

What	and How	Reporting	Resources
SACRE Key Stage 4 Conference	Working group Half-day conference Link to KYCC?	Evaluation and Feedback to SACRE	Consultant – 1 day Working group Admin. support Financial support
SACRE Primary Conference	Working group Half-day event May 2015 CCCU staff & students	Evaluation and Feedback to SACRE	Consultant – 1 day Working group Admin. support Financial support
Raise profile and status of RE and CW in Kent	Youth SACRE events Communications with LA and schools Attendance at local and national events SACRE members visits to schools Relationship with LA	Evaluation and feedback to SACRE SACRE Annual report	SACRE members SACRE Chairman Consultant Admin. support
Deliver high quality CPD	LA to be advised to commission CPD Collaboration with Dioceses Collaboration with CCCU and Regional Hub	Evaluation and feedback to SACRE	Consultant SACRE members SACRE Budget
Development of SMSC Guidance for schools	Working Group to review 'Shaping the Spirit' to reflect recent DfE and Ofsted guidance	Reviewed guidance to SACRE Published to schools on KELSI web page	Consultant Working Group SACRE budget

Appendix 3

KENT SACRE Membership and Attendance at meetings 2014 – 2015

GROUP 1: CHRISTIAN AND OTHER RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS REFLECTING THE PRINCIPAL RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OF THE AREA (13)

MEMBERSHIP	25/11/2014	10/3/2015	17/6/2015
Free Church (4)			
Miss J Webb – (Baptist)	YES	YES	NO
Mrs E Talbot - (Methodist)	-	-	YES
Mrs E May – (United Reformed Church)	-	YES	NO
Mrs J Wigg -(Salvation Army)	NO	NO	YES
Roman Catholic (3)			
Mrs A Donnelly	NO	YES	NO
Mrs F Hawkes	-	YES	SICK
Miss S Malone	YES	YES	NO
Buddhism (1)			
Mrs C Elapatha	NO	NO	YES
The Greek Orthodox Church (1)			
Mr M Papadopoulos	NO	YES	YES
Hinduism (1)			
Mr R Chakkedath	NO	SICK	SUB
Islam (1)			
Mrs N Younosi (<i>Group Convenor/SACRE Vice-Chair</i>)	YES	YES	YES
Judaism (1)			
Rabbi C Cohen	NO	YES	NO
Sikhism (1)			
Mrs Deepinder Kaur Gill	NO	NO	NO
Co-opted Members			
Mrs J Grant (Baha'i)	YES	YES	YES

GROUP 2: CHURCH OF ENGLAND (6)

MEMBERSHIP	25/11/2014	10/3/2015	17/6/2015
Rochester Diocesan Board of Education (3)			
Mrs V Corbyn (<i>Group Convenor</i>)	YES	YES	NO
Mr R Tyson	YES	YES	NO
Miss K Anderson	NO	maternity	-
Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education (3)			
Mrs B Naden	YES	YES	YES
Mrs N Paterson	-	YES	YES
Miss R Walters	YES	YES	YES

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GROUP 3: TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS (6) <i>(Having regard to local circumstances)</i> MEMBERSHIP	25/11/2014	10/3/2015	17/6/2015
National Union of Teachers Mr W Chambers	-	YES	YES
National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers Ms K Burke (<i>Group Convenor</i>)	YES	YES	YES
Association of Teachers and Lecturers Vacancy 1.4.2014			
Kent Association of Head Teachers Primary Mrs N Caisley	YES	YES	NO
Kent Association of Head Teachers Secondary Vacancy			
National Association of Head Teachers Kent Branch Vacancy			
Co-opted Members Miss T Kelvie Miss E Pope	NO NO	NO NO	NO YES

GROUP 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY (4)

MEMBERSHIP	19/11/2013	5/3/2014	26/6/2014
Nominees of Conservative Group (2)			
Mr S Manion (<i>SACRE Chairman and Group Convenor</i>)	YES	YES	NO
Mr M J Northey	YES	YES	YES
Nominee of the Labour Group (1)			
Mr T Maddison	YES	YES	YES
Nominee of UKIP Group (1)			
Mr J Elenor	YES	YES	YES