

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

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

DECISION NO:

19/00061

Unrestricted

Key decision: YES

Subject:

Following the amalgamation of the former Murston Infant and Junior Schools to establish Sunny Bank Primary School, relocation of Sunny Bank Infant and Nursery departments to Sunny Bank Junior department site, with infrastructure for an expansion from 1.5FE to 2FE following the academisation of the school.

Decision:

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

- (i) Allocate £4.2M from the Children, Young People and Education Capital budget;
- (ii) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the General Counsel (Interim) to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council; and
- (iii) 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. Variations to contract value to be no more than 10% above the capital funding agreed by the Cabinet Member without requiring a new Record of Decision.

This proposal is also subject to Planning agreement

Reason(s) for decision:

The current infant department was originally established in the 1860s and additional buildings were added over subsequent years. The cost of maintaining the infant school site would require substantial investment to ensure the buildings are fit for purpose as the classrooms are in a poor state of repair. The cost of refurbishment, continual maintenance and ongoing cost of the lease of the site (the site is owned by a Diocesan Trust) is not financially viable.

The cost-effective measure is therefore to relocate the infants to the junior site which is adjacent to the Infant site and has adequate space to accommodate the infant and nursery on one site.

Ensuring the infrastructure of the relocated school is built to a 2FE will enable the school to expand, once academised, by 0.5FE, ensuring the future viability of the school and enabling the school to meet the local need for additional places from new housing in the local area.

Equality Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of this proposal and is attached for information.

Financial Implications

- a. Capital – A feasibility study has been completed and the design has been developed. The estimated cost of the expansion is £4.2M.
- b. Revenue – Revenue funding will be allocated to enable the School to resource new classrooms which at present is at a value of £6,000 per classroom.
- c. Human – The School will appoint additional staff as the need arises.

Legal Implications

Notice will need to be given to the Diocesan of Canterbury regarding the lease of the Infant school site.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

At its meeting on 1 October 2019, the Children and Young People's Cabinet Committee considered the decision. The Minute extract is as follows:

Ms White (Area Education Officer- East Kent) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms White introduced the report which set out information relating to the proposal to relocate Sunny Bank Primary School's Infant and Nursery departments onto the Junior Site with the infrastructure for an expansion from 1.5FE to 2FE, following the academisation of the school.
- (2) Ms White clarified that although section 4 of the report stated that planning agreement had been confirmed, this did not mean that planning permission had yet been granted.
- (3) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education to:
 - (i) Allocate £4.2M from the Children, Young People and Education Capital budget;
 - (ii) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the General Counsel (Interim) to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council; and
 - (iii) 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. Variations to contract value to be no more than 10% above the capital funding agreed by the Cabinet Member without requiring a new Record of Decision,

be endorsed, subject to Planning agreement.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Relocation of the infant department and nursery is the cost effect option as opposed to refurbishing, expanding and maintaining two sites. The school needs to be financially viable and remaining on the Infant site would mean that this would not be the case due to the annual lease costs and the high costs related to the refurbishment and maintenance of the Infant School building.

The Headteacher and Governing Body fully support the proposal which will ensure the future

financial viability of the primary school on one site.

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

None

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signed

.....3 October 2019.....

date

