

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Richard Long
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

19/00083

Unrestricted

Key decision: **YES, Over £1m**

Subject:

Proposal to expand Gravesend Grammar School, Church Walk, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2PR increasing the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 174 places to 210 places from September 2021

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to

- (i) To fund the expansion of Gravesend Grammar School, Church Walk, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2PR to increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 174 places to 210 places from September 2021.
- (ii) Allocate £7,600,000 from the Children Young People and Education Services Capital Budget.
- (iii) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts / agreements on behalf of the County Council
- (iv) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

Reason(s) for decision:

1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) as the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out our future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the plan can be viewed from this link:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/education-skills-and-employment-policies/education-provision>

1.2. KCC forecasts indicate a growing demand for Year 7 places in Gravesend from the start of the 2019-20 academic year. The Gravesend and Longfield Selective Planning Group is forecast to have a deficit of 36 Year 7 places (1FE) from 2019-20 that increases to a deficit of 62 places (2FE) for the 2021-22 intake and increases again to 99 places (3.3FE) by 2023/24.

1.3. Gravesend Grammar School has a Published Admission Number of 174, but has in the past, offered extra places through appeals.

1.4. KCC proposed an expansion of the school to take the PAN to 210 (7FE). The school currently has a permanent infrastructure that can accommodate a PAN of 174. There is a temporary two storey block on site that offers additional accommodation, facilitating the extra 24 places. To expand Gravesend Grammar School, KCC are proposing the removal of the temporary block and the building of a new block at the school, together with other infill and enhancement work to social spaces. This work would be completed before the September 2021 intake. This build would enable the school to offer 210 Year 7 places for September 2021.

Financial Implications

Capital

In line with the agreement of Cabinet Committee on 7 May 2019, the capital figure previously reported was a budget estimate for information only. Estimates were then refined as detailed design work was undertaken and the scheme progressed through the planning process. Following receipt of planning permission, the refined cost estimate is being presented to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills for a key decision to be made.

The cost has been finalised and the total funding is £7,600,000

In addition, an allowance of up to £2500 may be payable to outfit the new learning spaces with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment.

Revenue

Should the scheme progress, £6,000 per new learning space will be provided towards the cost of furniture and equipment. This will be given to the school to purchase the required equipment.

The school will receive pupil growth funding in accordance with the Pupil Growth Policy established by KCC and its Schools' Funding Forum.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The assessment highlighted the following positive impacts, an increase in total number of places available to meet the needs of students with disabilities and/or SEN, more families able to access good school places and school places available to students with and without faith-based backgrounds. There were no negative impacts identified.

Legal Implications

These proposals will help to secure our ambition "to ensure that every child will go to a good school where they make good progress and can fair access to school places" as set out in the Kent Commissioning Plan.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

At its meeting on 19 November 2019, the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills that the decision outlined above be taken.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Gravesend Grammar School is a popular school that was judged Outstanding in every area by Ofsted in June 2015.

The school site lends itself to expansion for a number of reasons including the age and sustainability of existing structures, proximity to local demand and sympathetic leadership and governance.

The school is the only boy's grammar school in the Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group so is the only option

Any interest declared when the decision was taken, and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None



22 July 2020

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signed

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date