

From: Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services

To: Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee,
21 January 2016

Subject: Proposed changes to South Borough Primary School
(Maidstone)

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Education Cabinet Committee – 14 October 2014;
15 December 2015;

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Divisions: Maidstone Central

Summary: This report sets out the proposed changes to South Borough Primary School, Stagshaw Road, Maidstone.

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

- (i) Allocate £2.6 million from the Basic Needs budget to fund the permanent expansion of the school to two forms of entry.
- (ii) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- (iii) 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.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As the strategic commissioner of school provision, the Local Authority has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for the residents of Kent as set out in Kent's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2016-20.
- 1.2 The forecasts for Maidstone indicate a continued growth in demand for Reception year places with a deficit of places forecast for seven of the 12 planning groups. The growth is predominantly from incremental increases in the birth rate and significant new housing across the Borough.
- 1.3 Maidstone Central and South forecasts indicate sustained population growth. To address this we commissioned a bulge of 30 additional Reception Year places at South Borough Primary School for September 2015. At the Local Authority's request the Swale Academies Trust has agreed that a consultation should be carried out on permanent expansion of South Borough Primary School.

- 1.4 South Borough Primary School is currently a 1 Form Entry (FE) school in Maidstone. It became part of the Swale Academies Trust on 1st February 2015. The School collaborates with other Trust schools, namely Westlands Primary School and Regis Manor Primary School to ensure best practice is shared.
- 1.5 The process to increase the physical capacity of South Borough Primary School is set out in accordance with Department for Education guidance for Academy Trusts "Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy". Academy Trusts are required to seek approval from the Secretary of State through the Education Funding Agency and carry out a consultation with Stakeholders. The Secretary of State will require assurances that consultation has taken place and responses are taken into account, funding has been secured and any financial arrangements are sound.
- 1.6 Following the consultation, the Academy Trust will consider all the views expressed by stakeholders and then make a decision on how to proceed. If the Academy Trust agrees to proceed with the proposal, then approval will be sought from the Secretary of State.
- 1.7 The Local Authority will undertake a planning application process for the new classrooms and facilities will include consideration of issues arising out of the physical expansion of the school such as parking and the impact on traffic. A pre-planning consultation meeting has been scheduled for 28 January 2016.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 Swale Academies Trust and KCC are proposing to enlarge South Borough Primary School by 1FE taking the published admissions number (PAN) from 30 to 60 (2FE) for the September 2016 intake and eventually a total capacity of 420 places.
 - a. Capital
 - (i) It is proposed that the school are provided with a new six classroom block with associated facilities including toilets and storage. In addition, necessary infrastructure amendments, including car parking layout will be incorporated to enable the school to expand by one form of entry. A feasibility study has been completed and the total cost is estimated to be in the region of £2,600,000. Appropriate funding has been identified as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan. 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.
 - (ii) The County Council seeks funding from new housing developments towards capital projects where the additional pupils generated by those developments cannot be accommodated within surplus capacity. Developments in the South and South East of Maidstone will be requested to contribute to the cost of this project. There are currently two planning applications which, if consented by Maidstone Borough Council, are expected to provide approximately £370,000. Further planning applications are expected in the area which are also likely to provide funding to the project.

(iii) A £2,500 contribution towards the setup costs of each class will be provided.

b. Revenue

(iv) Academies are funded on lagged pupil numbers by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) through the General Accounting Grant (GAG). The means that any increase in Year R pupil numbers from September will not be funded until the following the September.

(v) To address the delay in funding for Year R pupils, Growth funding will be allocated to the academy in compliance with the LAs growth policy. For the first three years the academy will receive re-org funding and for the remaining four years of the expansion they will receive rising roll funding. Funding will be allocated only for the new annual Year R intake, for the first three years it will be on a guaranteed number of 30 and for the remaining 4 years it will be on the actual increase in numbers in excess of 30. In both instances it will be funded at the rate of £2,740 per pupil.

(vi) A £6,000 contribution towards the set up costs of each class will also be provided.

c. Human

(vii) Swale Academies Trust will appoint additional teachers and support staff, as the school size increases and the need arises within their overall funding allocation.

3. Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020) Policy Framework

3.1 These proposals will help to secure our ambition "to ensure that Kent's young people have access to the education, work and skills opportunities necessary to support Kent business to grow and be increasingly competitive in the national and international economy" as set out in 'Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020)'

3.2 These proposals reflect KCC's aspirations to provide sufficient school places across the County, as set out in Kent's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2016-20.

4. Consultation Outcomes

4.1 In accordance with Department for Education guidance for Academy Trusts, Swale Academies Trust with support of the Local Authority will launch a consultation from 11th January to 8th February 2016.

4.2 The Academies Trust have confirmed their intention to consult with parents/carers, staff and governors of South Borough Primary School, County Councillors, Member of Parliament, the Diocesan Authorities, local libraries, Parish Councils, Maidstone Borough Council, and others. The consultation document will also be posted KCC's School Consultation website and the link to the website widely circulated. An opportunity to send in written responses using the response form and email will be provided by the Academies Trust.

- 4.3 A drop-in session, supported by the Local Authority will be held on 28 January 2016 from 4.30 – 6.00 at South Borough Primary School.

5. Views

5.1 The View of the Headteacher and Swale Academies Trust

The Swale Academies Trust has determined that a consultation should be carried out on the permanent expansion of the school. Having additional students on roll at the school will have financial benefits for the school. This may potentially provide the opportunity to enhance teaching and career opportunities for staff, which in turn will benefit the learning experience of the children’.

5.2 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 is the most sustainable solution.

6. Proposal

- 6.1 The process to implement the proposal to increase the physical capacity of an academy is outlined in the DfE advice for Academy Trusts and will be the responsibility of Swale Academies Trust to carry out a consultation with stakeholders and seek approval by the Secretary of State through the Education Funding Agency.

- 6.2 Capital funding and building works for the proposed expansion of South Borough Primary School are subject to KCC statutory decision making process and planning.

- 6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of this process.

- 6.4 There will be an increase to the value on KCC’s property portfolio, however, this will be incorporated into the 125 year lease to the Swale Academies Trust.

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 This proposal will create an additional 210 primary aged places at South Borough Primary School in line with Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council’s Strategic Statement 2015-2020 Policy Framework’ and the ‘Commissioning Plan for Education – Kent’ (2016 – 2020).

9. Recommendation(s)

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

- (i) Allocate £2.6 million from the Basic Needs budget to fund the permanent expansion of the school to two forms of entry.
- (ii) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council
- (iii) 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.

10. Background Documents

- 10.1 Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020 <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/increasing-opportunities-improving-outcomes>
- 10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2016-20
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s61243/Item%20C1%20FINAL%20APP%20ROVED%20EYPS%20Report%20Education%20Commissioning%20Plan%20Dec%202015.pdf>
- 10.3 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment
www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

11. Report Author

- Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer – West Kent
- Telephone: 03000 412209
- Email: Jared.nehra@kent.gov.uk

12 Relevant Director

- Keith Abbott, Director of Education Planning and Access
- Telephone: 03000 417008
- Email: Keith.abbott@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,

Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

16/0002

For publication

Subject: Proposed Expansion of South Borough Primary School (Maidstone)

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform I agree to support the expansion of South Borough Primary School, Stagshaw Close, Maidstone ME15 6TL. Therefore, I agree to:

- (ii) Allocate £2.6 million from the Basic Needs budget to fund the permanent expansion of the school to two forms of entry.
- (iii) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council
- (iv) 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.

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 in order to allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

Reason(s) for decision:

In reaching this decision I have taken into account:

- the views expressed by those put in writing by the Area Education Officer for West Kent
- the Equalities Impact Assessment regarding this; and
- the views of the Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee which are set out below

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

21 January 2016

15 December 2015

The Committee endorsed the Kent Commissioning Plan 2016-20, which identified a need for additional secondary places in the Maidstone District.

14 October 2014

Education Cabinet Committee endorsed The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2015-19

Any alternatives considered:

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2016-20 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:

.....
Signed

.....
Date