

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Richard Long,
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

20/00071

For publication

Subject: Funding Update on the proposal to permanently expand Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys, St John's Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9XB by increasing the published admission number (PAN) from 180 to 210 places from September 2019.

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

- a) Allocate an additional £4.3 million from the Children, Young People & Education Basic Need Capital Budget to fund any necessary additional works or variations to accommodation.
- b) 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.
- c) 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. 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.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background

The expansion of Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys from 180 to 210 selective Secondary school places is one of five secondary school expansions proposed in 2017 to provide additional capacity in selective and non-selective secondary schools in Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge. The Cabinet Committee of 22 November 2017 endorsed the allocation of £7.7 million from the Basic Need budget to fund the permanent expansion of Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

The school's first permanently expanded intake of 210 pupils in September 2019 was accommodated within the school's existing accommodation, with additional accommodation needed to accommodate future intakes. The scheme includes the construction of a new teaching block of classrooms, a sports hall and additional dining facilities through conversion of the current gymnasium; works commenced in Summer 2019.

The proposal is to allocate a further £4.3 million from the Young People & Education Basic Need Capital Budget

The reasons for the increased expenditure are as follows:

- Unforeseen costs relating to ground conditions (including soft spots remediations), repairs to the existing gym roof, a larger water attenuation tank required and a new foul drainage system.
- An alteration to the scheme's design has been made which will increase the capacity of the new dining facility in the former gymnasium such that the school's current dining room, which is a rented mobile structure at the opposite end of the school to the kitchen will no longer be required. This will mean

that KCC will no longer incur the monthly rental cost of this mobile unit, which would otherwise have been incurred in perpetuity.

- Additional costs incurred due to longer build time than originally anticipated; this is primarily related to unaccounted for additional works (as detailed above) and the associated scoping and design works.

Actions have been taken to minimise the additional costs, including the procurement of a single contractor across this scheme and the expansion of the neighbouring St Gregory's Catholic School.

Original Decision

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2117>

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=894&MId=7730&Ver=4>

- Financial Implications –

Capital

Kent County Council's contribution was initially £7.7m. The Cabinet Committee and Cabinet Member acknowledged that the final amount may be higher or lower as the costs of the project were presented as an estimate prior to the procurement of a contractor. If the cost of the project was to be greater than 10% the Cabinet Member would be required to take a further decision to allocate the additional funding. This proposal increases the contribution by £4.3 million, taking the total scheme cost to £12 million.

Revenue

The school will receive growth funding in accordance with the Pupil Growth Policy established by KCC and its Schools' Funding Forum. The school will also receive £6,000 per new learning space that is provided towards the cost of furniture and equipment. In addition, an allowance of up to £2500 may be payable to outfit each new teaching room with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment.

Human

The schools will appoint additional staff as and when appropriate.

- Legal Implications

The local authority has a statutory duty under the Chapter III of the Education Act 1996 to ensure sufficient school places are available for any Kent child who requires one.

- Equalities implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been produced and identified the following positive impacts identified are:

- The new accommodation and better facilities will have a positive impact on students and staff through the improvement of the learning environment.
- More families able to access school places
- School places available to children with and without faith-based backgrounds.

No adverse impacts have been identified.

Data Protection implications

When handling consultation and scheme responses KCC are the 'controllers' under the General Data Protection Regulation and will ensure that any personal information is processed fairly and lawfully.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 30 July to be added after meeting.

(1) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to:

- a) allocate an additional £4.3 million from the Children, Young People & Education Basic Need Capital Budget to fund any necessary additional works or variations to accommodation;
- b) 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; and
- c) 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. 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.

The original proposal was presented to the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 22 November 2017, prior to the decision being taken by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=894&MId=7728&Ver=4>
https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/gf2.tif/938850/45780261.1/PDF/-/ROD_TWGSB_signed_by_Roger_12.12.17.pdf

In accordance with the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance (October 2018): Making 'prescribed alterations' to maintained schools, there was no need to undertake a formal statutory consultation process. However, an informal education consultation was completed from 1st May 2018 to 8th June 2018 as part the evidence base that was included in a Local Authority application to Selective Schools Expansion Fund (SSEF). Further information is available on the School Consultation webpage:

www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

Any alternatives considered:

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2020-24 explored all options and the expansion of this school was deemed the suitable option.

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

None



21 August 2020

Signed

Date