

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

To: **Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee - 17 March 2016**

Subject: **Proposal to permanently expand Edenbridge Primary School from 2FE to 3FE**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

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

Electoral Division: **Sevenoaks South (Cllr Clive Pearman)**

Summary:

This report informs the Cabinet Committee of the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to permanently expand Edenbridge Primary School (Community) from 2FE to 3FE and requests members to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform agrees to release sufficient funding to put the necessary infrastructure in place.

Recommendation:

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 the decision to:

- a. Agree that a Public Notice be published to expand Edenbridge Primary School to 3FE, and following a representation period of four weeks with no statutory objections received, implement the proposal.
- b. Allocate £875,000 from the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget, to fund any necessary additional works or variations to accommodation.
- c. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- d. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure 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.

This decision is subject to planning permission being granted.

1. Introduction

- 1.2. The Sevenoaks district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2016-20 identified a local pressure in Reception year places in the Sevenoaks Rural South West planning area. The Commissioning Plan identified a need to provide additional places in the planning area from September 2016.
- 1.3. Every school in the planning area was considered as a possible proposal for expansion according to several criteria, including location, cost, proximity to demand, site size, willingness of the school, highways issues, Sport England and Ofsted rating. Edenbridge Primary School was identified as the best option for expansion according to these criteria.
- 1.4. The Department for Education issued new Regulations in 2013 (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013), and as a consequence of the changes introduced in these regulations, local authorities can propose making changes to maintained schools including expansion (enlargement of premises) providing that they follow the statutory process.
- 1.5. Before a statutory Public Notice is published to initiate a representation period, a public consultation must be undertaken.
- 1.6. This report sets out the results of the consultation, which took place between 25 Jan 2016 and 29 Feb 2016. A consultation meeting for parents/carers, governors, members of staff and other stakeholders was held on 11 February 2016. For this proposal an informal meeting was held giving the public the opportunity to discuss the proposal with the AEO and property representatives.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1. It has been agreed by the Governing Body to permanently enlarge Edenbridge Primary School, increasing the PAN to 90 (3FE) for the September 2016 intake and eventually a total capacity of 630 places.
 - a. Capital – Kent County Council’s contribution will be £875,000. KCC acknowledge that the final amount may be higher or lower as the cost of the project is an estimate. 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 – For a period of three academic years, the school will receive protection for an additional 30 Reception Year pupils. For each additional classroom, resulting from the expansion of the school, the sum of £6,000 per classroom will be allocated towards the classroom setup costs.

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

3. Kent 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 the Education Commissioning Plan.
- 3.2. The ‘Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2016-20’ identified a pressure on primary school places in the Sevenoaks Rural South West planning area. Housing development in Edenbridge is expected to increase imminently which will lead to increased pressure on primary school places in the planning area.

4. Consultation Outcomes

- 4.1. The local authority established a formal consultation process over a five week period, between 25 Jan 2016 and 29 Feb 2016. A consultation meeting for parents/carers, governors, members of staff and other stakeholders was held on 11 February 2016.
- 4.2. A total of 52 written responses were received by the local authority through the prescribed consultation process. 20 respondents supported the proposal. 29 objecting to the proposal. 3 respondent was undecided.
- 4.3. A summary of the comments received by the local authority is provided at Appendix 1.

5. Views

5.1. The Local Member

Cllr Clive Pearman was informed of the proposal and said:

“I fully support the proposed expansion of Edenbridge Primary School in order that it will be accessible to the young families who will be moving in to the new housing development for in the region of between 250 and 300 homes within walking distance of the school. The first tranche of homes coming on to the market should be within the next year to eighteen months, with the incremental construction and availability of the remaining homes following immediately afterwards. As the primary school is currently experiencing accommodation problems, and with many local parents sending their children to neighbouring primary schools, there is already much concern within the community with regards to the availability of accommodation at the primary school. This proposed expansion will, therefore, meet existing needs and concerns, as well as those that will arise in the near future, so it is very timely and welcome.”

5.2. Headteacher

The Headteacher fully supports the proposal.

5.3. Chair of Governors

The Chair of Governors is fully supportive of the proposal.

5.4. Area Education Officer:

The analysis of the needs in the area indicate that due to immediate pressure and future demand, based on planned new housing in the Sevenoaks Rural South West planning area, an additional 1FE of Primary capacity is required.

- 5.5. The Director of Planning and Access and I have considered every primary school in the planning area with a view to whether that school could be enlarged. I am of the firm opinion that notwithstanding the objections received during the consultation, the most appropriate, sustainable and cost effective solution to the demand in the Swanley & Edenbridge Planning Area is to enlarge Edenbridge Primary School by 1 form of entry.

6. Proposal

- 6.1. The proposed expansion of Edenbridge Primary School will increase the value of KCC's property portfolio by adding value to the school buildings.
- 6.2. 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 Infrastructure will sign contracts on behalf of the County Council.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1. Forecasts for the Sevenoaks district indicate an increasing demand for Primary school places, due to small and medium scale housing development and inward migration.
- 8.2. This enlargement will add an additional 30 Reception Year places to the capacity per year, in line with priorities in the Kent Policy Framework, 'Vision and Priorities for Education and Young People's Services' and the 'Commissioning Plan for Education' (2016 – 2020).

9. Recommendations

9.1. 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 the decision to:

- a. Agree that a Public Notice be published to permanently expand Edenbridge Primary School from 2FE to 3FE, and following a representation period of four weeks with no statutory objections received, implement the proposal.
- b. Allocate £875,000 from the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget, to fund any necessary additional works or variations to accommodation.
- c. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- d. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary of Written Responses

11. Background Documents

11.1. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/bold-steps-for-kent>

11.2. Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2016 – 2020

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=61244>

11.3. Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-consultations>

12. Contact details

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Director of Education Planning and Access

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Appendix 1

Proposal to expand Edenbridge Primary School, Sevenoaks Summary of Written Responses

Printed Consultation Documents distributed: 600

Consultation responses received: 52

A summary of the responses received showed that:

	In Favour	Undecided	Opposed
Governors	3		
Staff	2		1
Parents	15	3	28
Pupils			
Other			
Totals	20	3	29

Comments in favour of the proposal:

- The expansion of the school will be under the very capable leadership of the new and enthusiastic headteacher
- The plan to expand will be a gradual process and could bring huge benefits to the school and town
- I hope all the building on the grounds are considered before new buildings made
- Edenbridge is a fast growing town and more & more families are moving here so will need a decent local school
- If we don't expand local children will have to travel to other areas where they won't always be with their friends and more cars will have to be used
- Hopefully there will be more employment for local people
- I think it is a good idea but worry about what will happen after primary school as there is no secondary school in the area
- As a town on a border it would be a good idea if free transport was offered to one secondary school from each area then parents would have more choice
- To have a bigger primary school would be wonderful and great for the town
- Agree but only concerns are parking
- I believe every child in Edenbridge should have the opportunity to go to Edenbridge Primary if they want to as many parents cannot drive them to another town
- I think it is essential the school expands to accommodate all the local children. I can think of no reason that makes the plans detrimental to the children or parents
- I welcome the proposal but the parking needs to be addressed as its already a huge problem

Comments against the proposal:

- **Not the best use of funds suggested by KCC**
- **Cannot see how the school can be expanded without losing outside space**
- **Town infrastructure could support increased level of transport without expensive substantial changes**
- **Develop school in the new developments to cut journey movements. It would also increase property prices thus helping a wider range of people as opposed to those in the immediate Edenbridge area**
- **Will divert funding from other well thought of and supported local schools, such as Four Elms, Crockham Hill and Hever. These schools are in much more dire need of funding**
- **Don't believe it is in the interests of our children's educational needs as would cause disruption to learning**
- **Huge concerns regarding the children's safety in relation to the amount of traffic around drop off & pick up times**
- **School is already big enough**
- **Surely there is enough land available to develop a brand new school.**
- **Other schools for example Four Elms would probably benefit from expansion as they have such small intakes each year**
- **Very concerned about the impact on the quality of teaching**
- **Local residents will have concerns as infrastructure cannot cope well now**
- **Extreme disruption to pupils**
- **School cannot cope with what it has now**
- **Perhaps should get rid of disruptive children who are disrupting other children's education, then there would be more spaces and teachers could concentrate of teaching and not waste time on children who do not want to learn**
- **Steps should be taken to remove disruptive children**
- **Real pressures will be placed on the infrastructure, parking, access etc and these issues are already becoming problems with the higher number of children at the school**
- **School has worked hard to improve and I think increasing the size will jeopardise its continued success**
- **Why not increase the surrounding village schools which have lots of land around them**
- **No parking for the parents whose children already attend the school.**
- **More children in school means more children per class so will less likely have the 1:1 tuition for children who need it**
- **You pay more attention to building a secondary school which the town needs**
- **School will end up being too big. It was a local primary school with small classes but has already grown bigger.**
- **There is already an issue with secondary schools and by making the primary larger this will only make matters worse. Keep primary as it is and focus on a secondary.**
- **Traffic congestion is already an issue so don't make it worse**
- **I feel the school is already big enough and parking around the site is already a problem.**
- **There isn't a secondary school to accommodate the children**

- Edenbridge PS shouldn't be extended as it is a big primary school already and there are nearby primary schools, such as Four Elms, Hever and Crockham Hill which are smaller and should be expanded instead (taking off the strain and impact of traffic, parking and quality of teaching off Edenbridge)
- What Edenbridge really needs is a secondary school
- Impact on the school community ethos and disruption to learning through building work
- Expansion will exacerbate the already nightmare traffic and parking issues. For many years we have encourage parents to find alternative ways of travelling but problems still continue.
- Reduction in outdoor play spaces and outdoor learning environment
- The roads near the school are already not coping with the current level of traffic at drop off and pick up times despite the school encouraging parents not to use their cars
- On Thursdays there is also the market so there is not enough parking spaces
- Some parents have started to park illegally on the yellow lines, pavement or resident's driveways. Traffic wardens sometimes patrol the road during drop off and pick up times and it does help
- I would be interested to hear if there are any proposals to address the traffic issue
- Whilst the plans for the new block look excellent for the Y6 pupils, my concerns are around the sizes of classrooms for existing school for all other pupils, especially reception. Would KCC provide funding/assistance to manage these changes that would be needed? If not pupils in all other years are being disadvantaged by larger classes
- The last Ofsted report suggested that the improvements that had happened were due in part to the small class sizes, KCC are proposing to disregard this. This potentially has an impact on all pupils at that school and any future pupils in terms of their success. There will be no scope to split hard to manage classes into smaller classes. I realise that many schools are 30 per class but that doesn't mean that it is right for this school and is also likely to have an impact on the other pupils if small class sizes are taken away.
- Another concern is around the transport and roads around the school. It is already very dangerous crossing from the free town car park to the school because there is no safe crossing area. With increased pupil numbers it will make this area even more congested and a risk for pupils and their families to cross. If increasing the school size becomes a reality there needs to be a secure staffed crossing site to teach the school from this side of town.
- There also needs to be increases to office staff, after school club and breakfast club. Wrap around care services are a reason why many parents picked this school and therefore if an increase in pupils means a number of parents can't access this service because there aren't enough places, again it means that this expansion is negatively affects pupils and parents/carers.
- Other concerns include: Higher teacher/pupil ratios than currently exist means a disadvantage to current pupils – how will this be compensated for?
- Less outdoor space
- Younger children at the school already feel intimidated by older children. This is likely to be exasperated as the school grows and there are increased numbers of older children.
- Will there be increases to library and ICT services with greater numbers of children in classes needing to use them at one time? Again if not the expansion is disadvantaging the children.
- It will be a shame that children won't be able to enjoy whole school assemblies.

- Lastly what else has been done in relation to the consideration of expanding other schools in this planning area? Why are the following schools not deemed suitable for expansion, Chiddingstone, Hever, Four Elms, Crockham Hill. People living in these villages have not been able to get their children into these schools which suggests that these schools are unable to serve the areas they are in, therefore, they should be considered for expansion
- I do not think the size the classrooms for reception children are appropriate for classes of 30 children as at present only one of the reception classes has outside access to a foundation stage garden, making the classroom not fit for purpose
- None of the classrooms, including nursery have toilet facilities that can be supervised by members of staff, this is positively dangerous and not suitable. The whole department needs a refit to make this expansion plausible
- Concerns are school is already struggling with traffic and congestion and this will lead to an accident. Proper parking measures, crossings etc need to be addressed before increasing numbers.
- School also lacks clear communication with parent/carers with current number of pupils, better management of this needs to be considered so parents don't feel left in the dark
- My son already worries about being in playground with older children so am concerned how school will manage increased numbers at lunchtimes so as not to leave younger children intimidated. Will there be an extension to the school hall to accommodate more children at lunchtime?
- The school for the past two years had taken in 90 children so to support 90 every year will see increased pressure to raise that figure to 120.
- Expansion of the school will invite new developments thus increasing the population of Edenbridge and pressure on schools and services, therefore, we refuse this notion
- Don't see that it will benefit the school but stretch it too much
- Concerned about the safety of the children, parents/carers at drop-off and pick-up times as traffic / congestion on Croft Lane is too great for the size of the road and the available parking. Consider significant safety improvements have to be made in this area before any expansion can go ahead otherwise the KCC would be putting the safety of the children and parents/carers at risk and we would hold it responsible in the event of injury/accident
- The expansion consultation document states that there are currently 60 places a year but there are in excess of 70 children currently in Y1 and in excess of 80 children in reception. As the current number of published places is clearly not being respected, we are concerned that this trend would continue, with actual numbers exceeding the 90 places per year that are proposed by the consultation.
- Other primary schools have very low intakes, has expanding those being properly considered?

Undecided

- I am undecided because I think that the children with special needs and children that need special help will get less help than they already do with more students going to the school

- **Would have liked to have seen increase in meeting room availability within the new design/layout as parents, teachers & Friends Association are required to meet at an off-site coffee shop as no facilities available in school.**
- **Existing building is cramped and likely to get worse if school expands**
- **Fantastic HT and staff and I trust their judgement**
- **The plans for the new building are sympathetic to the existing site although main concerns would be the impact of the extra traffic at the start and end of day.**

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

16/00036

For publication

Subject: Proposal to permanently expand Edenbridge Primary School from 2FE to 3FE

Decision:

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

- a. a Public Notice be published to permanently expand Edenbridge Primary School from 2FE to 3FE, and following a representation period of four weeks with no statutory objections received, implement the proposal.
- b. Allocate £875,000 from the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget, to fund any necessary additional works or variations to accommodation.
- c. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- d. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure 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.

This decision is subject to planning permission being granted.

Reason(s) for decision:

In reaching this decision I have taken into account:

1. The views received from the consultation with parents/carers, staff and governors.
2. The views of the Governing Body
3. The views of the Local Member
4. the views of the Area Education Officer
5. the views of the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee.

Financial Implications:

- 2.1. It has been agreed by the Governing Body to permanently enlarge Edenbridge Primary School,

increasing the PAN to 90 (3FE) for the September 2016 intake and eventually a total capacity of 630 places.

a. Capital – Kent County Council’s contribution will be £875,000. KCC acknowledge that the final amount may be higher or lower as the cost of the project is an estimate. 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 – For a period of three academic years, the school will receive protection for an additional 30 Reception Year pupils. For each additional classroom, resulting from the expansion of the school, the sum of £6,000 per classroom will be allocated towards the classroom setup costs.

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

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

17 March 2016 report to Education and Young Person’s Cabinet Committee

To be added following the meeting

15 December 2015 report to Education and Young People’s Cabinet Committee

The Committee endorsed the Kent Commissioning Plan, which identified a need for additional secondary places in the Sevenoaks District.

Any alternatives considered:

Forecasts for the Sevenoaks district indicate an increasing demand for Primary school places, due to small and medium scale housing development and inward migration.

This enlargement will add an additional 30 Reception Year places to the capacity per year, in line with priorities in the Kent Policy Framework, ‘Vision and Priorities for Education and Young People’s Services’ and the ‘Commissioning Plan for Education’ (2016 – 2020).

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

N/A

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Signed

Date