

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

**To:** Education Cabinet Committee – 4 December 2013

**Subject:** Decision number: 13/00091 - Proposal to expand Slade  
Primary School

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Education Cabinet Committee – 27 September 2013

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

**Electoral Division:** Castle Ward, Tonbridge: Richard Long/Christopher Smith

**Summary:** This report sets out the results of the public consultation on the proposal to commission an enlargement of Slade Primary from 1.5FE to 2FE for September 2014.

*Recommendation(s):*

**The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the decision to:**

- (i) Issue a public notice to expand Slade Primary School, The Slade, Tonbridge by 15 places from 1.5 FE to 2FE.

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

- (ii) Expand the school
- (iii) Allocate £1.5 million from the Education. Learning and Skills Capital Budget.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Tonbridge and Malling section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 has identified a significant pressure in Reception year places. The planning area of Tonbridge South is forecasted to have a deficit of up to 26 Reception year places in September 2014 and 2015.

1.2 It is proposed to enlarge Slade Primary School by 15 reception year places, taking the published admissions number (PAN) from 45 to 60 (2 Forms of Entry) for the September 2014 intake. Successive Reception Year intake will offer 60 places each year and the school will eventually have a total capacity of 420 pupils.

- 1.3 On 27 September 2013 Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform that a consultation takes place on the proposal to expand Slade Primary School.
- 1.4 This report sets out the results of the public consultation, which took place between 14 October and 29 November 2013. A public meeting was held on 4 November 2013.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 It is proposed to enlarge Slade Primary School by 15 places taking the PAN to 60 (2FE) for the September 2014 intake and eventually a total capacity of 420 places.

- a. The enlargement of the school requires the provision of 5 additional classrooms, as well as ancillary facilities. A feasibility study has been completed. The total cost is estimated to be in the region of £1.5 million of which £0.9 million will be funded from the Targeted Basic Need allocation from the DfE made in August 2013 and the remainder from the Basic Need Budget, which includes the annual capital allocation for Basic Need from the DfE. The costs of the project are estimates and these may increase as the project is developed. If the cost of the project is greater than 10% the Cabinet Member will be required to take a further decision to allocate the additional funding.

- b. Revenue - The school will receive increased funding through the Delegated Budget on a 'per pupil' basis.

- c. Human – Slade Primary School will appoint additional teachers, as the school size increases and the need arises.

## **3. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework**

- 3.1 These proposals will help to secure our ambition “to ensure every child will go to a good school where they make good progress and can have fair access to school places” as set out in ‘Bold Steps for Kent’.
- 3.2 The ‘Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2013-18’ has identified the demand for up to 26 Reception Year places within the planning group of Tonbridge South.

## **4. Consultation Outcomes**

- 4.1 At the time of writing, a total of 24 written responses were received: 13 respondents supporting the proposal; 10 objecting to the proposal and 1 respondent undecided.
- 4.2 A summary of the comments received at the time of writing is provided at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 A summary of the views and comments given at the public consultation meeting is attached at Appendix 2.

## **5. Views**

### **5.1 The view of the Local Members:**

Having attended the recent public meeting and heard the School's proposals, Local Member Christopher Smith is pleased to support the proposed expansion of the Slade Primary school to a 2 form entry with the increase of pupils rising from 315 to 420 places. Local Member for Tonbridge, Richard Long, having been consulted, also supports this view.

### **5.2. The view of the Headteacher and Governing Body:**

The Headteacher and the Governing Body are supportive of the sustainable long term solution that has been proposed by KCC to enable Slade to move from one and half form entry to two form entry. This proposal includes extra class room provision and other spaces such as a small hall that will ensure the school's high standards are maintained.

### **5.3. The view of the Area Education Officer:**

The Area Education Officer for West Kent fully supports this proposal and, having considered other commissioning options, is of the belief that this enlargement is not only necessary, but the most cost-effective and sustainable solution to increase demand in the area. All other schools in the planning area were considered.

Slade Primary is a popular and inclusive school judged as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and is regularly oversubscribed. The school's location in Tonbridge South means it is ideally placed to meet the forecasted demand for primary school places.

## **6. Proposal**

6.1 The proposed expansion of Slade Primary School will increase the value of KCC's property portfolio by adding value to the school buildings.

6.2 The proposed expansion of Slade Primary School is subject to KCC statutory decision making process and planning.

6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the consultation. To date no comments have been received and no changes are required to the Equality Impact Assessment.

## **7. Delegation to Officers**

7.1 The Officer Scheme of Delegation; under Appendix 2 part 4 of the Council's Constitution, provides a clear and appropriate link between this decision and the actions needed to implement it. For information it is envisaged, if the proposal goes ahead, that the Director of Property & Infrastructure Support will sign contracts on behalf of the County Council.

## **8. Conclusions**

- 8.1 Forecasts for the planning area of Tonbridge South indicate an increasing demand for primary school places. This enlargement will add an additional 15 Reception Year places to the capacity per year, in line with priorities 3, 4 and 9 of 'Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework' and the 'Commissioning Plan for Education – Kent' (2013 – 2018).

## 9. Recommendation(s)

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

- (i) Issue a public notice to expand Slade Primary School, The Slade, Tonbridge by 15 places from 1.5 FE to 2FE.

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

- (ii) Expand the school
- (iii) Allocate £1.5 million from Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget.

## 10. Background Documents

10.1 Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/your\\_council/priorities\\_policies\\_and\\_plans/priorities\\_and\\_plans/bold\\_steps\\_for\\_kent.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/priorities_policies_and_plans/priorities_and_plans/bold_steps_for_kent.aspx)

10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-2018

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s43253/ItemD3KentEducationCommissioningPlan20132018final.pdf>

10.3 Education Cabinet Committee report– 27 September 2013 – Primary Commissioning in Tonbridge & Malling District.

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s40893/Item%20C1a%20Primary%20Commissioning%20Tun%20Wells.pdf>

10.4 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment

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

## 11. Contact details

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**The proposed expansion of Slade Primary School to increase the PAN from 45 to 60 places**

**Summary of written responses at the time of writing**

Consultation documents (hard copies) distributed: 500  
Responses received: 24

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers	4	7	1	12
Governors	1			1
Members of Staff				
Interested Parties	8	3		11
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>

**In support of the proposal**

- Slade is a fantastic school thanks to the amazing staff and all the families which are part of it.
- Slade is the only primary school in central Tonbridge and is hugely oversubscribed. This is a step in the right direction. As more and more houses and apartments are being built in the centre of the town I can only see the demand increasing.
- Slade is an excellent and popular school and any chance to give more children access to a good quality education should be welcomed.
- It is obviously desirable to see expansion plans of a Primary School and we find it encouraging that consideration is being given to the demographic.
- It would be to the benefit of residents in Hildenborough if Slade Primary School should expand their places to 420 places.
- This proposal would enable children to attend a local school and therefore providing health and environmental benefits as children can walk to school.
- Attending a local school contributes to a sense of feeling part of a local community, by allowing children to make local friends.
- Attending a local school will reduce the need to travel across town during peak times.

**Against the proposal**

- Communal areas of the school such as the playground, library, IT suite and school hall are already overcrowded.
- Slade has the benefit of having the whole school together in one hall, concerned that the proposal will mean that the school will be separated.
- The community will suffer if the proposal is progressed.
- Concerns that shortcuts are being taken at the detriment of this wonderful school.
- Concern about use of mobile classrooms and loss of green space.

- Concern that larger Reception classes will not allow for extra attention that younger children need when they start their school career.
- There is availability of reception places at other local primaries – Long Mead could pick up additional demand.
- The argument that Slade provides good quality education is not a strong one. In 2011 Long Mead achieved 92% level 4+ in Maths and English as opposed to 82% at Slade. In 2012, the difference was only 2 points despite the significantly higher percentage of FSM and Special Needs.
- Concerned that this proposal will affect children with special needs, a small class size is a deciding factor.
- Would prefer for a new school to be built instead of the expansion of Slade Primary School.
- Suggested the expansion of St Stephen's (Tonbridge) Primary School is preferable compared to the expansion of Slade Primary School

**Proposal to expand Slade Primary School, Tonbridge  
Public Consultation Meeting 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013**

<b>Panel</b>	<b>Leyland Ridings (Chair)</b>	<b>MEM, Chairman of the ECC and Standards Committee</b>
	<b>Jared Nehra</b>	<b>Area Education Officer (West Kent)</b>
	<b>Michelle Hamilton</b>	<b>Area Schools Organisation Officer (West Kent)</b>
	<b>Deborah Ledniczky</b>	<b>Public Meeting Recorder</b>
	<b>Mrs Vivienne Resch</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>
	<b>Mr Brett Egan</b>	<b>Head of Governors</b>

### **Introduction**

Cllr Ridings welcomed parents, staff and members of the public to the meeting and introduced the supporting officers and principal speakers. Cllr Ridings explained that the meeting will be recorded and a transcript of the meeting will be presented to the KCC Education Cabinet Committee meeting (of which he explained he is the Chairman) and will be considered at any future meeting if the local authority is looking at whether to go ahead with this proposal.

### **Purpose of the Meeting**

- To explain the proposal to enlarge Slade Primary School from 315 places to 420 places
- To give members of the public an opportunity to ask questions and comment
- To listen to views and opinions

### **Proposal**

A short presentation outlining the background to the proposal was given.

In September 2014 reception year deficit is projected to be 23 places rising to 26 places in September 2015. Not taking into account the pupil numbers arising from anticipated housing developments, the medium and long term forecasts indicate that the high number of primary age children will continue.

Slade Primary School is a popular and successful school; ideally placed to accommodate the forecasted increase in demand for primary school places. It is therefore proposed to enlarge Slade Primary School to a two forms of entry by admitting 60 pupils to Reception Year each year from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014. To facilitate this expansion KCC is in discussion to acquire the Deacon House site which is situated adjacent to the school site.

No final decision will be taken until the consultation process has finished. The deadline for the response forms is the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

### **Statement from the Head teacher of Slade Primary School, Mrs Vivienne Resch**

The proposed expansion is seen as a positive direction for the school and I do not feel that it will affect its ethos, caring environment or quality of education at the school. Slade has been through change before, going from a boy's school to a

mixed school and in the 1970's expanding to a one and a half form entry, and throughout this time Slade has remained a wonderful school. We are looking very carefully at the proposal to make sure that this does not change and that the property side of the proposal can still happen. There are a lot of advantages and benefits for the school becoming a two form entry. Although we are very successfully in running a school with one and a half form entry and having the mixed aged classes, and other schools do visit to see how we do that, mixed stage classes do take a great deal and more time and effort with school organisation, curriculum and tracking pupil progress than a two form entry would and the majority of the teachers agree and are in favour of the expansion. The school understands that people will naturally be concerned about the proposal and we would want to reassure you that we would be looking to make sure everything remains the same and that the heart of the school which comes from you, the children and the staff will not change and I feel it would be marvellous to give more children the benefit of the Slade education.

**Statement from the Chair of Governors, Mr Brett Egan**

The governing body believes that this is a unique opportunity that has the potential to benefit the long term education of the children at Slade School. The School and the Governing Body are working closely with the AEO and his team on the proposals to ensure it meets our high standards. The Governing Body supports a sustainable long term solution to the deficit in Tonbridge South. We recognise that the proposal could have a negative impact, and as such, we are already in contact with other schools that have been through this process to learn from them. The School and the Governing Body are already planning to ensure that this opportunity has no negative impact on the learning of our current students. Then Governing Body and the School believe that the pace of change i.e. an extra fifteen (15) students per year from September 2014 is very manageable. This has been achieved through robust project management and governance arrangements and making sure that we have had access to the right people with the right skills and knowledge.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p><b>Lee Davies - Parent</b> I have a second child who will hopefully be coming to the school in September 2014 and will be a week over 4 years old. One of the things we liked about this school was that the smaller class of fifteen really helped the very young four year olds slowly get up to standard for their second year and the worry is that starting in a class of thirty pupils we are going to lose that dedication of looking after the younger children and I would like to know how Slade is going to manage that?</p>	<p><b>Head Teacher, Mrs Vivienne Resch</b> I can understand your point but the fact that we have had that small class size at Slade all these years has been a luxury and that would not normally be provided in a state school. Although we will not be able to provide a class of 15 or 18 children, it would be two classes of 30, we would be looking to meet the needs of the children and give them the provision that they need for them to flourish. As always, we hold the children at the heart of what we are doing and planning for them.</p>
<p><b>Daphne Millen - Parent</b> I would like more concrete detail about the extra provision in terms of accommodation because I think the accommodation currently at Slade is incredibly poor compared to some of the other schools and also how much extra</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> Accommodation is at an early stage of feasibility in terms of the proposal to use the Deacon House site. The next stage, subject to agreement, will be to move into detail design and planning. At this stage precise</p>

<p>staff would be coming to the school to support the extra children i.e. is it one extra teacher, one extra teaching assistant?</p>	<p>details are not available. We will work very closely with the school to ensure that the additional accommodation is sufficient as permanent accommodation for the additional pupils that will be coming to the school, that it fits well with the current school building and is beneficial in terms of the overall provision that the school has available rather than detracting from it. From the early feasibility work that we have seen we are confident that that will be the case, and I think the school would also support that, although we are at a very early stage in terms of that proposal.</p> <p><b>Mrs Vivienne Resch, Head Teacher</b> Staffing - the expansion to 420 pupils will happen gradually. As the reception children come through and the class sizes expand then the need for extra staffing will occur. We already have two reception teachers but we would need a full time teaching assistant rather than a part time teaching assistant that we currently have. As the classes build in number we would employ new staff. The school will have the capacity to induct new people at the school to the quality that we want and it would be a gradual process which I believe is a good thing</p>
<p><b>Rebecca Lobel – Parent</b> In terms of the Deacon House site do the council currently own that?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> KCC are currently in discussions with the acquisition of the site</p>
<p><b>Tracy Arnold – Parent</b></p> <p>(i) What happens if you don't get Deacon House?</p> <p>(ii) Will you be acquiring the site before the end of the consultation process? i.e. will you know before the final decision is made whether you own it or not?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b></p> <p>(i) If that is the case then we will work closely with the school to review the proposal but it is anticipated that it will be possible to acquire Deacon House</p> <p>(ii) Unable to provide the exact timings. Negotiations are on-going but we would know by the time we get into the detailed design planning and the before the report goes before the ECC.</p>
<p><b>Ms West - Parent</b> I work in building and know how long it often takes to develop a new project starting from planning so I was very surprised that this increase is going to start or could start in September 2014 and that we still haven't seen</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> Acknowledged that the time scales are tight but KCC are confident that it will be possible to complete the project by September 2014 and that this is the timescale that KCC are working on. No design detail has been seen</p>

<p>any details about the increase in the facilities or planning permissions, or, as we just heard, we don't know if this idea is going to happen because you are trying to deal with that decision. How can you reassure us that we will not have any problem with the site and that all this is going to happen? I would like to have more information because I feel we have not had enough information about what you are doing about the problem. I think we can understand what the school can do and it is lovely to hear that it could be a good thing for the school and we are happy that this school will serve more people because that is a great thing but I would like more information and more detail about what your input is in this</p>	<p>because that relates to the planning consultation process which is a separate process. This is the education consultation that is principally about the impact on the school and making sure that that is consulted upon. Detailed plans will be published; those will be consulted on at the planning process and at that stage there will be the opportunity to comment on the specific proposals that have been set out. Those would not normally be available at an educational consultation such as this.</p>
<p><b>Sue Kirk - Parent and visiting teacher</b> The room we are currently sitting in at the moment is the school hall and it is quite a squash to get the whole school into it. With the numbers increasing by an extra 105 pupils I cannot see how it would be possible to fit the whole school into one room on this site. What consideration has been made for that?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> As part of the feasibility we will look at all the facilities that are available to the school and make sure that they are in line with the building regulations. It may be that it is not possible to extend the hall and that it is not possible to accommodate all the pupils within the hall at one time; this is not uncommon for a two form entry primary school. I can't say at this moment that this is the case because, as I have said, we are at an early stage.</p>
<p><b>Joanna Russell – Parent, prospective parent and governor</b> Will KCC be providing any support or funding to help the school through the development process? This is my area of expertise and I understand the pressures and the amount of time it can take away from the senior management team, and I would be quite concerned if that was drawing from the pupils time and attention with Mrs Resch and the other teachers, so would KCC put in place any project management or funding to ensure that runs smoothly and properly?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> The County Council would also recognise that it is a challenge for the management of the school to go through the expansion process and we are keen to support schools as they go through that process as part of that i.e. looking to set up work-shops, sharing that process with schools that are going through a significant expansion or are due to go through that process. Something that has been set up recently with the Special Schools who have found it very useful and we are now looking to do the same for mainstream schools. In terms of funding; unfortunately I am not aware that there is funding available for that.</p>
<p><b>George Graham – Parent</b> Whilst I accept that this is an Education consultation rather than a planning one I feel that the facilities are so inherently bound to the desirability of the expansion that it is hard to be able to separate the expansion without a lot more information about proposals in terms of the infrastructure. Bearing in mind that this</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> The proposal is to utilise the Deacon House site and building and to enable the provision available within that budget to go ahead.</p>

<p>proposal is supposed to happen in 2014 there must be some concrete plans about how to accommodate the first expanded class and how, what are those plans?</p> <p>Before Sept 2014?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><b>Member of the public</b>          People are quite worried that the proposed date of 2014 is not that realistic. What assurance are we going to get to assure us that there will not be a portacabin put up to help the expansion because it is not ready and in five or ten years time it is still being used while we wait for Deacon House?          Also, what is being done about the other things in the school that need updating such as the music room, is this all going to be updated together or are we just going to have a nice new room for the Reception Year and the other children are still in the old class rooms?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b>          Unfortunately it is unlikely that we would have the resource to do a full school refurbishment of the existing school building.</p> <p>In terms of assurances we would work very closely with the Governing Body in providing a solution that meets the needs of the school and is to the benefit of the pupils. We would not want to see temporary arrangements for the long term; we would want to see a permanent proposal.</p>
<p><b>Parent</b>          Where are all the children going to eat and what about all the other things that take place that with the increase in pupil numbers will be harder to organise such as P.E. I fear that really what the Council maybe after is the field. Are there parallel consultations to build a new primary school to accommodate the extra places that will be needed with the anticipated new housing developments that are not even part of this process or will it be a case of the successful schools accommodating the demand for places that we know will be needed?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b>          In terms of growth there are three new primary schools proposed for Tonbridge &amp; Malling district which are due to open in September 2015 which are linked to housing developments in Kings Hill, Leybourne Chase and Holborough Lakes. These are some distance away from Tonbridge South and perhaps are not going to directly meet the needs within this area. We will need some additional provision and this expansion is a key part of that, increasing this school to two forms of entry, and we are also considering other proposals as well.</p>
<p><b>Member of the Public</b>          What are you going to say to the dwellers of the Halford site, which I presume families would have moved into by 2014 or would you be saying to Slade that you have to take an extra 18 or 20 because, if all these things that are going to come on stream by that date and the flats will be ready and lived in, what will you say to people applying for places in this area? Will you be asking Slade to take an extra five or ten children or are we getting a guarantee we are taking in an extra fifteen in September?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b>          Our intention is to ensure we have enough places for 2014. We cannot say with absolute certainty what the figures from the anticipated housing development will be and that is why those figures are excluded from the slide. We need to be certain before we use public money and build, that the housing developments are coming forward. This is an on-going process and we will work closely with the Borough Council to ensure that there are sufficient school places and our statutory duty is fulfilled in Tonbridge.</p> <p>The slides set out the picture for Tonbridge South and we need to ensure that we have a</p>

	strategic response to the numbers we are facing.
<p><b>John Cope – Parent</b> September 2014 shortfall of 23, 2015 shortfall 26, 15 places are being added at Slade, what will happen to the shortfall of places that still exists?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> There is a link between Tonbridge South, Tonbridge North and Hildenborough within the travel to school distance and some surplus places elsewhere that could accommodate those pupils. We are also looking at other proposals in terms of temporary expansion and there are other options that we can look at.</p>
<p><b>Ian Russell - Parent</b> It appears that the expansion does not hinge on the purchase of land and that we are being asked for a yes/no decision before knowing whether there is a plan B which may mean that there is some unforeseen compromise involved. If we cannot be utterly sure about the adjacent site can you say if there is a plan B, and if there is are we able to know about that before the 29<sup>th</sup> because not knowing is slightly concerning, and will we know if it has been possible to purchase the site before the closing date on the 29<sup>th</sup> or is that something that cannot be confirmed?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> We do not have a plan B. The proposal is to expand into the Deacon House Site. KCC are in advanced discussions regarding the acquisition of the Deacon House site. We are hopeful that that will proceed but I cannot say for certain that we will be in a situation to say by the 29<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Emma Stokes - Parent</b> Regarding Mrs Resch's points about the ethos and culture of school, all the children know each other and part of that is due to the mixed year class system that gives the school the family feel. My concern is that whilst I understand the reasons for the teachers being in favour of a two form entry, it will lose the family feel and the culture we are proud ourselves on.</p>	<p><b>Mrs Resch - Head Teacher</b> The feedback from the other headteachers that I have spoken to about this is that a two form entry is good size and works well and that you don't lose that family feel but that three forms of entry is difficult.</p>
<p><b>Sue Kirk – Parent and visiting teacher</b> Would there be consideration given to the two form entry but keeping mixed classes because I feel that the good behaviour levels and low level of bullying in the playground stems from the mixed year classes and that is why I am a keen supporter of it.</p>	<p><b>Mrs Resch - Head Teacher</b> Staff and organisation is much easier with single age classes but we can think about that although I cannot see that the staff would be in favour. There are things that we can do such as peer mentoring and peer teaching, children of mixed years are taught together i.e. paired reading and golden time activities where older children work with younger. We could keep re-mixing the classes each year to keep that fresh so the children don't stay in the same class through the seven years. I think that is healthy and we would look to do that so that the children get to know the other</p>

	children in other classes.
<p><b>Janine Cole</b> Mixed year groups been a positive from a social point of view and the peer mentoring is beneficial to the younger children. With regard to the current reception group how will you cope with the transition of the youngest 15?</p>	<p><b>Mrs Resch - Head Teacher</b> In Yr 1 there would be two classes of Yr R. We would still continue, still have I3, I4, etc. Mrs Hill - Teacher It would stay the same next year, my class would still go into I4 next year it would be the following year that two reception classes would move up into 2 Yr 1 classes. Mrs Resch - Head Teacher You would end up with two small groups in year 2 that works its way through quite nicely.</p> <p>We would have higher staff costs than other years because we would have a smaller class in reception</p>
<p><b>Sue Kirk – parent and visiting teacher</b> What provision is there in the new plan for further parking places for permanent members of staff?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> We are not at the detail design phase yet but I would anticipate that there would be additional staff parking as part of the proposal.</p>
<p><b>Joanna – Parent and school governor</b> The planning and detail stage is important. Once Deacon House is purchased will KCC work with the school and governing body to make sure provision within Deacon House fits the needs of the children and that the school is not left with costly things to put right.</p> <p>What will happen to I1, where will they go? Reception classes are close together and play together and the plan would be to cascade the older children up to the new building.</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> The precise details are not available yet but we would be looking to provide permanent class rooms within the Deacon House site. The configuration of classes will be designed to meet the needs of the children and we will work very closely with the school and the governing body in looking at the most effective options available.</p>
<p><b>Tracey Arnold - Parent</b> Has there been any consideration on traffic and picking up at pick up times, as a local resident you cannot move at those times</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> The planning process will look at all those issues. Highways will look at travel plans and parking issues.</p>
<p><b>Parent</b> The proposal does not say anything about school travel plan</p>	<p><b>Mrs Resch - Head Teacher</b> We do have two walking busses and we are currently looking at the possibility of developing that further. As a school we are lucky to be able to park at the Castle car park. A lot of schools have more issues than we have with residents having drive ways blocked, something that is not such an issue here.</p>
<p><b>Aaron Hill - Parent</b> If we are going through this public consultation</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> The proposal is to increase the PAN to 60.</p>

<p>and you still have to decide if you are going forward with Deacon House then you will then have to go through the planning process. If as a parent applying for 2014 is it going to be 45 places or 60 and will it be concluded by time the Cabinet meet in January 2014?</p>	<p>There will be 45 places currently on offer subject to the proposal going through and that being agreed, there will be 60 places available.</p>
<p><b>Aaron Hill - Parent</b> When the offer of places is sent out will it say 45 or 60?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> Subject to the proposal going through it will be increasing to 60 in September 2014.</p>
<p><b>Emma Stokes – Parent</b></p> <p>(i) There has been an historic shortage of places in Tonbridge and many new housing developments over the years. Why has it taken this long and being rushed through this year, why was it not pre-empted?</p> <p>(ii) I can appreciate why Slade is an optimal school to expand, being situated in the centre of Tonbridge and having an outstanding Ofsted. However, there are other schools in Tonbridge that have been reduced from a two form intake to a one form intake in recent years that have the</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> It is a tight time scale but we think the proposal is achievable for September 2014. Clearly we do need to work closely with Borough Council in terms of what the housing projected numbers may be. There has been an increase in the projection figures; they are higher than last year. We are expecting there to be a greater deficit than previously forecast. We will continue to work closely with the Borough Council.</p> <p><b>Leyland Ridings – MEM, Chairman of the ECC and Standards Committee</b> We also try and make an annual assessment of the numbers that are coming through the projected year groups several years ahead because we need to look at the longer picture. When we looked at the figures last year we wanted to make sure that any of the decisions we made were going to be capable of being either a permanent improvement, decrease, increase or whatever they may be. We didn't have the number of permanent solutions that were needed so there was a lot of temporary expansion from last year that we now need to ensure we have proper permanent expansion processes for. Last year we knew we would have a problem going forward but we didn't have a solution for it but now we have a permanent solution this is why we are carrying it out this year.</p> <p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> In terms of the forecasting process that falls in the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education provision for 2013/2018 and as part of that commissioning process we need to look at capacity and places in the area and where there is a deficit in the Tonbridge South area we need to respond to that deficit. We look at</p>

<p>capacity in situ to expand and wondered if they were being considered as well.</p>	<p>all the provisions/options available and identify the proposal to take forward. Slade is ideally placed to expand and is in line with KCC policy to expand good or outstanding schools and on that basis we identified Slade as being perfect for expansion.</p>
<p><b>Ollie Sylge – Parent</b></p> <p>(i) Deacon House site is critical, who owns the site and if you cannot obtain it are you going to use your purchasing powers to obtain it?</p> <p>(ii) If you can't are you able to use compulsory purchase orders to purchase the property?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b></p> <p>We are in advanced discussions about acquiring that property and hope to conclude shortly.</p> <p>That is not something that we have considered to date.</p>
<p><b>Louise Davenport - Parent</b></p> <p>Will the expansion included any increase in the breakfast club or the after school club or after school provision in the area which is already very difficult to get.</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b></p> <p>At the moment I cannot say if there will be an opportunity to increase that provision. A key part of the proposal is to allow additional pupils to be admitted to school. However, this maybe an option for the school around the configuration of the additional provision.</p>
<p><b>Parent</b></p> <p>Any option to delay 2015 or is it saying 2014 with have go ahead even if Deacon House is not ready you will have to start in 2014 and make provision elsewhere?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b></p> <p>There is a need to provide for additional provision for September 2014. We are hopeful that is going to be achievable subject to the agreement of this proposal.</p>
<p><b>Parent</b></p> <p>(i) Is it the intention of refurbishing Deacon House or knock it down and make it fit for purpose?</p> <p>(ii) If that is the case then that is a shame because if we are saying a refurbishment then it is a chance wasted. If we had more time we could design something that is along the lines with what the school need. Is there not an option to create those places for 2014 elsewhere and have a proper think, timescale for Slade.</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b></p> <p>We are currently at the early feasibility stage. When we move into the detailed design stage that will give us an idea about how best to proceed. The most likely option will be to refurbish and revamp; converting the building to regulatory standards.</p> <p>We feel the proposal does meet the needs of the school. We are at the early stage in terms of feasibility and from the discussions we have had with the school we do believe that the school will work effectively at two forms of entry and it is appropriate and achievable to bring forward for 2014. In terms of identifying appropriate options, we need to look at a range of different factors such as popular and successful school and location and the need for KCC to deliver the most cost effective proposal that; meets the needs of pupils; is affordable and deliverable in that time frame.</p>

<p><b>John Cope - Parent</b> I can see how this expansion will benefit teaching staff, KCC, children who fall into this short fall but what about the pupils who are currently at school and sibling of children already here?</p>	<p><b>Mrs Resch - Head Teacher</b> Nothing will change; we will sustain what we already have here.</p> <p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> The design for the expansion should be quite clear and benefit children at the school. As already stated; feasibility is in the early stage and I cannot at this stage promise what will be the outcome of that.</p>
<p><b>Sue</b> Does Deacon House have any history of flooding?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> I am not in a position to say. However, as part of the process any constraints will be looked at in the surveys and ground work.</p> <p><b>Mrs Resch - Head Teacher</b> I cannot say for certain. The ground floor is very high, higher than the mobile class and that flooded up to the first step so do not think so.</p>
<p><b>Teacher and parent</b> I had one child start in a class of 15 and one in a class of 30. Both had a good start. I do not think the children will be disadvantaged</p>	
<p><b>Parent</b> Are you likely to come back about the plans for Deacon House before going to the Cabinet Members on the 29th?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> Detailed plans are not available at the moment. That is a separate process.</p>
<p><b>Parent</b> When will you come back to us about the planning side?</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> Detailed planning will follow and I will ensure that the school have site of the plans when they are available which will be within a 3 month period.</p>
<p><b>Parent</b> This is a good school and the children are happy. There appears to be ifs and buts but no plan 'B'. What happens is the option to acquire Deacon House fails, is there any chance of extending the time scale as I feel we have not been given much detail.</p> <p>I feel we need some context about the proposal for the school, the children and the area and feel your answer is shady. What happens after the process or is it a done deal? What other opinions are there? Has to happen this year? Not much detail to discuss.</p>	<p><b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> I understand your concern. What is being consulted on is the principal to expand and the approach.</p> <p>I do not agree that the process is a done deal. This is a full open transparent process that is recorded and noted and views will be listened to by the Education Cabinet Committee. The proposal is to use the Deacon House site to expand and benefit the school. The Head teacher and governing body are happy with what they have heard and feel that the</p>

	expansion will be beneficial to the school, and a key part to take forward and make sure that the proposal meets the needs of the pupils. I am not able to give exact details about the design details at this stage.
<b>Tracy</b> What will happen if you do not get Deacon House, will the expansion be cancelled?	<b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> I cannot say one way or the other. Currently we are in the process of acquiring Deacon House and shortly will be able to advise you of the outcome. There is no plan B, the proposal is to proceed with the plan to acquire Deacon House.
<b>Question to Head teacher</b> Are there any plans to give more information about the proposal because by being here tonight we will need to come to some type of conclusion? How are you addressing that?	<b>Mrs Resch - Head Teacher</b> The leaflets have been distributed to all the parents setting out the proposal for the expansion and inviting them to give their views. As you are aware there is not a lot of detail available.
<b>DH</b> The building is a significant part of the expansion but we have not heard: if there will be parking available, there has been no detail of the simple things, no photographs of what the expansion will look like, how many additional classes or proposed level of entry. We need more detail. I am not impressed. The timing of the consultation, first day back after half term, is poor and there are parents that would have forgotten that this was taking place.	<b>Jared Nehra, AEO for WK</b> This evening's consultation was about the Education process. The slides from the power point presentation will be made available. The acquisition of Deacon House is at an early stage but we would anticipate that the proposal is that the site will have at least four classes and there will be additional parking provided for staff.

Leyland Ridings thanked everyone for their views and comments. He told the room that he will make sure the school and parents are kept informed about the process.

Cllr Ridings concluded that he felt the general feeling had been fairly positive about the expansion.

Feed back to Cllr Ridings' comment:

- Do not feel that there was enough information about the plan to make an informed decision
- Presentation was limited
- No information about the proposed accommodation
- No consideration given to cancelling the process until the acquisition of Deacon House is known and the plans for the expansion are completed
- Clarification sought over the number of classrooms

Cllr Ridings explained that the consultation had delivered all the information that is available at this stage of the process.

JN read out the timescales for the consultation process as detailed on the presentation and reiterated that no final decision will be made until the consultation process has concluded. He asked that people do complete a response form and return it before the closing date for public comment which is the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

The meeting was informed that following the consultation the Cabinet Member will decide whether to continue with the proposal. If so, KCC will publish a Public Notice which will run for 6 weeks. The Cabinet Member then considers all the responses made and decides whether to proceed with the proposal to.

Cllr Ridings thanked everyone for coming along and for their views and questions.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Approximately 30 people attended the meeting.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,  
Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

**13/00091**

For publication

**Subject: Proposal to expand Slade Primary School**

Decision:

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

- (i) Issue a public notice to expand Slade Primary School, The Slade, Tonbridge by 15 places from 1.5 FE to 2FE.

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

- (ii) Expand the school
- (iii) Allocate £1.5 million from the Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget.

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 expand the school to allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

Reason(s) for decision:

The Tonbridge & Malling section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 has identified a need for up to 26 additional Reception Year places within the planning group of Tonbridge South.

The expansion of Slade Primary School, The Slade, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HR will help to address these pressures and adheres to the principles of our Commissioning Plan as it increases capacity at an outstanding, popular school. In reaching this decision I have taken into account:

- the views expressed by those attending the public consultation meeting on 4 November 2013, and those put in writing in response to the consultation;
- the views of the District and Parish Councils, the local County Councillor; Governing Body of the school, the Staff and Pupils;
- the Equalities Impact Assessment and comments received regarding this; and
- the views of the Education Cabinet Committee which are set out below

**Financial Implications:**

It is proposed to enlarge Slade Primary School by 15 places taking the PAN to 60 (2FE) for the September 2014 intake and eventually a total capacity of 420 places.

- a. Capital - The enlargement of the school requires the provision of 5 additional classrooms, as well as ancillary facilities. A feasibility study has been completed. The total cost is estimated to be in the region of £1.5 million of which £0.9 million will be funded from Targeted Basic Need and the remainder from the Basic Need Budget. The costs of the project are estimates and these may increase as the project is developed. If the cost of the project is greater than 10% the Cabinet

Member will be required to take a further decision to allocate the additional funding.

- b. Revenue - The school will receive increased funding through the Delegated Budget on a 'per pupil' basis.
- c. Human – Slade Primary School will appoint additional teachers, as the school size increases and the need arises.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

**27 September 2012**

The Committee endorsed the Kent Commissioning Plan, which identified a need for additional places in the planning group of Tonbridge South and recommended to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform that a consultation takes place on the proposal to expand Slade Primary School, The Slade, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HR

**4 December 2013**

To be added after Committee meeting

Any alternatives considered:

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 explored all options and the expansion of this school was deemed the suitable option.

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

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**Signed**

**Date**