

From: Matt Dunkley, CBE, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

Subject: Allocation of capital funding to enable Norton Knatchbull Grammar School to expand from 5FE to 7FE (149 to 210 places per year)

Classification: Unrestricted

Decision No: 18/00039

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: Ashford Central - Paul Bartlett

Summary:

As Cabinet Member of Children, Young People and Education, I agree to:

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education on the proposed decision to:

- a) Agree to release £100,000 from the CYPE capital budget to enable Norton Knatchbull Grammar School to complete design work and secure planning approval for replacement/expanded buildings.
- b) Subject to the Academy being successful in its Condition Improvement Funding (CIF) bid, agree to release £1,900,000 of the CYPE capital budget to Norton Knatchbull Grammar School to enable the permanent expansion from 5FE to 7FE (149 to 210 places per year).

1. Background

- 1.1 Since the 2014-15 academic year capacity has increased in Ashford District non-selective schools by 4FE. This was due to the opening of the Wye Free School (3FE) and an increase in the Published Admissions Number at Homewood School by 1FE. Further non-selective capacity will be added via the proposed Chilmington Green Secondary School which is expected to come on line in 2022/23.
- 1.2 There are 2 selective schools in Ashford District: The Norton Knatchbull Grammar School for Boys and Highworth Grammar School for Girls. While we have seen a significant permanent increase in non-selective provision since September 2014, this has not been matched with permanent increases to the capacity of the selective sector. Therefore, the Published Admissions

Number (PAN) at The Norton Knatchbull School and Highworth Grammar remain at 149 and 184 respectively.

- 1.3 In 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 the Governors of Norton Knatchbull School (Academy) offered 180 places on National Offer Day. For 2018-19 they made 210 places available. This has been achieved within existing accommodation and without any capital funding from KCC. However, the School cannot continue to admit additional pupils without further accommodation. In addition, some of the older accommodation needs replacement. As an Academy school, the responsibility for improving existing accommodation sits with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The School will apply to the ESFA for Condition Improvement Funding (CIF) to rebuild the Creative Arts and Technology facilities. The bid has to be submitted by December 2018. If successful, this in turn will release some existing accommodation enabling the school to permanently increase provision by 1FE. The School has proposed that if its bid is successful, and KCC were to contribute £2,000,000, the School would be able to add sufficient extra accommodation to enable it to expand by a further 1FE, to 7FE. This represents good value for money. Developer contributions totalling £2,224,759.18 have been sought to support the expansion of the School with £442,000 being secured in signed agreements at this point.
- 1.4 The School's CIF bid is more likely to succeed if it clearly demonstrates the project is deliverable. Having planning consent is a fundamental step towards this. Assisting the School through the provision of £100,000 of funding to progress its design work to enable a planning application to be submitted is a necessary step towards progressing this scheme.
- 1.5 It will be necessary for KCC to make a commitment to provide £1,900,000 if the CIF bid is to include accommodation to enable expansion to 7FE. Clearly funding will only be provided if the bid succeeds. Again, it is understood the bid is more likely to succeed if it is joined together with other funding streams and has wider impact than simply refurbishing buildings.

2. Need for School Places

- 2.1 Forecasts in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-22 (KCP) are based on current travel to school flows and migration into the District. Figure 1 demonstrates that if current travel to school patterns and migration remains there will be a deficit of 42 Year 7 places across all secondary schools from September 2019.

Figure 1: Year 7 and Years 7-11 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if no Further Action is Taken (KCP 2018-22)

| District | 2016-17 capacity | 2018-19 (F) | 2019-20 (F) | 2020-21 (F) | 2021-22 (F) | 2022-23 (F) | 2023-24 (F) | 2023-24 capacity |
|------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Year 7 | 1,512 | 56 | -42 | -69 | -9 | -32 | -88 | 1,481 |
| Years 7-11 | 7,431 | 771 | 546 | 267 | 123 | -130 | -275 | 7,405 |

2.2 Figure 2 does not differentiate the need for selective and non-selective provision. Kent's secondary school assessment process seeks to identify 25% of the County cohort for admission to grammar schools. At a District level, the proportions of the cohort being assessed for a grammar school place under the County procedure varies. In Ashford across the last three years an average of 25.9% of the resident cohort are eligible via the County process. The principles set out in the KCP (6.4) indicate 'Principles for additional secondary places need to demonstrate a balance between selective and non-selective places.' Figure 2 outlines the forecast number of places required to achieve 25.9% selective places based on the resident population of Ashford District and, the surplus/deficit places based on the places offered in 2018-19 and agreed PAN moving forward. This demonstrates a deficit of around 3FE of Year 7 selective provision from 2019-20 and throughout the rest of the Plan period.

Figure 2: Forecast Surplus/Deficit Year 7 Selective Places Based on Forecast Ashford Year 7 Residents

| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
|---|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Ashford District | | | | | | |
| Forecast Ashford Year 7 Roll | 1501 | 1610 | 1638 | 1587 | 1609 | 1671 |
| 25.9% of forecast roll | 389 | 417 | 424 | 411 | 417 | 433 |
| Places offered for Sept 2018 and Agreed PAN in future years | 420 | 333 | 333 | 333 | 333 | 333 |
| Surplus/deficit places at current PAN | 31 | -84 | -91 | -78 | -84 | -100 |

2.5 On average over the last three years the percentage of Ashford resident boys and girls assessed eligible for grammar school places has been fairly even. The 25.9% average comprises of 12.8% boys and 13.1% girls. Figure 3 outlines the number of places required for boys selective provision if this average proportion continues and the shortfall of places based on the current PAN at The Norton Knatchbull School.

Figure 3: Forecast Year 7 Selective School Places required in Ashford for Boys

| | 2018-19 (a) | 2019-20 (f) | 2020-21 (f) | 2021-22 (f) | 2022-23 (f) | 2023-24 (f) |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Yr. 6 male assessed selective via PESE | 192 | 206 | 210 | 203 | 206 | 214 |
| Places offered for Sept 2018 and Agreed PAN in future years | 210 | 149 | 149 | 149 | 149 | 149 |
| Surplus/deficit of boys places at current offer and PAN in future years | 33 | -57 | -61 | -54 | -57 | -65 |

3. Provision at The Norton Knatchbull School

3.1 As mentioned previously, the School intends to submit a Condition Improvement Funding (CIF) bid to the ESFA in the autumn of 2018 for a new Creative Arts and Technology block. If successful, this will improve facilities for present and future pupils and will enable the School to consolidate its PAN

at 180. To achieve a further 1FE extra capacity in addition to accommodation provided from a successful CIF bid the school will require:

- 1FE of additional classrooms
- An extension to the dining hall
- Improved social spaces
- A new playground or expansion of existing playground spaces
- An expansion of the existing car park to replace spaces lost during the building expansion and to provide for additional staff.

3.2 The School's leaders and governors have funded a feasibility study which shows that a further storey of classrooms could be added to the proposed Creative Arts block. The proposed scheme needs to be developed to enable a planning application to be submitted. Development to this stage would strengthen the CIF bid, as it will demonstrate the project is deliverable within the spending timeframes for these grants. This development work would need to be funded by KCC. A feasibility study has been completed, funded by the School. We are proposing that KCC provides £100,000 from the existing Children's, Young People and Education capital budget to enable Norton Knatchbull Grammar School to further develop its scheme. KCC will also need to confirm that it will make £1,900,000 available, should the CIF bid be successful, if it wishes the School to expand to 7FE.

3.3 To protect this increased capacity, KCC would enter into a legal agreement with the Governors of Norton Knatchbull School prior to any funds being released.

3.4 The Governors at Norton Knatchbull School have confirmed that they have the capacity in the present buildings to offer up to 210 places in the 2019-20 academic year, after that they will need the additional facilities. Therefore, the new classrooms would need to be in place by September 2020. It is expected that it will take 18 months to deliver the expansion which includes completing plans, securing planning permission and building out the new facilities.

4. The Views of the Local Member- Paul Bartlett, Ashford Central

4.1 I am very supportive of this project in my division. It is crucial for KCC to deliver its objectives of supporting selective education whereby 25% of each cohort can be accepted by admission to selective schools. Without this scheme it may be difficult for the Norton Knatchbull to increase its Published Admission Numbers to the desired level which would mean that some pupils and parents would miss out.

I do not consider there to be a material risk that developer contributions will not be received as there are 5 sizeable residential schemes within a mile or so. These are Waterbrook (450 houses), and extension to Finberry (400 houses), Great Burton Farm (700 houses), Bridgefield extension (375 houses) and Newton Road former rail works (number TBC); none of these have determined planning applications but each are reasonably expected to be determined in the near future. This will reduce the financing risk for KCC to an acceptable level.

I do accept that there is a risk that the Education and Skills Funding Council may not agree to CIF funding and there is a planning risk over the site itself

but colleagues' support for this project at CYPE Cabinet Committee and then Portfolio Holder support will reduce these two risks.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 a. Capital –The additional facilities needed to permanently increase Norton Knatchbull School from 5FE to 7FE (149 to 210 places in each year) as outlined in 3.1 will be funded from the Children, Young People and Education Capital Budget. Prior to the School submitting its CIF bid, KCC will release £100,000 to enable the School to complete its design work. KCC will make a commitment that, if the CIF bid is successful, it will provide a further £1,900,000 to facilitate the expansion to 7FE. If the bid is unsuccessful KCC will need to reassess how it might provide further places in the School. A maximum of £2,000,000 will need to be committed from the Children, Young People and Education Capital budget.

Developer contributions have been and will continue to be sought to fund the the different phases of the expansion. Developer contribution requests totalling £2,250,000 have been made towards this project of which £442,000 has been secured in agreements.

- b. Revenue – When expansion takes place the School will receive increased funding through the Delegated Budget. The rising rolls will be protected in line with KCC Growth Funding Policy. Revenue funding will also be allocated to enable the School to resource each new classroom as they come on line. At present that is at a value of £6,000 per classroom. Deferral of the school expansion will correspondingly pushback the revenue expenditure.
- c. Human – The School will appoint additional staff as required, as the School size increases and the need arises.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is available with this report. There are deemed to be no risks to pupils with protected characteristics at present. If any concerns or objections to this proposal are made the EqIA will be reviewed and any negative impacts addressed.

7. Recommendation(s)

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7. Background Documents

7.1 Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-22

8. Contact details

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