

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL — RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TAKEN BY:**

**Richard Long**

**Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

**DECISION NO:**

20/0001

**Key decision: YES**

*The decision will:*

- a) *result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £f,000,000);*

**Proposal to open satellite provision of the Beacon Folkestone at the former Walmer Science College and increase the designated number to 620 places.****As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills I agree to:**

- (i). Expand The Beacon Folkestone by opening a satellite provision at the former Walmer Science College and increasing the designated number of the School from 380 places to 620 places;
- (ii). issue a public notice in regard to the proposal as set out in (i) above;
- (iii). release the funding required from the Children's, Young People and Education Capital Budget to implement the proposal; and to
- (iv). delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education to take necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into necessary contracts or taking other legal actions as required, to implement the decision.

Should objections, not already considered by me when taking this decision, be received during the public notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for a proper consideration of the points raised.

This decision is conditional upon planning permission being granted where required.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

Across Kent, the number of pupils with an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) has increased significantly. Between January 2015 and January 2019, the number of pupils aged between 0 -25 years of age with an EHCP increased from 7,374 to 11,763 an increase of 60%. The increase in the overall number of pupils with an ECHP is having an impact on the need for places within our special schools and the specialist resourced provisions (SRPs) within mainstream schools. Dover District is one of only two Kent Districts without a PSCN special school (the other being Dartford). In order to address this, The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2019-23 identified the need for a new 168 place PSCN provision from September 2020. The County Council retained the Walmer Science College site for future educational needs. A feasibility study has shown that, once refurbished, the buildings and site would be suitable for more ambulant PSCN pupils across the 3-19 year old age range. Having a building such as this available will allow us to open the provision quicker than would have otherwise been expected and possibly with an initial phase as early as

September 2020.

In reaching this decision I have considered:

- The views expressed by those who responded to the public education consultation
- The views expressed by those put in writing by the Area Education Officer, the School and the Chair of Governors.
- The Equalities Impact Assessment regarding this; and
- The views of the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee which are set out below.

### **Financial Implications:**

#### **Capital:**

It is estimated that the total cost of the proposal will be in the region of £4,000,000. Detailed plans for the first phase have been prepared. It is estimated that £1,600,000 will be required to complete this first phase.

Capital funding of £4,000,000 towards the project has been agreed, £3,000,000 of which would be from the second tranche of the Government's Special Provision Capital Fund.

#### **Revenue:**

School places will be funded in line with KCCs standard school, funding arrangements. In addition, £50,000 start-up funding has been agreed alongside the standard classroom set up grant of £6,000 per classroom. A minimum of four classrooms are expected to be set up in the first year.

### **Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

CYPE Cabinet Committee considered the proposed decision on 11 March 2020. They agreed to recommend a change to one element of the decision — this recommendation has been accepted by the Cabinet Member, taking into account advice from the Corporate Director and Area Education Officer. CYPE Cabinet Committee recognised the recommended change would impact on the capital cost.

RESOLVED that the CYPE Cabinet Committee recommend the following changes to the proposed decision:

**In part (i) of the decision, increase the proposed PAN level from 548 to 620.**

### **Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

The alternatives were all explored in the preparation for the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24 and the report presented to CYPE Cabinet Committee 11 March 2020.

The Beacon Folkestone is an OFSTED rated outstanding provision. The school leaders are experienced at promoting outstanding provision across different sites. If no action is taken it will be difficult to provide the additional special school places required in across the corner of the County.

The former Walmer Science College is available, ideally located to address the need and has been retained for educational use.

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

None

  
signed

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020  
date

