

CABINET

27 OCTOBER 2015

2015 REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2011-16 INCORPORATING OUTCOMES OF THE OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR THE SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

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Summary

This annual summary report provides an update on the progress made against the School Organisation Plan 2011-16 action plan, highlights areas of emerging need and makes recommendations to ensure that a sufficient supply of good quality school places is maintained.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 Although there is no longer a statutory requirement for local authorities to have a School Organisation Plan, it was decided by Cabinet when approving the School Organisation Plan in November 2011, that having such a strategic plan will enable the Council to establish a framework for school organisation decisions to ensure an appropriate supply of school places linked to school improvement. The proposals, which flow from the updated School Organisation Plan, are consistent with the School Organisation Plan Principles, and with the Council Plan Priority of 'Children and young people having the best start in life'.

2. Background

2.1 In January 2008 Cabinet approved the School Organisation Plan Principles, which contained a set of planning principles to guide decision-making in a clear and consistent way so that the Council complies with its statutory duty to provide sufficient good school places. The core of these principles ensures that any changes to schools are based upon improving schools and raising standards. In November 2011, the Cabinet approved the School Organisation Plan 2011-16 (SOP).

2.2 The SOP included an action plan, which highlighted specific proposals for developing provision in Medway over the lifetime of the plan. These proposals were informed by an analysis of local and national policy and strategy, as well as the most up-to-date available information and data, which were used to forecast the future need for places in Medway schools.

- 2.3 Annual reviews followed in July 2013 and September 2014. Cabinet approved the reviews which outlined the positive progress made against the action plan and highlighted further areas of emerging need where additional provision was expected to be required. The action plan was updated to reflect this.
- 2.4 This report highlights progress against the updated action plan and identifies new areas of emerging need based upon the latest annual round of forecasting undertaken in April 2015.
- 2.5 Previous year's reviews have concentrated in the main on the primary phase of education, however this report adds the outcomes of the options appraisal for the sufficient supply of secondary school places, which was approved by Cabinet on 30 September 2014 (see section 5).

3. Achievements against the Action Plan

- 3.1 Items 1-10 from the original action plan in 2011 are either completed or ongoing as part of medium to long-term proposals.
- Items 11 and 12 in the 2013 revised action plan highlighted emerging need in Hoo St Werburgh and Cuxton/Halling and provided solutions. Action to address these items is underway with new primary provision being provided in Hoo St Werburgh village at The Hundred of Hoo Academy, and by expansion at the Cuxton Schools.
 - Items 13 and 15 to provide further additional primary places in Gillingham is underway with expansion at Woodlands by 1 form of entry. 2016 shows a potential spike in numbers and a bulge class is suggested in section 3.4 of this report
 - Item 14 to provide additional places in Chatham and Rochester is now likely to be required and a bulge class for September 2016 is proposed in section 4.6 of this report
 - Item 16 to add additional provision in Strood is underway with approval granted for an additional 2FE, which will comprise of a bulge class at Elaine for September 2016 and a 1FE expansion at Bligh Infant School brought forward from 2018 to take effect from September 2017.
 - Item 17 to ensure a sufficient supply of secondary places from 2017 is underway. Specific projects will be presented to Cabinet for approval at the appropriate times.
- 3.2 For the reception intake in September 2015 there were 289 more places available than in September 2012. This is due to the successful expansion programme that has taken place in that time, which includes school expansions, new schools and Published Admission Number (PAN) increases within current capacity. Table 1 highlights the primary schools where the expansion of places has or will take place to ensure sufficient places are available.

Table 1

School (All Primary phase)	Type of expansion	From	Increase PAN	Total increase in capacity over time
Wainscott Primary	1 FE expansion	Sept 2013	30	210
Napier Primary	1 FE expansion	Sept 2013	30	210
Brompton W'brook Primary	½ FE expansion	Sept 2013	15	105
Saxon Way Primary	1 FE expansion	Sept 2014	30	210
Cuxton Schools	1/3 FE expansion	Sept 2014	10	70
Riverside Primary	Increase in PAN	Sept 2014	5	35
New Horizons Academy	3 FE New school	Sept 2014	90	630
Cedar Primary	Increase in PAN	Sept 2014	15	105
St Michaels RCP	Increase in PAN	Sept 2014	4	28
Woodlands Academy	1FE expansion	Sept 2015	30	210
Hundred of Hoo Academy	1FE New school	Sept 2015	30	210
Elaine Primary Academy	1FE expansion	Sept 2016	40*	40
Bligh Infant School	1FE expansion	Sept 2017	30	90
Bligh Junior School	1FE expansion	Sept 2020	30	120
St Thomas of Canterbury	1FE bulge class	Sept 2016	30*	30

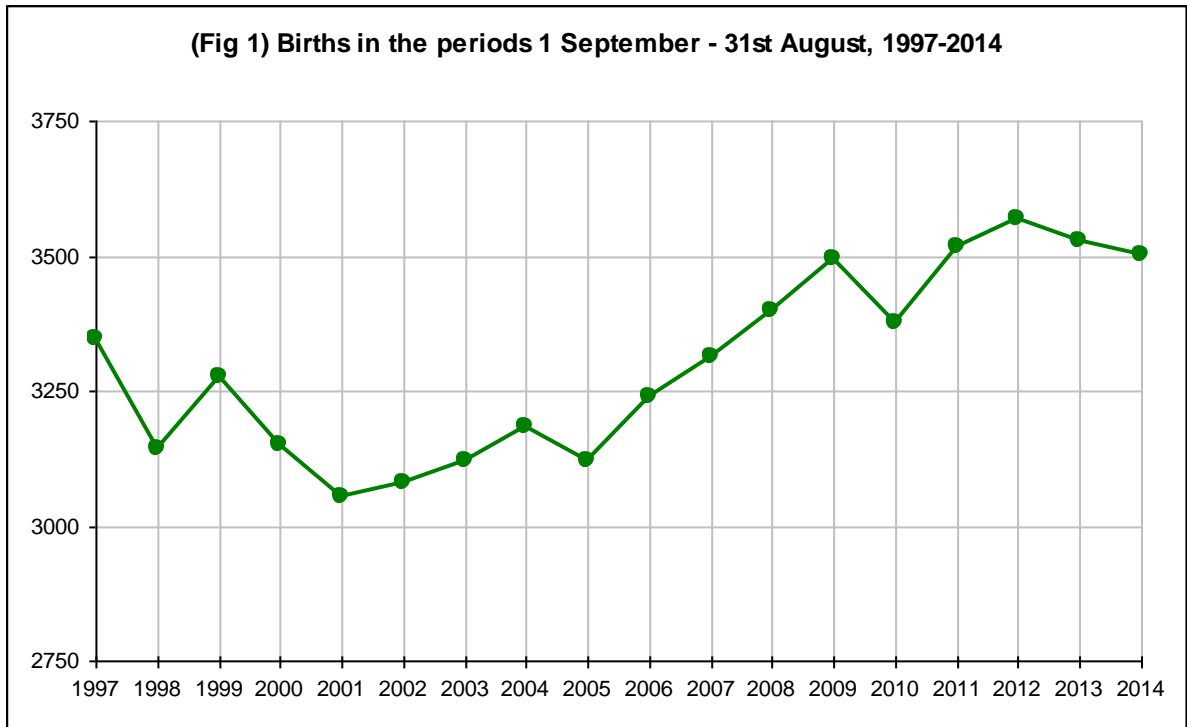
*Bulge classes initially

- 3.3 There are less than 100 spare places in the current reception year group across the 66 schools that admit reception age children, meaning that without the creation of the additional places outlined above there would have been a shortage of at least 189 places for September 2015 entry, with no capacity for any additional in-year casual admission applications received throughout the year. These 100 spaces are spread across Medway, giving flexibility to the system and ensuring that there are spaces available for children of families who move into Medway during the year.
- 3.4 Where additional temporary capacity may be required this will be addressed through the use of bulge classes (funded by the growth fund school block DSG) within current accommodation where possible. The areas this affects most are Chatham/Rochester and Gillingham for September 2016. One school in each area will take an additional 1FE reception class to cater for a spike in numbers. These classes will progress through the schools in the usual manner.
- 3.5 In summary the completed actions emanating from the School Organisation Plan 2011-16 have ensured a sufficient supply of primary school places, in the right locations and at the right time. The forward plan of current and future projects should ensure this position is maintained for the future.

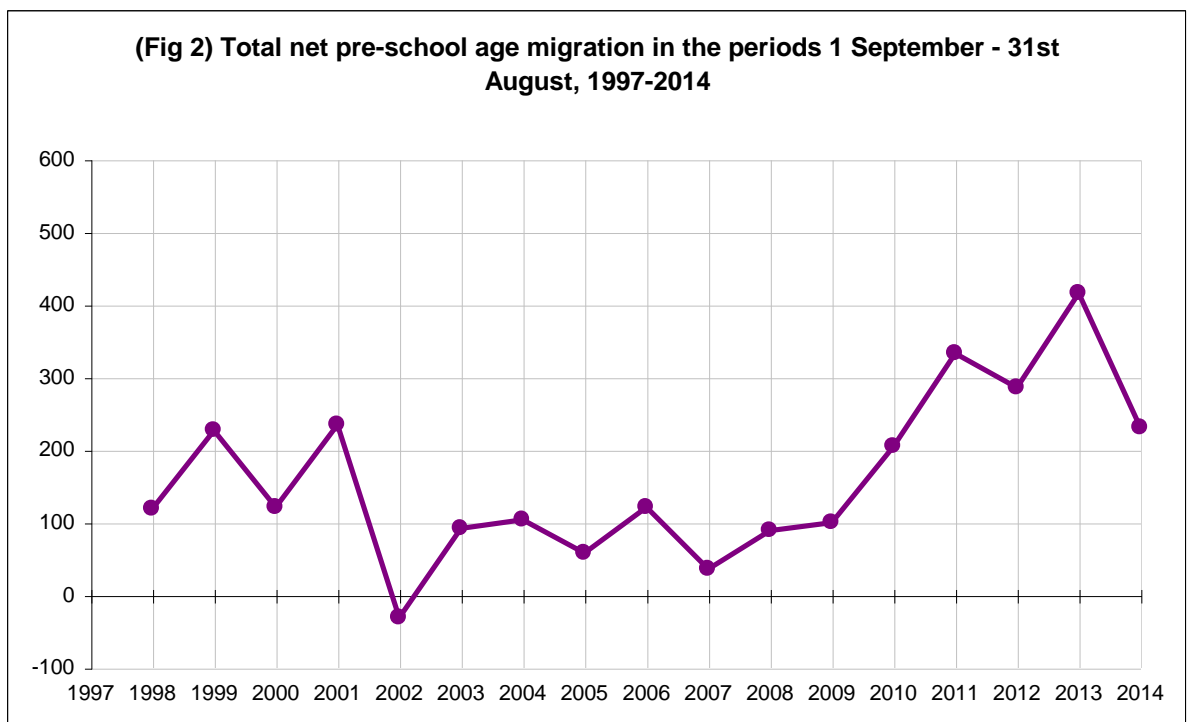
4. Analysis of latest data and information– Primary phase

4.1 Latest headline data:

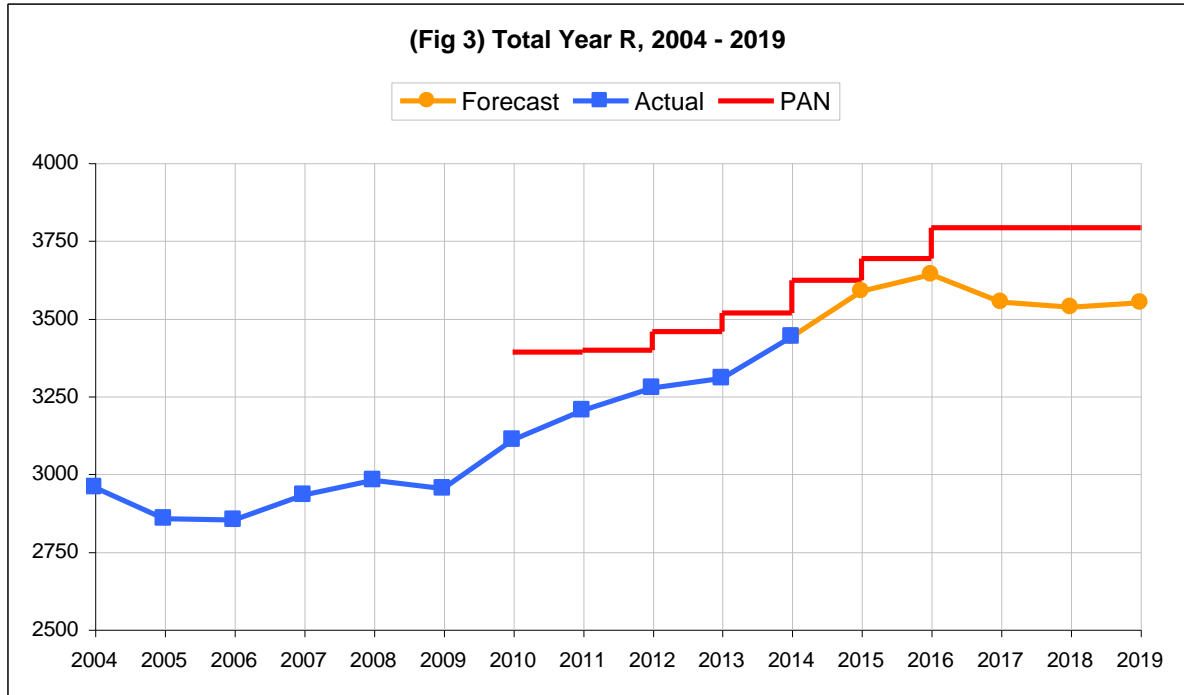
- The birth rate in Medway for 1 September 2013 – 31 August 2014 is the fourth highest since Medway was formed (Fig 1). However it is also the lowest of the past four years. These larger cohorts have yet to enter the education system.



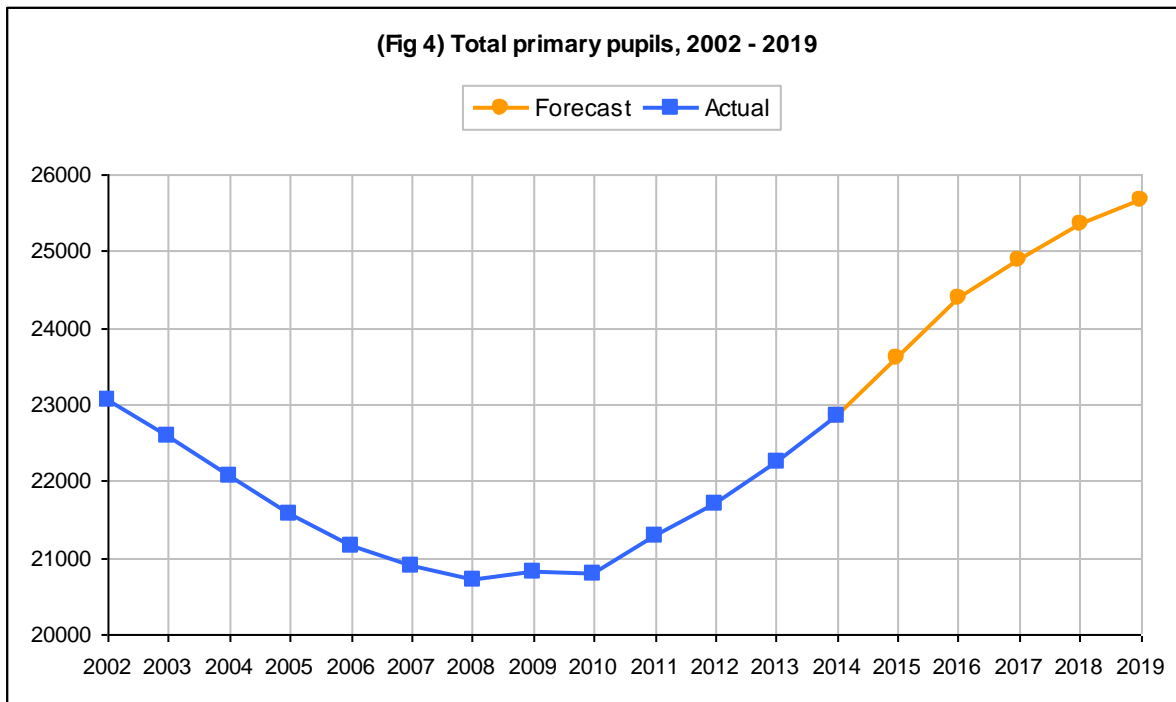
- Weekly monitoring of births from registry office data suggests that births for the academic year 2014/15 are slightly lower than last year, indicating a potential easing in the numbers of children being born in Medway.
- Net inward movement of pre-school age children into Medway for the same period shows a net gain of 231 (fig 2), just higher than the equivalent of a 1FE primary school, but across only 5 age groups. Whilst not as high as the previous three years, it is still the fourth highest on record. The pattern of inward movement into Medway is erratic; in the main this is caused by the differing numbers of new houses available each year. It is likely given the ongoing housing schemes in Medway that the general trend for inward movement will be upwards.



- The number of reception children at January 2015, using data from the 2015 Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), was 3439, the highest on record. Forecasts suggest that this number will increase year on year until 2016/17 (fig 3) when it will reach 3,640. At the start of the 2015/16 academic year applications for September were at 3,608 against a forecast of 3,590, a difference of 0.5%. Forecasts indicate that there could then be a small drop in 2017/18 (fig 3), followed by a period of stability with numbers levelling out. However, if the inward movement of families continues at similar levels to recent years then those figures could rise. It is therefore important to retain a level of spare capacity within the system to ensure flexibility.



- Overall pupil numbers in primary schools are increasing; currently there are 22,838 pupils in primary schools, the highest it has been since 2003. Numbers are expected to continue to rise year on year until at least 2019/20 when forecasts (fig 4) indicate that there could be 25,659 pupils on roll, which would be the highest on record by over 2500, and an increase of nearly 5000 pupils in ten years.



4.2 Impact of New Housing Schemes planned

- Significant housing development has taken place in recent years across Medway, which has exacerbated the inward movement effect and added further pressure upon the availability of places.
- More developments are underway and planned for the future, which will inevitably lead to further inward movement of families, in turn leading to increased demand for school places.
- Using approved pupil yield figures, should all planned developments be completed, there could be demand, over time, for over 1,200 additional primary places, the equivalent of three 2FE primary schools. This does not include the potential 5,000 home Lodge Hill or the 1,500 dwelling Rochester Riverside developments which are intended to be educationally self sufficient.
- The main school place planning areas currently most affected by proposed housing developments are Strood and Gillingham West.
- Officers will continue to monitor housing schemes; both approved and planned, to ensure their impact upon the school place system is addressed accordingly.
- Officers will also continue to claim contributions from developers where possible to assist with mitigating the impact of these new housing schemes.

4.3 Analysis by planning area

Using the latest birth, migration and housing data, 2015's forecasts have highlighted that the proposals to provide additional capacity already completed, underway or about to commence should in the main ensure a sufficient supply of primary school places for the foreseeable future. There are a couple of exceptions, although these are limited and the use of bulge classes from 2016 should resolve the pressure. These areas are in Gillingham and Chatham/Rochester.

In line with national policy, officers will explore options based upon good or outstanding schools expanding. Other principles taken into consideration are the capacity and practicality of the school site to support expansion, the popularity of each school and the geographical location of the school in relation to demand centres.

4.3 Gillingham

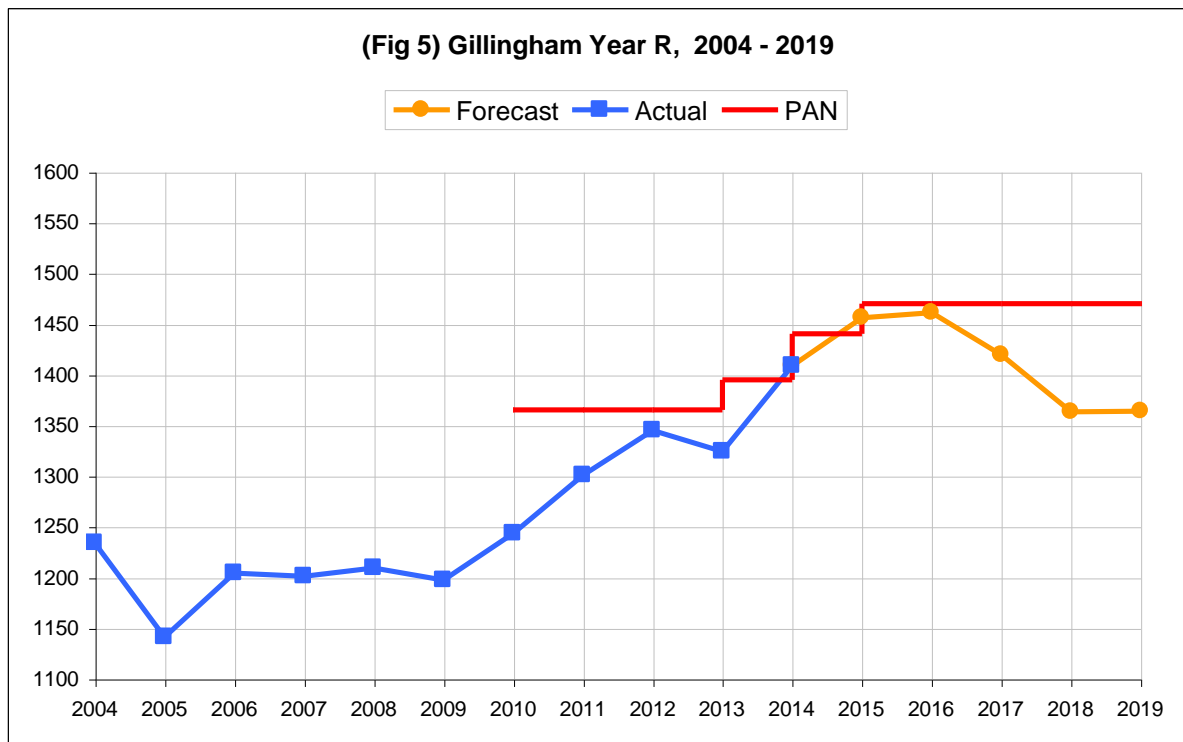


Fig 5 above shows the reception class forecast for the wider Gillingham area, which includes the Rainham, Wigmore, Parkwood and Twydall areas. This shows that due to recent and ongoing expansions at Brompton Westbrook, Saxon Way, Napier, and Woodlands sufficient capacity should be in place going forward, although for September 2016 there are forecast to be only nine spaces available, and with a sudden influx of families into the developments around the river, this spare capacity could easily be taken up. It is therefore recommended that a bulge class be put into place for 2016 at St Thomas of Canterbury, allowing time to monitor whether a permanent expansion is needed. This will add 30 places to the system, ensuring sufficient local places are available.

4.5 Strood

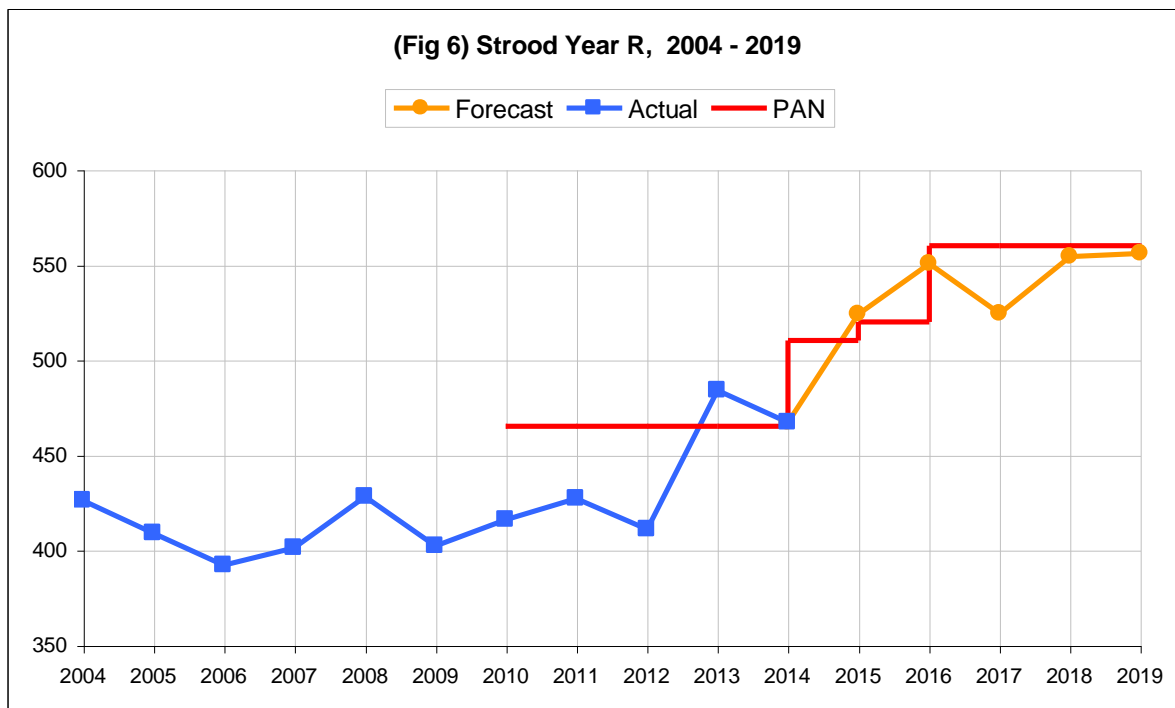


Figure 6 above shows that demand for reception places in Strood is expected to rise over the next two years, fall slightly for one year in 2017 and then rise again. In the main the additional capacity already approved, and being put in place in terms of a bulge class at Elaine and a 1FE expansion at the Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' school at Bligh, should ensure a sufficient supply of places in the medium term. Births, inward movement of families, travel patterns and parental preference will be continually monitored to ensure that we are providing sufficient school places in the appropriate locations.

4.6 Chatham and Rochester

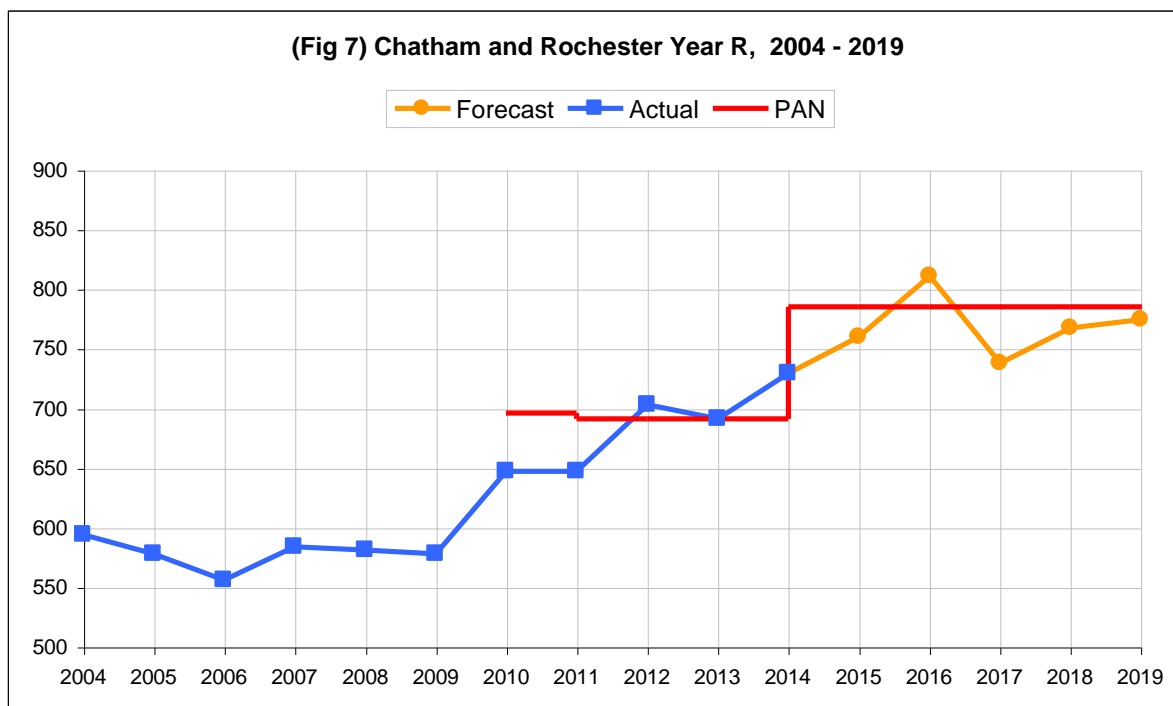


Figure 7 above shows a continual rise in pupil demand to 2016 in Chatham and Rochester after which there is a fall in numbers for one year and then a steady rise again. In the main the establishment of New Horizons Children's Academy should provide sufficient places in the medium term, however there is likely to be the need for a 30 pupil bulge class for 2016 when the forecast numbers exceed the available places by around 25. In the past there have been bulge classes in Chatham and this could again be a solution in the short term.

Alternative solutions could include the expansion of Delce Academy, which the Academy Trust is consulting upon in September, although this relies upon the Regional Schools Commissioner's support and approval.

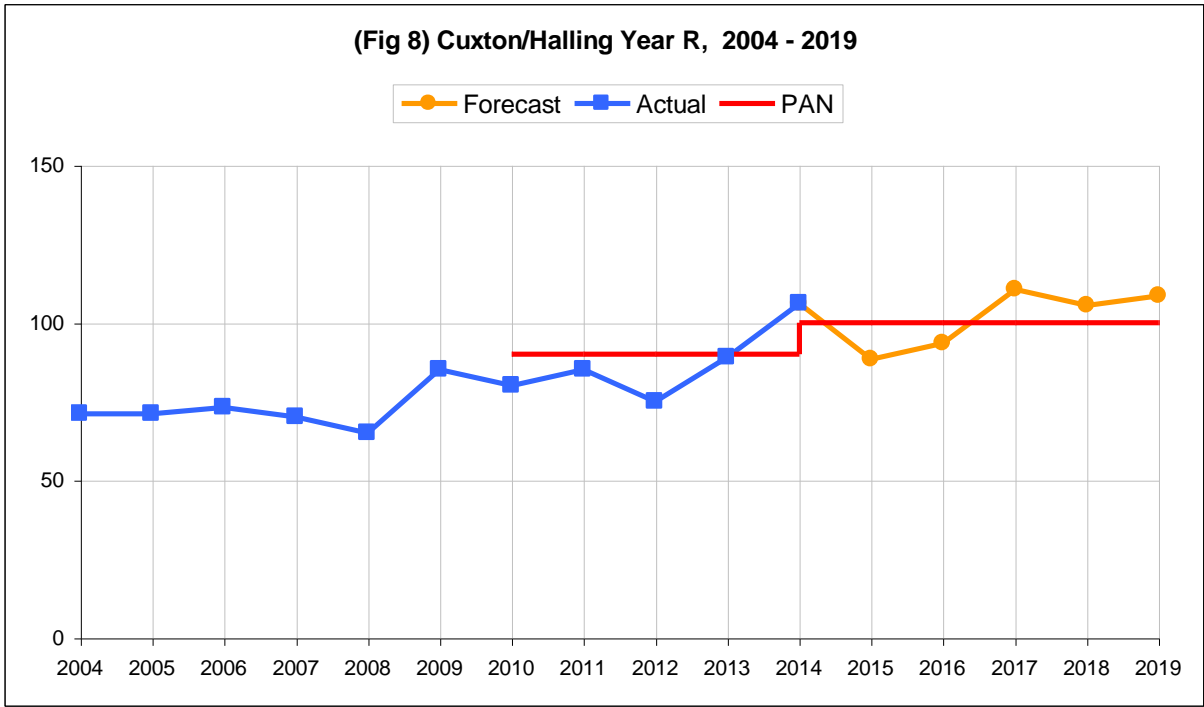
4.7 Cuxton and Halling

Figure 8 below highlights that demand for places in this area could exceed supply from 2017. The recent expansion at Cuxton should mean that sufficient places are available until then, but inward movement of families into ongoing local developments such as St Andrews Park on the former Halling cement works site could result in the need for additional places. Consideration also needs to be given to the potential impact of a new Kent school at Holborough Lakes, which opened in September and a proposed new Kent school in Peters Village development at Wouldham.

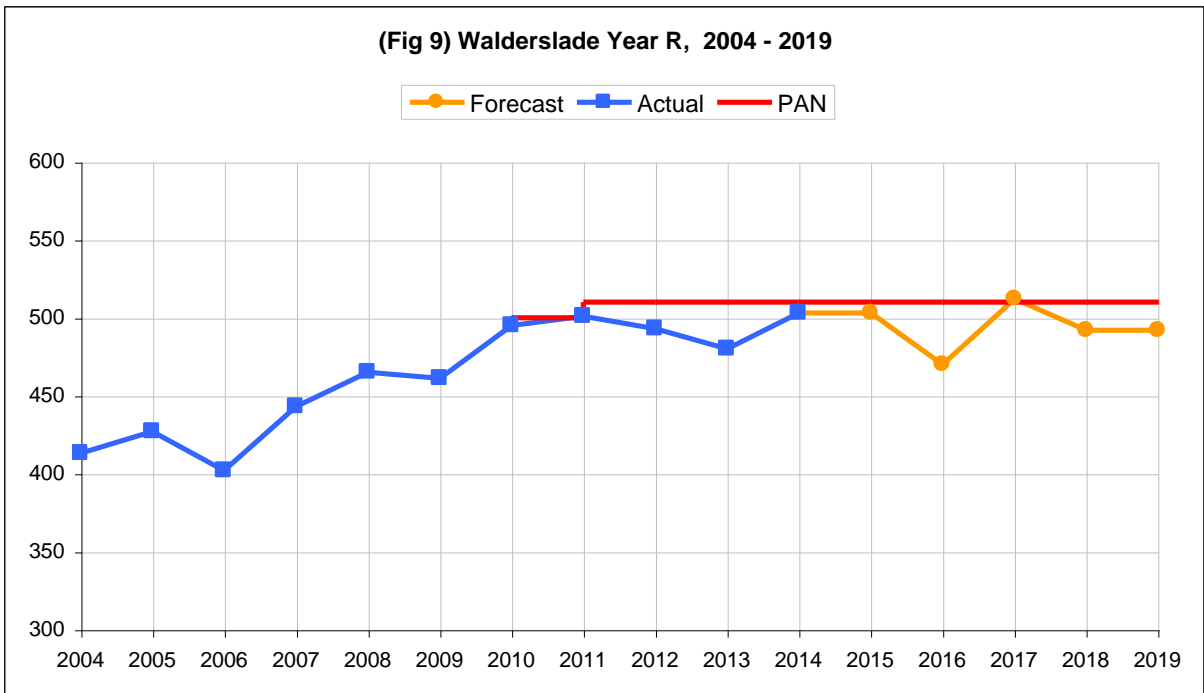
Halling Primary School currently operates a PAN of 40. To increase to a full 2FE school they would eventually need four additional classrooms plus associated improvements such as toilets and group rooms etc. No additional rooms would be required until September 2018 when one may be needed. Therefore, it is feasible to increase the PAN to 60 in 2017, which would ensure demand is met, without the need for a building project initially.

There is currently no funding available in the Capital Programme for this scheme, and so the Council is reliant upon future years funding from 2018 onwards.

Cabinet are requested to approve a detailed feasibility study to ascertain the need for additional capacity at Halling, taking into account the impact the new school Kent have established at nearby Holborough Lakes for September 2015 and the proposed school in the Peters Village development at Wouldham would have, and to obtain estimates of the funding needed to address this issue, should it be required.



4.8 Walderslade



As fig 9 above shows there is forecast to be sufficient availability of places in the Walderslade area for the extent of the forecasts, although for 2017 demand may exceed supply by just a few pupils. However, there is expected to be some spare capacity in the neighbouring Chatham area, and therefore it is not recommended at this time that any additional capacity be considered for this area. However, officers will continue to monitor planning applications for residential developments in the area, which may, if approved, advance the need for additional school places in the Walderslade area.

4.9 Peninsula

The Peninsula planning area now includes nine primary phase schools, which are some distance apart and serve their respective communities. Overall forecasts for the whole area suggest that there is quite a significant surplus of places, but the reality is that most of these are to be found at the remotest of the schools around Grain and Allhallows. Demand for places is greatest around the villages of Hoo St Werburgh, Cliffe Woods and Chattenden. The establishment from September 2015 of a 1FE primary phase at The Hundred of Hoo Academy should provide sufficient capacity for the short term, although officers will continue to monitor the situation in this area to ensure sufficient places remain available to meet demand and parental preference where appropriate.

Should future expansion in the area be necessary consideration will be given to the expansion of a number of schools, dependent upon the centres of demand and subject to the availability of funding. Should additional capacity be required specific proposals will be presented to Cabinet at the appropriate time.

4.10 Summary

In the main, the ongoing approved programme of expansions and new schools has, and should continue to ensure a sufficient supply of places for the medium term. In some areas however, a spike in numbers for 2016 could mean the need for some bulge classes to alleviate that pressure. It is expected that any bulge classes would not incur any significant capital costs, as current accommodation would be utilised although some minor adaptations to buildings may be required.

Forecasts will be continually monitored to make sure that as future demand increases or indeed decreases that the council is in the best position to react accordingly.

5 Outcome of the options appraisal for the sufficient supply of Secondary School places

- 5.1 The increasing number of primary pupils will start to impact on secondary numbers in 2015/16 as the larger primary cohorts start to transfer to secondary education. Currently there are 18,706 pupils in secondary schools, the lowest year since 2001. Numbers are now expected to rise year on year from 2015 until at least 2021/22 when forecasts suggest there could be 20,741 pupils on roll. This would be the highest level since 2005/6, an increase of 2,000 pupils over 7 years, and only 200 pupils short of the previous largest ever roll in 2003/4.
- 5.2 Following Cabinet approval in September 2014, an appraisal of the availability of secondary school capacity has taken place with a view to ensuring sufficient places are available. This has involved discussion with all secondary schools, both selective and non-selective.
- 5.3 Officers are pleased to confirm that all of Medway's secondary schools, 16 out of 17 are academies, are willing to work with the Council to provide sufficient places, albeit to differing degrees and timeframes.
- 5.4 The raising of the participation age initiative will add further pressure to available secondary places by increasing sixth form numbers, which will take up some capacity currently underused within secondary schools. This, coupled with the

increased intakes at year 7, means that that the additional pressure on accommodation is likely to be double pronged.

- 5.5 The establishment of the University Technical College (UTC) will impact upon the availability of places, however as the pupils do not begin their courses until year 10, and we cannot be certain from which schools the pupils will come, it is difficult to assess what effect this will have on the availability of secondary places at individual schools.
- 5.6 In recent months Medway has experienced an increase in the numbers of children being placed into its schools by other authorities. This is caused in the main by the impact of unaccompanied asylum seekers requiring a school place, and whilst not entirely the case this mainly affects secondary schools. This is difficult to plan for and if this continues will add further pressure upon the numbers of spare places available.
- 5.7 The following outlines the need and the options for addressing the pressure on places expected over the next seven years at least.
- 5.8 Non-Selective

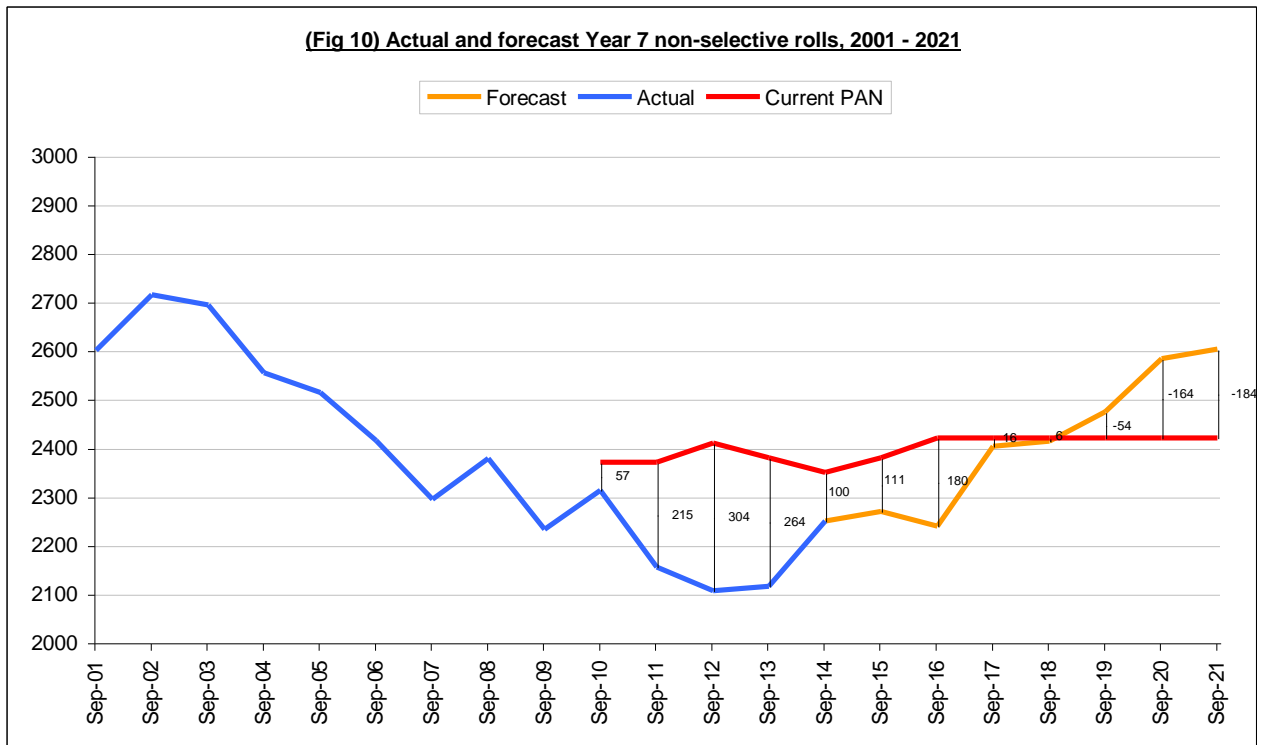
There are expected to be sufficient spaces available to meet forecast demand in non-selective secondary schools over the next two academic years, however it is expected that demand for year 7 places will be extremely close to capacity in 2017/18 and 2018/2019 (fig 10), and there will be a shortage of places from September 2019. This will grow year on year until capacity in all year groups in schools are oversubscribed by 2022. Whilst it is difficult to predict beyond that with any certainty, indications are that demand will continue to rise based upon the known numbers of pre-school age children and proposed housing developments.

The severity of the demand from 2019 is significant with a predicted shortage of 164 year 7 places from 2020 and 184 year 7 places in 2021. This is equivalent to a 5 to 6 form entry school.

The severity increases year on year as these Year 7 cohorts progress through the school, only to be replaced by larger cohorts at subsequent intakes.

Options to address the forecast increase in demand are either to expand capacity at existing schools or to create a new school. The favoured option would be to look at expanding current capacity. The cost of a new school is likely to be in excess of £20m, and whilst the eventual cost over time of a number of smaller expansions may exceed that figure, with limited funding available it would not be possible to fund a new school within the time frame required.

(Fig 10) Actual and forecast Year 7 non-selective rolls, 2001 - 2021



It is likely that for 2019 the 54 pupil forecast oversubscription could be absorbed within existing accommodation as this would equate to an average of around 5 pupils per school. Should the inward movement of families rise above expected levels then this figure could increase to unsustainable levels.

For 2020 we could need as many as six schools to expand by 1FE to cater for the expected demand. Each school's needs will be different to enable them to admit additional pupils, with sports provision and dining facilities needing to be considered, together with specialist rooms for science, DT, music and art etc along with general classrooms.

Some schools have indicated that whilst they are keen to work with Medway to provide sufficient places, they would rather be included at a later stage, in some cases affording them the opportunity to concentrate on improving standards before taking on the distraction of expansion.

Proposed solutions

Greenacre Boys School has already increased their PAN by 40 pupils within their current capacity. This is sustainable in the short term but some additional classrooms will be required together with increased dining facilities in order to maintain that additional level in future years.

Walderslade Girls School, which shares a site with Greenacre, has also indicated a willingness to expand and would require a block of around 12 general use classrooms.

The option of combining these projects would provide some economies of scale and a comparatively good cost per pupil. The overall project, it is estimated, would cost in the region of £6m and would provide enough places for an additional 80 pupils per year group, 400 overall.

The next group of options includes Thomas Aveling, although the project here only provides for 20 pupils per year, 100 overall, at an estimated cost of around £5m.

A project at The Howard School to increase the PAN from 250 to 270/280 would bring parity with the neighbouring Rainham Girls School (PAN 270), promoting equality of choice for boys and girls in the Rainham area. The Howard School were successful in bidding for funding under the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) and while the extent of the project under that funding stream is unclear, as is the timeframe, the Council would need to liaise with the school to work in a coordinated way. Given the circumstances here it is difficult to make any estimates of the requirements and therefore costs.

The Hundred of Hoo Academy are working on a masterplan for their campus, and are keen to engage with the Council to tie in with available funding with a view to incorporating expansion from a PAN of 270 to 300.

The Robert Napier School were positive in discussions, although at this time permanent expansion was not seen as a priority at the school. However, they would be happy to discuss a one-year bulge class to assist Council. This may prove to be a cost effective temporary solution for 2019.

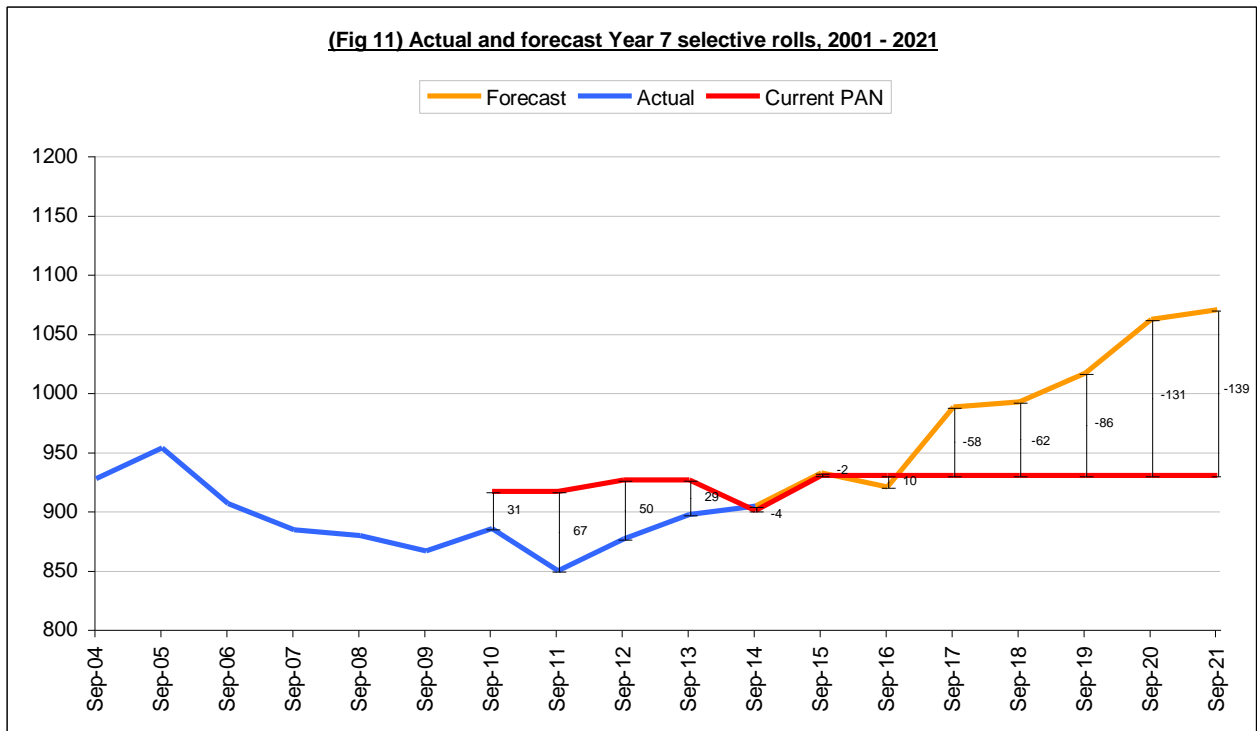
St John Fisher were also successful in bidding under the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP), but are in a similar position to The Howard School in that at this time the extent and timeframe of the project are unknown. However, it was agreed that further discussions would take place when the detail behind the PSBP was known.

Discussions were held with representatives of the three academies that have had new buildings in recent years at Strood Academy, Brompton Academy and The Victory Academy. Their buildings have recently been built to house 240 pupils per year group and we will work towards filling to this capacity. This includes Brompton Academy admitting up to 240 against its current PAN of 210; Strood and Victory are looking to an improvement in performance prior to any further expansion, therefore it is not proposed at this point to look at further building works although this may be revisited in the future should demand continue to increase.

As funding becomes available proposals for individual projects will be presented to Cabinet, to ensure a sufficient supply of non-selective secondary places are available.

5.9 Selective

As the graph in fig 11 below shows, from September 2017, there is expected to be a shortage of grammar places in year 7 based upon the current PAN's of Medway's Grammar Schools. It is expected that there will be sufficient spare physical capacity within the system due to lower cohorts in older year groups, which should mean that the shortfall could be absorbed. It is possible that this would be the case for two years, however, from September 2019, it is unlikely that the current capacity would be able to withstand this applied pressure without additional buildings and facilities.



With only six schools in the sector, options are limited, but all schools have indicated a willingness to work with the Council to address this situation. It is likely that over time each of the schools will require some level of additional capacity.

Proposals to provide essential additional capacity from 2019 will be presented to Cabinet at the appropriate times to ensure a sufficiency of supply to meet demand subject to available funding.

With the Grammar Schools offering a specialist curriculum offer, further work is required to ascertain the extent of the work and therefore the level of funding required.

6 Special Educational Needs

- 6.1 Item 5 of the action plan within the School Organisation Plan sets out options for providing SEN provision to address the increasing demand. As a result a recent project has created additional spaces at Danecourt for children with ASD, MLD, and SLD. A project is underway to expand and relocate Abbey Court, which will provide additional places for children with SLD and PMLD.
- 6.2 Cabinet approved a report on 15 July 2014, outlining the proposals to expand and relocate Rivermead Special School into the premises to be vacated by Abbey Court at Rainham, which will provide 60 additional primary ASD places. The consultation process for this project is underway.
- 6.3 It is also intended to explore the options for providing secondary Hearing Impaired provision, and primary EBD provision. Delce Academy has been approved to set up a primary special Free School for children with emotional and behavioral difficulties. Investigations will include ascertaining whether the Bridge facility provides sufficient capacity to cater for the overall EBD need across Medway.

7 Risk management

7.1 There are no risks resulting directly from this report, however the following would be assessed as risks should recommendations from individual proposals flowing from this report not be implemented.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
The Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient good quality school places	If insufficient school places are made available to meet demand, the council would be failing to meet its obligations	Implement proposals to provide additional good quality places in the areas of demand
That insufficient funding is available to fund proposals to provide sufficient places	Basic need funding is limited and the extent of the emerging need may mean that unless additional funding can be sourced projects to provide places may not be able to be implemented, which could mean that the council fails to meet its statutory obligation.	Explore options to fund projects including bidding for funding initiatives. Look at cost effective ways to supply places.
That the level of forecast pupils fails to materialise.	Should the expected numbers of pupils fail to materialise in one or more areas then any funding committed could have been better spent elsewhere	Continue to monitor births, migration and housing developments and accuracy of forecasting
That the criteria for inspections and performance benchmarking changes.	Schools could attempt to exclude more pupils requiring some SEN provision.	Early help and interventions in place to support schools to retain pupils in mainstream
Applications for Free Schools increases	Applications for Free Schools could be a risk to strategic planning framework, as the Council has no control over where or by whom the application is made.	Monitor all applications to Secretary of State, and work with DFE to influence outcomes of applications to suit, and fit in with, the Council's wider pupil place planning strategy
Other Local Authorities placing children in Medway	Other authorities are placing children into Medway schools, including unaccompanied asylum seekers, which adds pressure to the system and is difficult to plan for.	Retain a certain level of flexibility within the system for unexpected inward movement of children requiring a school place.

8 Consultation

8.1 No consultation is required for this report; however, any specific proposals that are progressed as a result of this report will include consultation as appropriate.

8.2 No Diversity Impact Assessment accompanies this report, however, one will be provided for individual proposals brought forward as a result of actions from this report.

9 Financial and legal implications

9.1 All projects approved and undertaken as a result of the 2015 review of the School Organisation Plan 2011-16 will be funded through the Children and Adults' Capital Programme. Funding implications for proposed projects will be included in subsequent reports requesting approval for each individual project.

9.2 Where appropriate, Developer Contributions will be sought from new housing schemes to assist with the provision of school places in areas of demographic growth.

9.3 Occasionally, additional funding sources and initiatives become available. Where possible the Council will seek to make use of these opportunities to reduce the demands upon the funding currently available.

9.4 Medway receives a basic need grant from central government annually. The table below highlights the levels of funding due to be received until 2017/18. Beyond then, Medway could reasonably expect further Basic Needs allocations of at least £2.0 million per annum and, at a national level, the Department for Education may offer further opportunities to bid for targeted funds to deliver the basic need for school places, although there is no guarantee that there will be opportunities or that bids will be successful.

Year	Funding allocation
Carry over	1.9m
2015 –16	2.2m
2016 –17	2.3m
2017- 18	9.0m

9.5 Whilst the table outlines a significant level of funding, this funding is already allocated to the completion of the projects currently approved and underway (see table in 3.2). There is currently no funding available for the proposed projects to expand Halling (should this be required) and Rivermead as well as those to expand secondary provision, which will need to rely entirely upon future years funding beyond 2017-18 as yet unknown.

9.6 Whilst all opportunities for future funding will be explored and every opportunity will be taken to seek cost effective solutions there is a potential shortfall in available funding to provide sufficient school places. As recent press coverage and television have highlighted, Medway's situation is consistent with the national picture with many authorities in similar or worse positions.

9.7 Council approved bulge classes are funded through the centrally retained school block DSG growth funding. The schools forum approves the growth fund funding each year and school can fund bulge classes from this funding for up to 7 years.

9.8 The Council has the power under sections 18 and 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to make "prescribed alterations" to a maintained school. The procedure for making prescribed alterations is set out in 'School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

9.9 From 24 January 2014 there is no longer a prescribed 'pre-publication' (informal) consultation period for prescribed alterations, there is however a strong expectation on Local Authorities to consult interested parties in developing their proposals prior to publication of the formal proposals as part of their duty under public law to act rationally and take into account all relevant considerations. Specific proposals brought forward from this report will be subject to these consultation processes.

10. Recommendations

10.1 The Cabinet is asked to:

- a) Note the positive progress made against the action plan.
- b) Approve detailed feasibility studies of the options outlined in this report to provide sufficient additional primary accommodation in the area of Halling.
- c) Approve the temporary expansion of a Chatham School to provide a reception bulge class within the current capacity, for September 2016, which will progress through the school and provide sufficient places in the Chatham and Rochester area to cater for the forecast spike in numbers, should the Delce Academy's request to expand be refused by the Regional Schools Commissioner, and that the Director of Children and Adults Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, be granted delegated authority to finalise the arrangements for the temporary expansion of a Chatham School if necessary.
- d) Note the temporary expansion initially of St Thomas of Canterbury to provide a reception bulge class within the current capacity, for September 2016, which will progress through the school and provide sufficient places in the Gillingham area to cater for a spike in numbers. That it be further noted that Cabinet has formerly approved the expansion of St Thomas Of Canterbury under decision 8/2015 and forecasts will be monitored to assess whether and if so when a permanent expansion here is required.
- e) Notes sections 5.7 and 5.8 for the secondary sector and to approve the commencement of detailed design work to ascertain the extent of work and the indicative costings to ensure that sufficient places are available to meet demand, subject to the availability of sufficient funding.

11 Suggested reason for decision

11.1 By approving the recommendations in section 10, the Cabinet are ensuring that the Council meets its statutory duty to ensure sufficient good school places.

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Background papers

School Organisation Plan Report to Cabinet 8 January 2008
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=2300>

School Organisation Plan 2011-15/Review of School Organisation Plan 2013 Report to Cabinet 9 July 2013 <http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgconvert2pdf.aspx?id=20666>

Expansion and Relocation of Rivermead Community Special School by way of Prescribed Alterations Report to Cabinet 15 July 2014
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgconvert2pdf.aspx?id=24216>

Appendix

Updated Action Plan 2015.

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School Organisation Plan 2011-16: Consolidated Action Plan for Review July 2015

Item no.	Subject	Action	Due date	Status @July 2015	Updated position/Commentary 2015
1	Approval of School Organisation Plan	Cabinet approval to consult on plan	July 2011	Complete	The School Organisation Plan was presented to Cabinet in July 2011 when approval to consult was given.
		School Organisation Plan Consultation	July to Sept 2011	Complete	Consultation was undertaken, and the outcomes of the consultation period were presented firstly to Overview and Scrutiny and then Cabinet.
		Cabinet to approve plan following consultation	Autumn 2011	Complete	Cabinet approved plan on 1 November 2011
2	Address issue of likely shortfall of places in Gillingham West	Consult on increased PAN for Napier Primary	Nov 2011	Complete	Consultation took place as part of the normal round of admissions consultations to increase the PAN at Napier Primary School from 60 to 90. This will take effect from September 2013 starting from the reception intake.
		Undertake project to complete building works at Woodlands Primary School to allow them to remain at 2 forms of entry	By Sept 2012	Complete	Cabinet approved works to be undertaken, and the building project is now complete.
		Monitor year R applications and offer data, and if necessary increase provision in another school to meet demand	By Sept 14	Complete	Increases in the PANs at Napier (2013) and Saxon Way and Brompton Westbrook (2014) will provide sufficient places to meet demand in the immediate area. Projects to expand the premises at Napier and Brompton Westbrook schools are complete, with Saxon Way ongoing.
3	Address issue of likely shortfall of places in Chatham and Rochester	Invite expressions of interest from current and new providers for additional provision in the Chatham and Rochester area	Autumn 2011	Complete	New Horizons Children's Academy opened in September 2014, which when full will provide primary education for 630 pupils plus nursery.
4	Increase capacity at Wainscott Primary School	Consult on an increased PAN for Wainscott Primary School	Nov 2011	Complete	Consultation took place and approval was given to increase the PAN at Wainscott with effect from September 2013

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		Develop a feasibility study to increase accommodation at Wainscott Primary to accommodate an additional form of entry	Early 2012	Complete	Building project complete
5	Undertake SEN Master Plan	Undertake an SEN Master Plan	By Sept 2011	Ongoing/underway	An assessment of the SEN estate and future need was undertaken, which produced some forecasting and trend analysis; this information was used to consider the most effective steps and options required to address the issue of additional demand for SEN provision. This has resulted in the approval for projects to expand and relocate Abbey Court, which is underway, the expansion of Danecourt, which is due to complete in September 2015 and proposals to expand and relocate Rivermead are on hold subject to the completion of the Abbey Court project.
6	Develop plans for the future use of Chatham South site	We will undertake a feasibility study regarding the future use of the Chatham South buildings and site which will be vacated by Bishop of Rochester Academy in 2012	By Oct 2011	Complete	It was decided that the buildings would best be served to provide accommodation for the new primary academy required to cater for the increased numbers of pupils expected in Chatham (see Action Plan item 3). New school is known as New Horizons Children's Academy and opened in September 2014. (see item 3)
7	Develop new school provision for Lodge Hill and Rochester Riverside developments	We will work with the developer to plan the delivery of additional school provision set out in the Section 106 agreements	2013 onwards	Ongoing	This is an ongoing project, and In line with government policy for new provision to be established as an Academy or Free school we will need to identify appropriate sponsors for any new school provision. This will be undertaken at the appropriate time as the developments progress.

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8	Ongoing programme of federations and amalgamations	We will continue to consider opportunities for federation and amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools	Ongoing	Ongoing	Since the plan was approved, Oaklands Infant and Junior Schools have amalgamated, as have Barnsole Infant and Junior Schools (both September 2012). The statutory process has successfully been completed to amalgamate Sherwin Knight Infant and Junior Schools, as well as Swingate Infant and Spinnens Acre Junior Schools, both due for implementation in September 2013. Parkwood Infant and Junior Schools were federated in April 2014 and are now looking to progress to amalgamation. The Bligh Infant and Junior Schools are federated, as are Horsted Infant and Junior. A review will be undertaken whenever a head teacher of a separate infant or junior school plans to leave.
9	Ongoing monitoring of surplus places and place pressure	We will continue to monitor pupil numbers and admission applications against school capacity	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing monitoring has highlighted that the pressure on primary places is likely to be more severe than expected in the School Organisation Plan. Appropriate actions are underway to mitigate this, with approval sought from cabinet to take the additional measures needed. We will propose changes in line with the School Organisation Principles to ensure the continued viability of all schools in Medway.
10	Investigate options for a UTC	We will investigate the opportunities for the establishment of a UTC in Medway	Autumn 2011	Complete	A second application was successful and a site identified at Chatham Waters development. The UTC opened in September 2015
Objectives from 2013 review					
11	Address issue of likely shortfall of primary places in the Hoo St Werburgh Village area	Investigate options for providing additional primary provision in Hoo village, and develop proposals for approval by Cabinet	For September 2015	Underway	Approval has been granted for the creation of an all-through academy on the Hundred of Hoo site, which will involve the expansion of the age range of the school to incorporate a primary phase. Initially temporary accommodation will be utilised for September 2015.
12	Address the issue of likely shortfall of places in the Cuxton and Halling planning area	Investigate options for providing additional primary provision in the area, and develop proposals for approval by Cabinet	Initially for September 2015	Underway	Temporary accommodation is being installed at Cuxton to ensure that sufficient class space is available to enable the school to admit to a full 2FE school, which will result in additional capacity for 70 children across the primary phase. A project to provide the permanent accommodation is underway. Forecasts will be monitored to consider if and when further capacity is required in the area.

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13	Potential requirement for additional need in Gillingham over and above that already approved by Cabinet.	Highlight suitable options for providing additional places if required	As required	Monitoring of places will be ongoing to ensure a sufficiency of good quality places	Forecasting in 2015 has highlighted a likely spike in numbers for September 2016. A bulge class at one school should resolve this issue.
14	Potential requirement for additional need in Chatham/Rochester over and above that already approved by Cabinet	Highlight suitable options for providing additional places if required	As required	Monitoring of places will be ongoing to ensure a sufficiency of good quality places	Monitoring of forecasts based upon the latest available data indicate that the establishment of New Horizons should ensure that sufficient primary spaces are available in the short term. Ongoing monitoring and twice yearly forecasting rounds will enable officers to react as required to ensure a sufficiency of supply. Forecasting in 2015 has highlighted a likely spike in numbers for September 2016. A bulge class at one school should resolve this issue.
New objectives 2014					
15	Additional primary provision required for Gillingham area	The establishment of 2 forms of entry	September 2016	Underway	Woodlands Academy expansion is underway and has admitted an additional form of entry for September 2015. Forecasts suggest that only a bulge class will be required in the short term from 2016 to provide the 2 nd FE.
16	Additional primary provision in Strood for 2016	The phased establishment of 2 FE	Initially September 2016	Underway	Cabinet has approved the expansion of provision in Strood by 2FE. This will take effect from September 2016 with a bulge class at Elaine, followed by a permanent 1FE expansion at Bligh Infants for 2017.
17	To ensure a sufficiency of secondary school places	Explore options for providing additional secondary places	September 2017	Underway	Officers have held discussions with all Medway's secondary schools to ensure appropriate provision is available to meet expected demand from September 2017.