

Report to CABINET

Expansion of Kingsland School

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Shaid Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Education

Officer Contacts:

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16th November 2020

Reason for Decision

To agree the following recommended changes in relation to Kingsland School: -

1. Increase the schools PAN (Planned Admission Number) to 100 pupils (70 permanently excluded children and 30 SLC children).
2. Refurbish the lower ground floor of Laurel Bank to enable use by the school at an estimated cost of £500,000.
3. Set a budget for the school based on the newly proposed PAN and agree the release of funds from the DSG to cover the schools currently predicted deficit.

Recommendations

Cabinet members are asked to note the options set out in this report and to:

- Approve option 2 with the recommended interventions
- Approve spend up to £500k to support the delivery of the works needed to progress immediately with further delegated authority to the Director of Economy and Director of Finance for an additional £250k should this be required to complete the scheme.

Expansion of Kingsland School

1 Background and Context

- 1.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide full time education for permanently excluded pupils from the 6th day following exclusion from a mainstream setting. The Local Authority must also provide education to pupils who cannot attend a mainstream setting due to medical or mental health issues.
- 1.2 The Pupil Referral Unit (Kingsland) works with excluded pupils and those pupils who are not able to attend a mainstream setting. The overriding goal of this provision is to reintegrate children as soon as possible back into a mainstream setting. The PAN (Planned Admission Number) and available space are clearly not suitable for the current demands placed on the school. For comparison Tameside Pupil Referral Unit has a PAN of around 120 yet its total number of pupils in the borough is around 33,000.
- 1.3 Oldham has around 42,000 school age children in the borough with a PAN of 70. The overriding goal in the borough is to reduce the number of exclusions and where possible keep pupils in a mainstream setting, to this end we are actively encouraging schools where possible to develop internal exclusion units and to work with pupils and parents to reduce exclusions.
- 1.4 Kingsland provides an excellent service to the young people in its care and this has been demonstrated by its recent good Ofsted inspection which is attached to this report as a background paper.

2 Current Position and Rationale for Expansion

2.1 Planned Admission Number

Kingsland School currently has a PAN of 70 (40 permanently excluded children and 30 SLC Children). The PAN of the school has not changed since 2012. In recent years the number of school age children in the borough has increased to approximately 43,500 in 2020 and is predicted to increase to 47,000 by 2025. This increase has put enormous pressure on Kingsland School as there has been a corresponding increase in the number of pupils excluded in the borough, consequently the actual numbers of children in the school is always far in excess the official PAN. Therefore, there is a need to formally increase the PAN of the school. The current number on roll at the school is 148 (although some of these pupils are on part-time timetables). A statutory process will need to be followed in order to formally increase the schools PAN. A six-week public consultation is required, and it is also necessary to inform and gain the approval of the DfE for the changes proposed to the PAN. There would also be a requirement to amend the PRU's Instrument of Governance.

2.2 Refurbishment of Laurel Bank (Lower Ground Floor)

The school currently occupies two sites (Broadbent Road and Laurel Bank in Shaw). The site at Broadbent Road is the main base of the school. In 2018 it was agreed by the Cabinet Member for Education that the upper ground floor of Laurel Bank could be refurbished to help the school cope with the continuing increase in pupil numbers. At the time of that expansion the lower ground floor of that building was in use as a Day Care Centre for Elderly Residents. The lower ground floor became vacant in 2019 and as the

school continues to experience pressure on space it is being proposed that the lower ground floor is also refurbished to provide additional space for the school. In particular this space will be used for therapeutic interventions to be delivered to pupils. There are three main areas of therapeutic intervention; Think Bricks, Narrative Therapy and counselling. Kingsland School intend to increase their offer of interventions to include social communication speech and language interventions. There is a team of staff trained in mental health first aid who can offer emotional support, referral and guidance for pupils as and when it is required or when concerns arise. There is also a need for additional space in order to separate groups of pupils where there are known gang affiliations that need to be managed to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

2.3 School Budget and Targeted Interventions

The school is currently funded on the following basis: -

- Base funding is £400K.
- High needs top up funding is £433K.
- DSG exclusion funding is £261K
- Hospital funding is £448K

The need for additional funding of £224K was ringfenced from the DSG in July 2019 but has not yet been received in the school's budget for 2020/21.

As the school PAN is currently only set for 70 pupils the Local Authority has had to pay additional contributions to the school in order that the school can be appropriately staffed and resourced to enable it to offer provision well over its official PAN. Consequently, the school has encountered significant budget issues which have required a year on year response from the LA in terms of additional funding. A permanent increase to the schools PAN will enable far more effective budget planning in the future as a set budget can be allocated on actual numbers as opposed to current official PAN of 70. In 2019/20 the school had a deficit of £166K increasing to an estimated deficit of £734k in 2020/21. This deficit is anticipated to increase year on year unless additional funding is agreed.

There is no scope to reduce staffing in the school. As a general rule the ratios are 2 staff to 8 pupils (maximum). This consists of a teacher and a teaching assistant, given the complexity of need in many of the children at Kingsland this is an appropriate level of staff for this type of provision.

There are currently 15 pupils in total receiving home tuition which is delivered by three members of staff (x 2 teachers and 1 HLTA) and again this is in line with the levels needed for this provision.

The school undertake a significant number of interventions and these have been gradually increasing over time. Up to February half term 2020, a total of 64 interventions including counselling were being delivered each week by a team of 5 staff (full time equivalent of 3.4). The intervention programme is constantly under review to ensure all sessions are allocated to pupils. From the 17 cases analysed 100% of pupils scored their time at Kingsland School higher than the previous point in their life. Staff report an improvement in emotional regulation with pupils accessing narrative therapy. Counselling is a way of supporting pupils with personal problems including bereavement, loss, sexuality and abuse. There is a significant need for these interventions in Oldham.

All staff who are identified as pastoral team members are not actively involved in academic interventions. They are however responsible for one to one work with pupils, such as travel training, and transporting pupils when needed. Travel training has resulted in increased attendance for many pupils who have undertaken this, and this is also something that would have a significant benefit for school and pupils alike.

Since September 2019 there have been 36 statutory action requests (PNs and Warning Letters) submitted, 7 were for unauthorised holidays and the rest were for sporadic unauthorised absences 12 pupils have been placed on Fast Track to Attendance and 3 School Attendance orders have been issued. To try to increase overall school attendance and reduce absent rates the school have carried out 450 attendance home visits to pupils since Sept 2019. Out of these visits, they have made 223 to more persistent non-attenders 20.6% of these have resulted in the pupils attending school on either the same or next day. In addition to this 227-home visit were completed to 77 pupils of which 56.38% these have resulted in pupils attending the same or next day. Nearly 50% of pupils are unable to access a full-time timetable due to various reasons including behavior, violence including gang affiliation, mental health and other family factors. At the point when the school had 136 pupils on roll, 121 of these are classed Persistent Absenteeism which equates to 88.97% of the cohort. When we look at reasons for absence that are within the school's control (excluding part time timetables) 69 pupils are persistent absence (PA) which equates to 50.74% of the cohort which is lower than the national average of 72.2%. The school are working closely with the LA who have offered weekly support with meetings, home visits, statistics and staff training. This work is key to improving outcomes for this vulnerable group of pupils.

The Kingsland Team have also established a 'Return to Learn' programme to target pupils who are unable to cope within the school environment at Broadbent Road. The aim is to focus on re-engaging pupils into Kingsland School. Due to the high risk posed by these pupils and the vulnerability of staff working off site, this requires 3 members of staff, consisting of a teacher, HLTA's/teaching assistant. Ratios in this provision are 3 staff to 8 pupils. This has been extremely successful. Out of the 12 pupils attending this placement, all of them sustained their place. This success enabled us to reintegrate 10 pupils back into Kingsland School.

All these interventions are clearly of educational benefit and we would like to support this work going forward in order to improve outcomes for this vulnerable group.

2 **Options/Alternatives**

3.1 Option 1: Do nothing.

3.2 Option 2: Approve the recommended changes:

- The current budget is not set at an appropriate level for the school and is complicated by the lack of an appropriate PAN. Revising the school PAN would enable more effective budget planning.
- In addition, the extra funding requirements outlined above will be required to enable these targeted interventions to continue.
- The school is currently short of physical space and the development of the lower floor of laurel bank would allow the school to build upon the recent successful Ofsted Inspection and continue its programme of targeted interventions.

4 **Recommended Option**

4.1 Option 2 is the preferred option.

5 **Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation will take place with all stakeholders and the public (in relation to the proposed PAN increase).
- 5.2 Cabinet member for Education and Ward members have been consulted

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 Revenue Implications

6.1.1 Increase in PAN from 70 to 100 pupils

The Pupil Referral Unit (Kingsland) is funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant which covers funding for the education of pupil's subject to Education, Health and Care Plans from age 0 -25 in a range of provision including special schools, mainstream schools, alternative provision, Independent specialist provision and Council centrally retained expenditure for High Needs.

Increasing the PAN by 30 places would result in an additional £625k of required funding split between base and high needs top up funding. Due to increasing pressures on the school budget over recent years the school is already in receipt of an additional annual amount of £401k, above the official PAN funding. Therefore, the additional cost to the DSG of increasing the PAN by 30 places would be £224k each year.

The DSG outturn for 2019-20 forecast has factored in £224,000 to pay for the additional cost of increasing the PAN and a further £224k has been included in the DSG estimated outturn for 2020/21 and for future years. The current estimated deficit budget for Kingsland is £734k in 2020/21. Increasing the PAN funding by 30 places will still leave the school facing a deficit budget. The predicted deficits for 2020/21 would be £286k increasing to and £567k in 2021/22. It is proposed therefore to fund the increase in PAN of 30 pupils of £448K and to work with Kingsland on a 3-year recovery plan to bring the budget back into surplus.

6.1.2 Refurbish the lower ground floor of Laurel Bank

The revenue costs of running an additional floor within Laurel Bank have currently not be included in the school's projected budget deficit. The additional estimated annual running cost is £27k which has been derived using the actual running costs included within Kingsland's budget of the upper ground floor at Laurel Bank in 2019/20.

The premises costs for the building are currently been funded from the Corporate Landlord budget. The revised use of the accommodation will therefore lead to a saving to the General Fund and an increased cost to the DSG

The above estimated revenue costs for the lower ground floor include only utilities and other general running costs. There is no additional staffing required to run the facility.

A breakdown of the estimated cost is below.

Expenditure Type	Total (£)
Maintenance Contracts	1,490
Cleaning	15,300
Cleaning Support SLA	300
Cleaning Materials	300
Water	1,600
Gas and Electric	6,000
Window Cleaning	100
Telephone	400
Waste	1,220
Total	£26,710

(Liz Caygill)

Capital Implications

- 6.1.3 The Council has a total Basic Needs Grant allocation of £54.930m for the period 2017/22 (£15.4m 2017/18, £22.8m 18/19, £9.9m 19/20, nil in 20/21 and £6.8m in 2021/22). Notification of Basic Needs Grant for 2022/23 will not be given until after the Comprehensive Spending review, which was originally planned for July 2020 but has been delayed because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prior to the consideration of this report, £39.555m of the Basic Need Grant funding had been allocated to projects. The allocation of a further £0.500m will bring the total commitment to £40.055m, leaving a remaining amount of £14.875m, as shown in the table below: -

Capital Project	Basic Needs Grant Allocation (£m)
Crompton House	10.829
Oldham Academy North	5.000
Feasibility Costs	0.100
Greenfield CP	1.862
Royton and Crompton	5.000
Holy Trinity	0.250
Oasis Academy – Dining Room	0.575
Oasis Academy – UTC adaptations	0.350
North Chadderton Expansion	7.200
Kingfisher (Expansion)	0.750
Kingfisher School (Laurel Bank)	0.240
Clarksfield Primary (Oasis)	2.904
Hollinwood Academy contribution	0.690
St Herberts	0.217
Mayfield Academy	2.500
Oasis – Dining Room additional contribution	0.088
Kingfisher additional grant and additional contribution (conditional grant)	1.000
Kingsland – (this report)	0.500
Total Allocated	40.055
Total Grant	54.930
Amount Available for Allocation	14.875

- 6.1.4 This approval report includes a request for delegated approval to the Director of Finance and Director of Economy for an additional £250k contingency on top of the cost estimate

for the works, in order to account for any unforeseen issues and to allow timely progress to be delivered in order to support the needed increase to the PAN. This would be monitored and reviewed in the financial reports taken to Education and Corporate Property Boards. Should the additional £250k of additional funding be required the Amount of Basic Need funding will reduce to £14.625m.

- 6.1.5 The whole of the remaining Basic Need grant allocations may not be available to the Council to deploy. The ESFA may use a portion of the remaining Basic Need funding to cover the cost of building the new Oasis Free School (Leesbrook). The exact amount for the build costs and initial fit out of the school are not currently known. However, there will be ongoing negotiations with the ESFA and the impact on the Council's available Basic Need funding will be reported once known
- (James Postle)

7 **Legal Services Comments**

- 7.1 There are no immediate legal issues arising from the proposal contained in the report, but as indicated, a statutory consultation process in respect of the proposals and an amendment to the Instrument of Governance will be required for a lawful process to be concluded thereafter.
- (Colin Brittain)

8. **Co-operative Agenda**

- 8.1 The recommended option supports the Local Authority stated ambition for children and young people to improve their lives through the provision of effective teaching and learning by ensuring that there is sufficient access to quality school places for those experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties or challenging behavior.
- (Andy Collinge)

9 **Human Resources Comments**

- 9.1 There are no HR implications
- (Andy Collinge)

10 **Risk Assessments**

- 10.1 The report highlights the challenges the Council faces on returning the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to break-even over a three-year period. The report sets out a rationale for supporting the school which provides an essential service in integrating pupils into mainstream education whereby the school will have to manage in line with set resources that require further efficiencies. If these cannot be managed, then the pressure on the High Needs Block is likely to increase impacting on the agreed Recovery Plan.
- (Mark Stenson)

11 **IT Implications**

- 11.1 IT implications and associated costs have not yet been considered as part of this proposal. A statement of requirements and a technical design should be commissioned if there are any IT implications.
- (Chris Petrie – Head of IT)

12 **Property Implications**

- 12.1 The proposal to improve provision on the ground floor of the site at Laurel Bank, will result in an upgrade to internal and external facilities, and these works are considered necessary to meet the school's requirements. This approval report includes a £250k

contingency on top of the cost estimate works to account for any unforeseen issues and to allow timely progress to be delivered in order to support the needed increase to the PAN.
(Andrew Hall)

12.2 Furthermore, the proposed expansion of Kingsland school will result in the whole asset (L00048) being occupied by a single occupier thereby providing a more efficient use of the premises from an asset management perspective.
(Peter Wood)

13 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 The client department will need to engage procurement at an early stage in order to establish a suitable procurement strategy and programme (including COVID-19 impacts) for both professional services and works in relation to the refurbishment of the lower ground floor of Laurel Bank. Estimated cost of £500,000.
(Dan Cheetham)

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 It is essential that any expansion works are completed in compliance with health and safety legislation. It is essential that competent contractors are procured and building works are properly managed.
(Laura Smith)

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 Admission authorities have a legal duty to comply with parental preference wherever possible. Consequently, Oldham's school place planning approach takes account of identified demand for places. In terms of equality, the proposal will positively increase the supply of good quality school places in the borough.

15.2 Good quality alternative provision contributes to community cohesion and in addition results in a reduces crime and pressure on the Youth Justice System.
(Andy Collinge)

16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

16.1 An equality and impact assessment is not required as there are no detrimental implications for any vulnerable groups.
(Andy Collinge)

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 ED-03-20

19 **Background Papers**

19.1 Ofsted Report (Kingsland School, May 2020)