

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

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

Subject: Proposal to permanently expand the Secondary provision at Saint George's Church of England School, Gravesend, from a PAN of 180 to 210

Decision Number: 19/00026

Classification: Unrestricted

Future Pathway: Cabinet Member Decision of Paper

Electoral Division: Northfleet and Gravesend West (Cllrs Tan Dhesi & Lauren Sullivan)

Summary:

This report informs the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee of the proposal to permanently expand the secondary provision at Saint George's Church of England School from a PAN of 180 to 210 from September 2020 and requests members to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education agrees to release sufficient funding to put the necessary infrastructure in place.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to:

- a. Allocate £2.6m from the Children, Young People and Education Capital Budget, to fund any necessary additional works or variations to accommodation.
- b. Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the General Counsel to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.

This decision is subject to planning permission being granted.

1. Introduction

- 1.2. The Gravesham district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2019-23 has identified pressure for Year 7 places in the Gravesham area. The Commissioning Plan identified a need to provide up to 90 additional places in the planning area from September 2019., with further forms of entry required to

come online over the next 4-5 years. The expansion of Saint George's Church of England School supports the increases required in future years.

- 1.3. For 2020, the school will be able to accommodate an additional 30 year 7 places, but for 2021, permanent building works will be required to ensure an increased cohort can continue to be accommodated.
- 1.4. The School has already been successful in securing CIF funding from the ESFA for the demolition of a teaching block on the school site. The ESFA have now agreed to vary the scheme to enable this expansion to proceed. Therefore, the CIF funding of £3.7m will be combined with the KCC contribution of £2.6 million to meet the anticipated scheme cost of £6.3 million. The main reason for the increased cost is because the original CIF bid was to demolish a block that is no longer fit for purpose and to rebuild that provision. The KCC funding will now be combined with that to ensure sufficient additional space is provided.
- 1.5. The School will manage the project and a funding agreement will be produced and signed by both Saint George's Church of England School and KCC stipulating that the KCC contribution is up to a value £2.6 million. The school therefore own the risk of any overspend occurring on the scheme.
- 1.6. Every secondary school in the district 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. The 7 all-ability schools in the new non-selective planning area of Gravesend and Longfield have been approached to consider expansion and feasibility studies have been commissioned on a number of these. The Area Education Officer is now starting to progress to proposals to expand. Saint George's Church of England School in Gravesend is one of those schools.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1. It has been agreed by the Governing Body to permanently enlarge Saint George's Church of England School, Gravesend, increasing the Secondary PAN from 180 to 210 for the September 2020 intake.
 - a. Capital – Kent County Council's contribution will be £2.6m. The School will manage the project and a funding agreement will be produced and signed by both Saint George's Church of England School and KCC stipulating that the KCC contribution is up to a value £2.6 million. The school therefore own the risk of any overspend occurring on the scheme.
 - b. Revenue – For a period of three academic years, the school will receive protection for an additional 30 Year 7 students. For each additional classroom, resulting from the expansion of the school, the sum of £6,000 will allocated towards the classroom setup costs.
 - c. Human – Saint George's Church of England 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, 2018-22 identified a pressure on secondary school places in the Gravesham district. Changes to demographics and increased migration over the last six years has required significant expansions in the primary provision. These expansions are now feeding into the secondary cohort. This demand is further demonstrated in the 2019-23 Kent Commissioning Plan.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. Saint George’s Church of England School, Gravesend, being an Academy is conducting its own consultation.

5. Views

5.1. The Local Members

Cllrs Tan Dhesi & Lauren Sullivan have been informed of the proposal.

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 changing demographics in Gravesham district, an additional 30 Year 7 places are required in Saint George’s Church of England School, Gravesend. These additional places will help achieve that additional capacity requirement.

- 5.5. The Director of Education Planning and Access and I have considered every Secondary school in the planning area with a view to whether that school could be enlarged. I am of the firm opinion that the most appropriate, sustainable and cost-effective solution to the secondary demand in Gravesham district is to enlarge the Secondary provision at Saint George’s Church of England School, Gravesend as one of several schools that are being proposed for expansion in Gravesham.

6. Proposal

6.1. 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 Gravesham district indicate an increasing demand for secondary school places, due to small & medium scale housing development, inward migration and the impact of primary expansion in recent years.

8.2. This enlargement will add an additional 30 Year 7 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' (2019 – 2023).

9. Recommendations

9.1 The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to:

- a) Allocate £2.6m from the Children, Young People and Education Capital Budget, to fund any necessary additional works or variations to accommodation.
- b) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the General Counsel to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council.

10. Background Documents

10.1. Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/education-skills-and-employment-policies/vision-and-priorities-for-improvement>

10.2. Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision

www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision

11. Contact details

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