

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20 June 2012

Report of the Director of Planning Transport and Leisure

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 RESPONSE TO KCC CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT COMMISSIONING PLAN FOR EDUCATION PROVISION 2012-17

Summary

This report summarises the main implications for the Borough arising from the draft Commissioning Plan and seeks approval for the officer level comments returned by the deadline for responding.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) published the draft Commissioning Plan for Education on the 24th April 2012, inviting comments up to the 19th June. Officers responded by this deadline and a copy of the response is appended to this report for approval. Any further comments made by Members at the meeting will also be forwarded to KCC.
- 1.1.2 The document sets out KCC's current understanding of the need for new school places in the County over the next 5 years. The report acknowledges that the role of the County Council in Education is changing, but recognises that it remains the strategic commissioner of education and therefore has a statutory responsibility to monitor the supply and demand for school places and for ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to meet demand.
- 1.1.3 KCC's goals for 2015 are:
- 1.1.4 That there will be more good schools, with at least 85% of primary and secondary schools judged as good or outstanding. All special schools will be good or outstanding;
- 1.1.5 At least 85% of families secure school places at their first preference school and 95% secure either their first or second preference;
- 1.1.6 At least 5% surplus capacity in the primary sector in each District;
- 1.1.7 At least 5% surplus capacity in the secondary sector in each travel to learn area of Kent; and

- 1.1.8 Appropriate provisions for children with special educational needs so as to reduce the number who need to attend independent and out of county provision by 10%.
- 1.1.9 The Plan looks at trends in population, migration, pre-school and school numbers and estimates any additional demands arising from planned housing developments to assess where extra capacity is needed. In Kent as a whole pupil numbers are expected to rise significantly, but this is not uniformly distributed across the County.
- 1.1.10 Primary school numbers are expected to rise from 116,600 in 2011 to 127,300 in 2016, which will require some additional provision in some Districts. Secondary school numbers (years 7-11) are expected to fall to 2015 (from 80,371 in 2011/12 to 77,600 in 2015), but they are then expected to rise again up to a peak of 83,200 in 2021. The fall in numbers to 2015 masks the fact that some extra provision will be needed in some parts of the County.
- 1.1.11 In T&M the primary age population forecast sees a slight increase of +200 pupils from 2011-16, a drop in numbers by -700 from 2016-21 and a further drop of -100 during 2021-26. The secondary age population is expected to be static (i.e. no change) 2011-16, then an increase of +400 is expected 2016-21 before dropping back by -400 during 2021-26.
- 1.1.12 For commissioning purposes KCC split the County into three areas. T&MBC is in Mid Kent with Maidstone, Ashford and Shepway. The Plan also includes a District Profile for T&M, which is appended to this report for information. The draft Plan notes that due to the location and number of secondary schools in Tonbridge, the district profiles for Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells are also relevant for commissioning purposes.
- 1.1.13 Officers met with colleagues from KCC on the 29th May to discuss the draft Plan and the data and assumptions upon which the recommendations are based. Some this discussion has helped to inform the response that has been returned to KCC.

1.2 Key Issues for T&MBC

- 1.2.1 In terms of primary school provision the draft plan concludes that there is sufficient capacity to meet demand (plus the +5% surplus capacity) in the borough for the plan period up to 2017. However, it notes a number of 'pressure points' that are linked to current and planned housing developments, which are currently predominantly in the Malling area.
- 1.2.2 The district profile identifies the major developments at Holborough Quarry, Peter's Pit, Leybourne Chase, and Kings Hill and the additional provision that would be needed to meet extra demand. (Each of these, of course, enjoys a firm planning permission with identified development contributions to demonstrably necessary education infrastructure required in relation to the need arising from the approved development). The main issues relate to the rate at which these

developments come forward and whether any future developments are planned, but this will be over a longer timescale than covered by this commissioning plan.

- 1.2.3 For secondary school provision the plan identifies a potential deficit of places in the Tonbridge area between 2016/17 and 2019/20, predominantly at the Hayesbrook Boys School and the three grammar schools. The draft Plan identifies no additional capacity coming forward in the Tonbridge area, but it is anticipated that additional capacity in schools in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells will compensate. The District profiles for Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells point to additional capacity in non-selective places in Sevenoaks and additional selective capacity at two existing school in Tunbridge Wells.
- 1.2.4 Officers have made the point in meetings that while capacity may not be an issue in the secondary provision in Tonbridge as a result of additional places being made available in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells, there may be more competition for selective places at the Tonbridge schools by Sevenoaks families, if the alternatives are being provided for in Tunbridge Wells.
- 1.2.5 Some additional comments were made in respect of references to developer contributions to clarify the relationship between Section 106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy – I remain unsure that KCC officers appreciate the range and complexity of the CIL regime *if* it were to be adopted by TMBC.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report, which seeking approval of a response to the County Council's draft commissioning plan for education. Officers will continue to work closely with KCC Education in the future commissioning of school places and as part of the review of the Local Development Framework in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The delivery of additional school capacity is addressed by KCC and other providers and with the Borough Council through Section 106 agreements.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 Not responding to the draft Plan by the deadline would have resulted in a risk that the Borough Council's views were not incorporated.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 That the Cabinet note the summary and issues arising from the draft Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2012-17 by Kent County Council and endorse the officer level comments at Appendix 1 to this report.

Background papers:

Draft Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2012-17 (KCC April 2012)

contact: Ian Bailey
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Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	This report summarises the draft Plan and seeks endorsement of officer level comments. KCC have carried out an EqlA as part of their statutory responsibilities.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	The goals of the draft plan are to increase the number of good schools in the county and improve choice. These have been welcomed in the comments.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A	N/A

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.