

## **CABINET**

**27 SEPTEMBER 2016**

### **2016 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Andrew Mackness – Children’s Services (Lead Member)  
Councillor Martin Potter – Educational Attainment and Improvement

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#### **Summary**

This annual summary report provides the Cabinet with an update on the progress made against the School Organisation Plan 2011-16 action plan, highlights areas of emerging need and makes initial recommendations for consideration 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 (SOP), 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. Any proposals that flow from the updated School Organisation Plan are consistent with the School Organisation Plan Principles and with the Council Plan Priority of ‘Supporting Medway’s people to realise their potential’. The proposals, if approved, will be delivered through available funding from the Education Capital Programme, therefore this is a matter for Cabinet.

#### **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.

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, September 2014 and October 2015. Cabinet approved each review of the plan. The reports 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 identifies areas of emerging need based upon the latest annual round of forecasting undertaken in April 2016.
- 2.5 This will be the final annual review emanating from the School Organisation Plan 2011-16. A new plan will be presented to Cabinet in the late autumn of 2016 which will outline the next 5 years' expectations and actions to ensure sufficient school places are available within a rising population. At the same time, the School Organisation Principles will be updated to reflect the current national and local education landscape.
- 2.6 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure a sufficient supply of school places. This, coupled with the local and national policy of successful schools expanding, means that when deciding upon which schools to expand consideration must be given to the OFSTED rating of the school, its current known performance, as well as its popularity with parents.
- 2.7 Birth rates, continued inward movement of families with children, together with a number of ongoing, approved and proposed housing schemes means that demand for school places continues at record levels, a situation which is not expected to alter within the foreseeable future.
- 2.8 With Medway's Local Plan, currently under consultation, highlighting the need for an additional 29,000 homes across Medway, it is expected that the total population will increase from 274,000 to 330,000; therefore demand for school places is likely to continue to rise over the next 20 years at least.
- 2.9 The forecasts, upon which this report is based, include all approved housing schemes. Those under consideration, at appeal or proposed will only be included in the forecasts when formally approved. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that as more housing schemes gain approval future forecasts will reflect this and demand for places will rise further.
- 2.10 Recognised formulae, based upon research by MORI, which informs the Council's Developer Contributions Guide, indicate that for every 775 two+ bed houses built there is a requirement for an additional 1Form of Entry worth of primary aged provision (210 children).
- 2.11 To ensure that sufficient places are available to cater for in-year demand (casual admissions) and any sudden influx of pupils into new housing schemes it is necessary to operate with a surplus of places in the system. It is nationally accepted that a 5% surplus is a sensible level to ensure places are available without the viability of schools being endangered.
- 2.12 Free Schools  
Regional Schools Commissioners are working closely with local authorities to encourage applications from potential providers to meet the government's target for 500 new free schools. Unlike the initial tranche of free schools the government is now considering applications submitted directly to them under the following criteria;

- there is or will be a basic need for new school places in an area
- the quality of provision in other local schools is poor and the new school will offer a better quality alternative
- the new provision is innovative in its approach and responds to what parents want.

Through this route, the capital and revenue set up costs are met by the DFE, however, there is an expectation that local authorities will provide a site where possible.

This initiative affords an opportunity for the Council to acquire the additional capacity required to meet school place demand without the significant funding responsibility, subject to the availability of sites capable of supporting a school. For example a 2FE primary school requires approximately 1.6 hectares (4 acres) and a 6FE secondary school around 9-10 hectares (25 acres).

In discussions with the EFA a number of potential sponsors have been encouraged to express an interest on the EFA website, and then to submit formal bids for the next wave of applications which closes at the end of September 2016.

The free school programme will consider applications for primary schools (minimum 2FE), special schools, alternative provision and non-selective secondary provision. New grammar schools will not be considered, nor will expansions and relocations of existing schools.

Officers have highlighted to the EFA the areas of emerging need as;

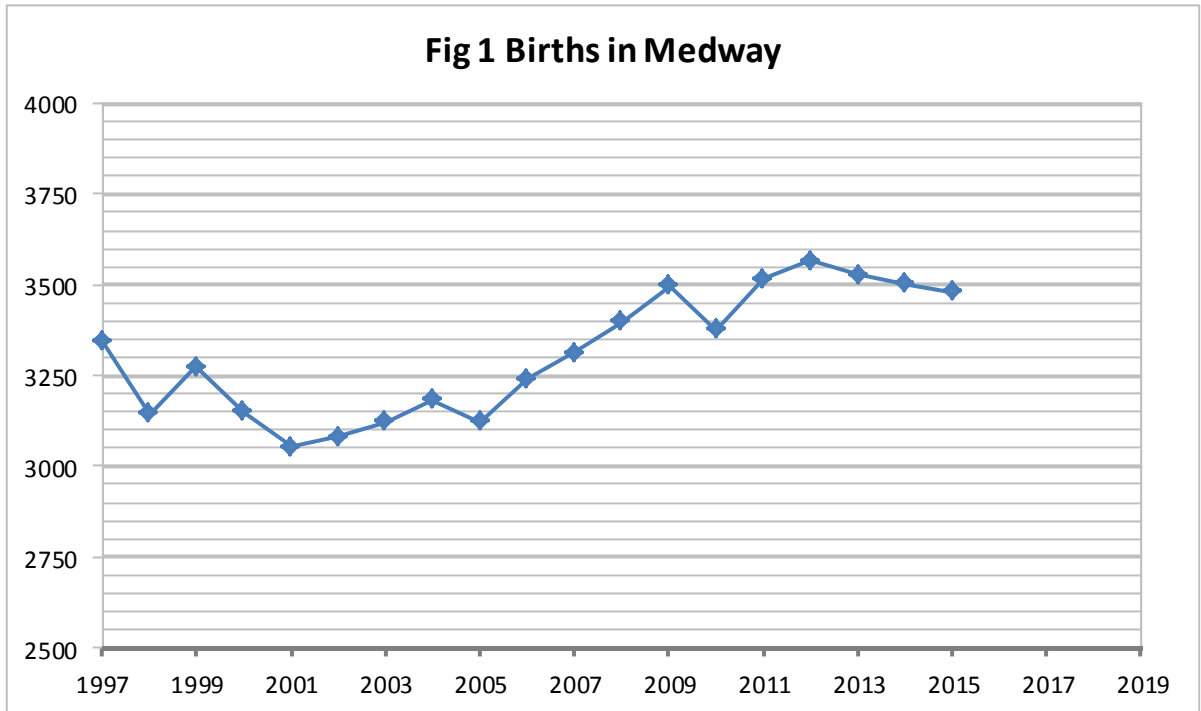
- Primary provision in Strood and Gillingham/Rainham
- Secondary provision in Strood and Rainham
- Special provision for primary ASD

These areas of need are discussed in more detail within this report.

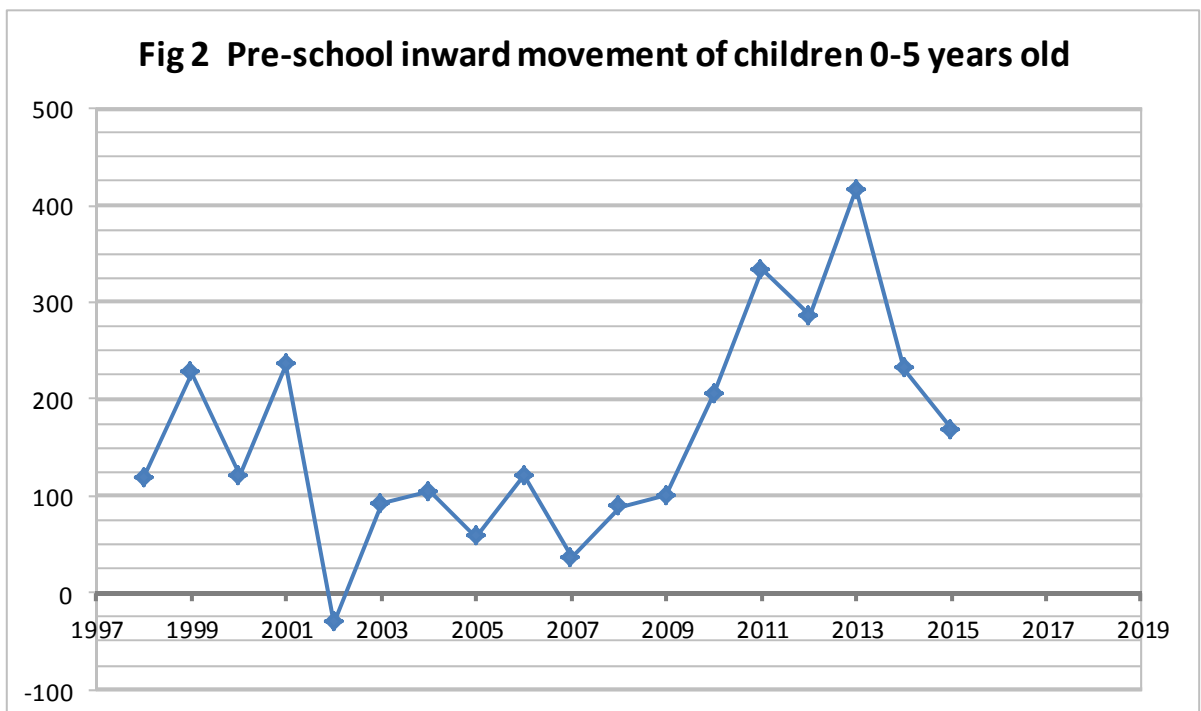
### 3 Analysis of latest data and information

#### Pre-school and primary phase

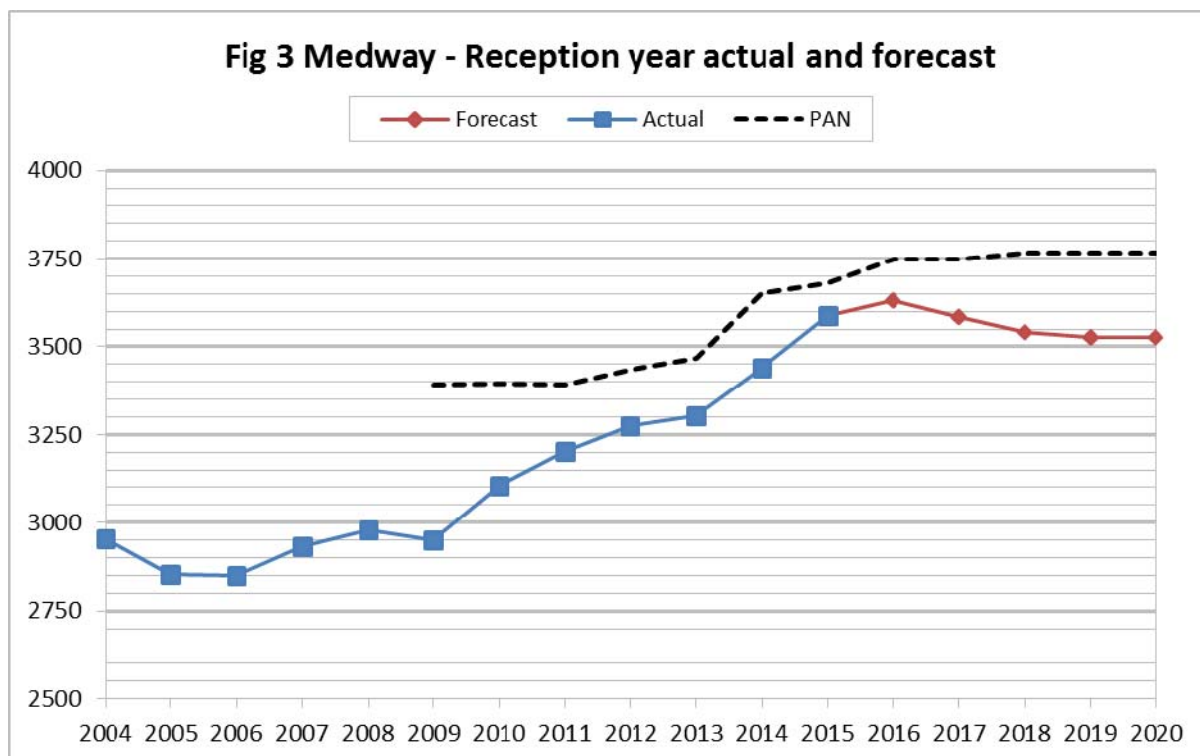
- 3.1 Actual births have fallen slightly against recent year's levels but are still significantly higher than pre 2009 figures as highlighted by the graph below (fig 1.).



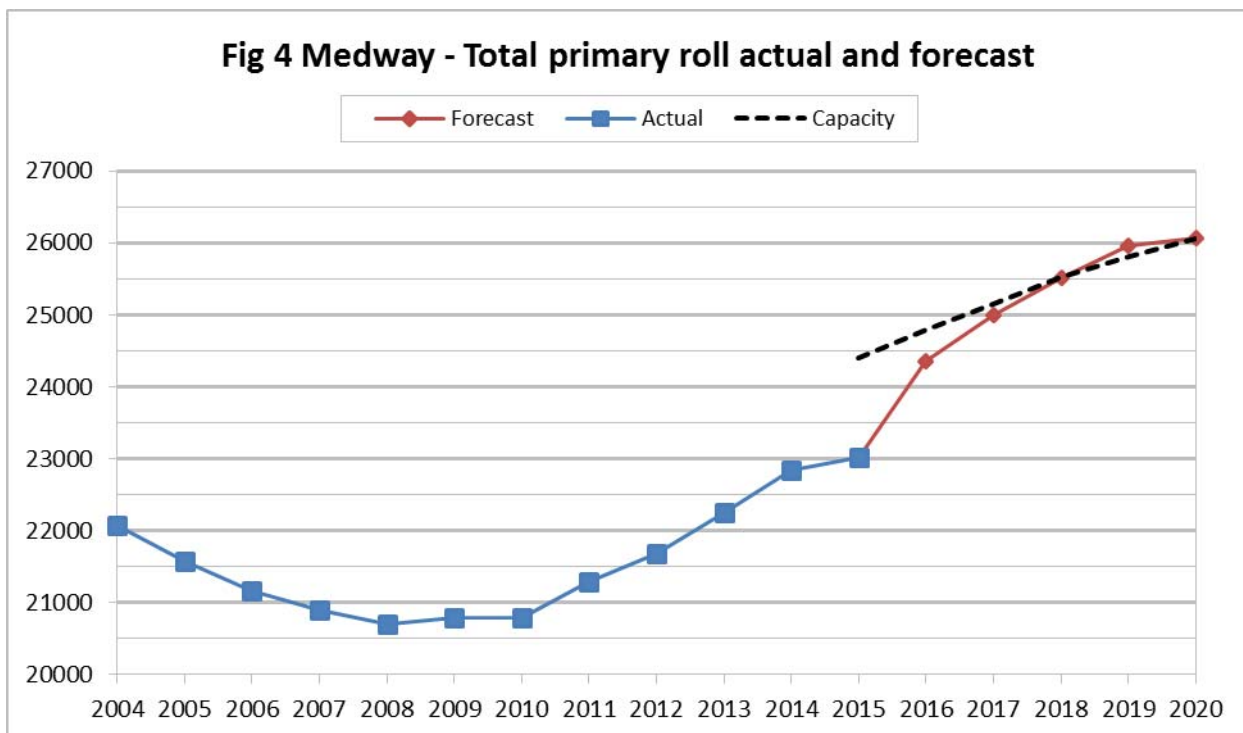
- 3.2 The inward movement of families with pre-school age children has also fallen to its lowest level since 2009 (fig 2.). However, given the likely progression of a number of housing schemes as part of the local plan, inward movement of pre-school age children can be reasonably expected to increase again in the future. This will add to demand for reception places in the future and forecasts will be frequently monitored to ensure the Council is in a position to react accordingly.



3.3 Both of the factors in 3.1 and 3.2 mean that the demand for reception places is forecast to fall slightly across Medway over the next five years (fig 3), although some specific areas are still coming under pressure and would benefit from some additional capacity. These are discussed in later sections of this report. The graph shows that the total Published Admission Number (PAN) of all reception places in Medway sits above the expected numbers of pupils and this difference is 5.6% of the total.



3.4 Overall pupil numbers in primary schools have increased to 23,020, the highest level since 2002 and are predicted to continue to rise for at least the next 5 years to 26,066 (fig 4). Much of the expansion work carried out in recent years has enabled the Council to meet demand when and where it is needed, and whilst this additional capacity will meet much of the forecast demand, some further primary capacity is recommended in certain areas. Forecasts suggest a 0.65% surplus in 2017, whilst in 2018 and 2020 capacity matches demand and there is a potential deficit of places for 2019. Additional capacity is required to be certain that sufficient places are available.



3.5 Medway operates nine pupil place planning areas based generally on the local geography. However, when planning school places it is sensible to consider neighbouring areas, taking into account cross area movement. The following sections outline the forecasts for each of these areas, some individually and others grouped due to their interdependence and mutual impacts. Options and recommendations for providing additional capacity where required are included within these sections.

### 3.6 Peninsula

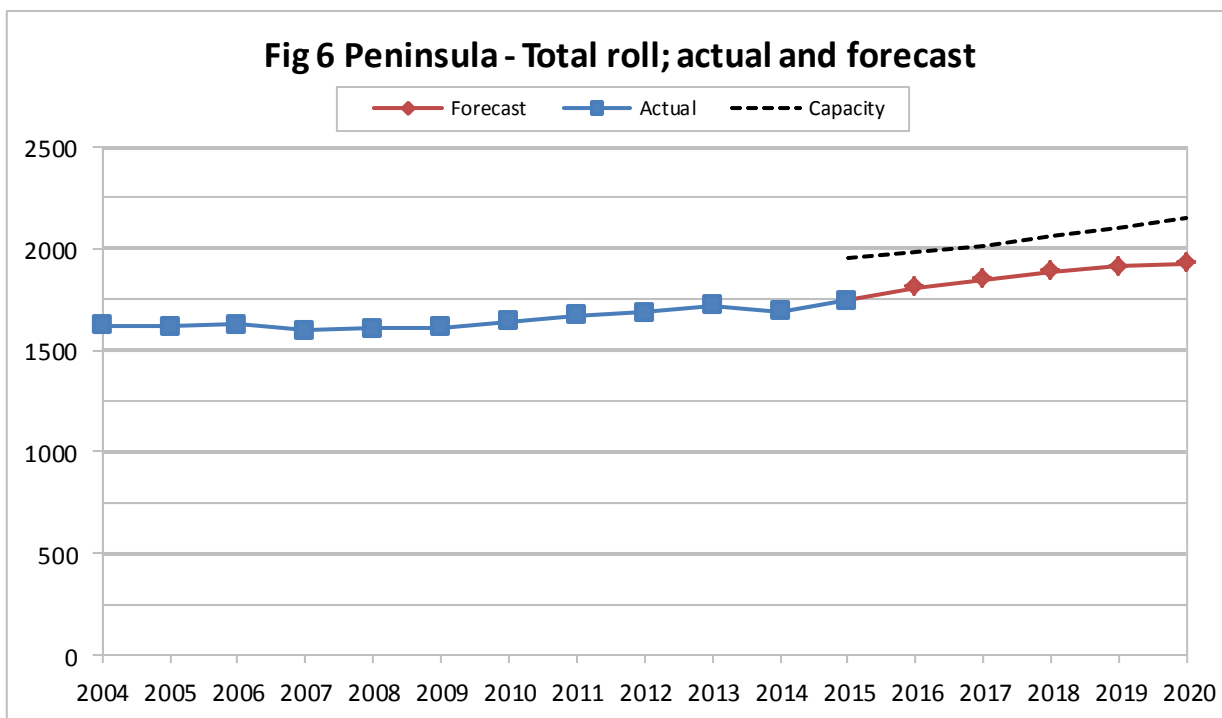
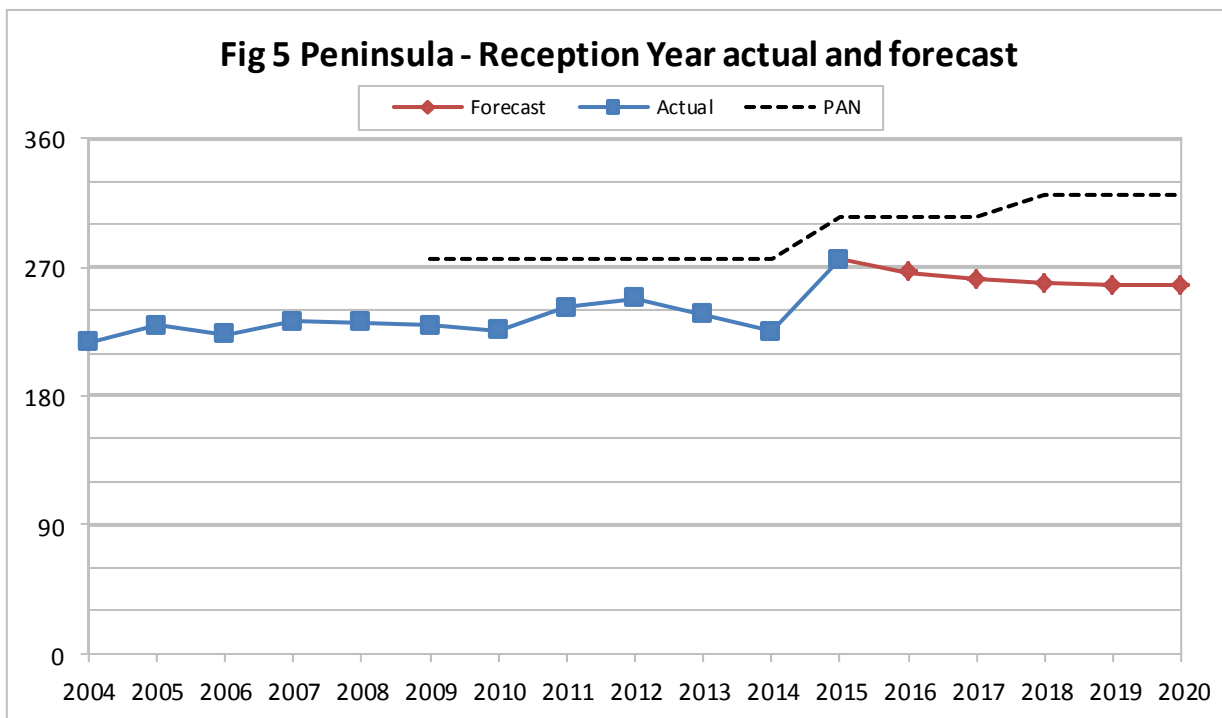
This place planning area encompasses the whole of the Hoo Peninsula and stretches from the Four Elms Hill in the west to the villages of Grain and Allhallows in the east. It incorporates nine primary schools, one of which, the primary phase at The Hundred of Hoo Academy, was established in 2015 to cater for demand from Hoo village as a result of a number of housing developments. This facility is currently utilising temporary accommodation with construction on the permanent building expected to start in the autumn of 2016.

Proposals were approved by Cabinet in July 2016 to expand provision at Cliffe Woods Primary Academy from 1.5FE to a full 2FE and this project is at the early design stages.

These two projects, when complete, will have added 315 primary school places into the western peninsula area. Forecasts suggest this should be sufficient for the short term, but as more housing developments gain approval in the area, further additional capacity is likely to be required and options to provide this will continue to be considered and reviewed to ensure the Council is in a good position to react as demand dictates and funding allows. For example, the new primary provision at Hundred of Hoo Academy, whilst being built as a 1FE school to meet current demand, has been designed to enable efficient expansion to 2FE in the future and a feasibility study has been undertaken at Chattenden Primary Academy to assess the viability of a future expansion there.

The graphs below show the forecasts for reception (fig 5) and total primary rolls (fig 6) within the peninsula area. Whilst it appears from the charts that there is sufficient space available, it should be recognised that much of the spare capacity

sits within the two schools in the most easterly part of the area in Allhallows and St James' Grain. The schools in the west peninsula are generally full with only a few spaces in various year groups available. The distances involved between the schools means that accessing the schools where spaces are available is difficult and it should not be assumed that these spaces are appropriate for children in more central villages. The position in the western peninsula area should be monitored closely to ensure a good supply of places remains as the population increases as expected.





### 3.7 **Gillingham West, Gillingham East and Rainham**

Whilst this section covers three individual place planning areas, their proximity to each other and the levels of pupil movement between them makes it sensible to consider the wider Gillingham area as a whole.

Recent primary phase expansions in the area at Brompton Westbrook, Woodlands Academy, Napier Primary and Saxon Way together with the bulge class at St Thomas of Canterbury for this academic year have ensured that sufficient places are available. Forecasting in this area has proved to be particularly accurate in recent years with provision in place to meet increasing demand.

Currently, pressure is being experienced in two parts of the wider area; in the east of the area around the Rainham boundary with Kent and in the west around St Mary's Island and the docks area. In the main this pressure is caused by maturing housing developments as well as those underway and proposed. The two maps (figs 7 and 8) below highlight the developments in the areas and differentiate between those schemes approved in blue, which have been included within forecasts, and those in red which await a decision and, therefore, are not included at this stage.

*Fig 7 Proposed housing schemes and schools in the East of Rainham*

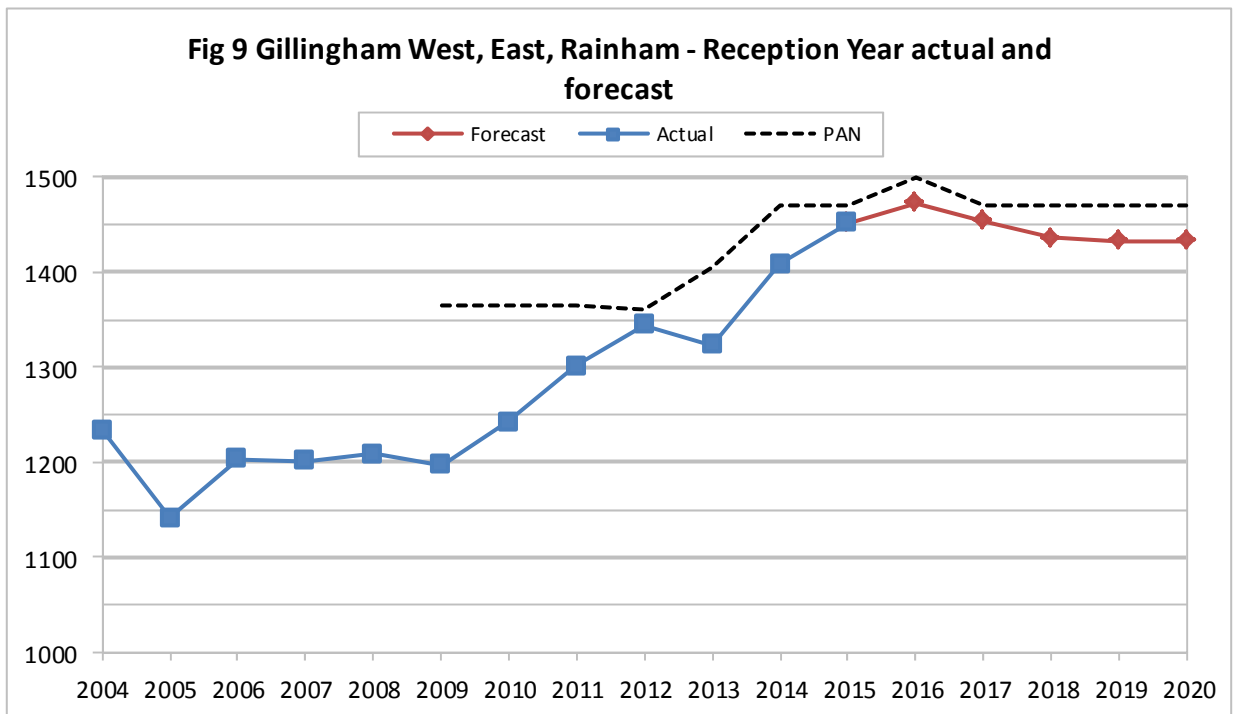




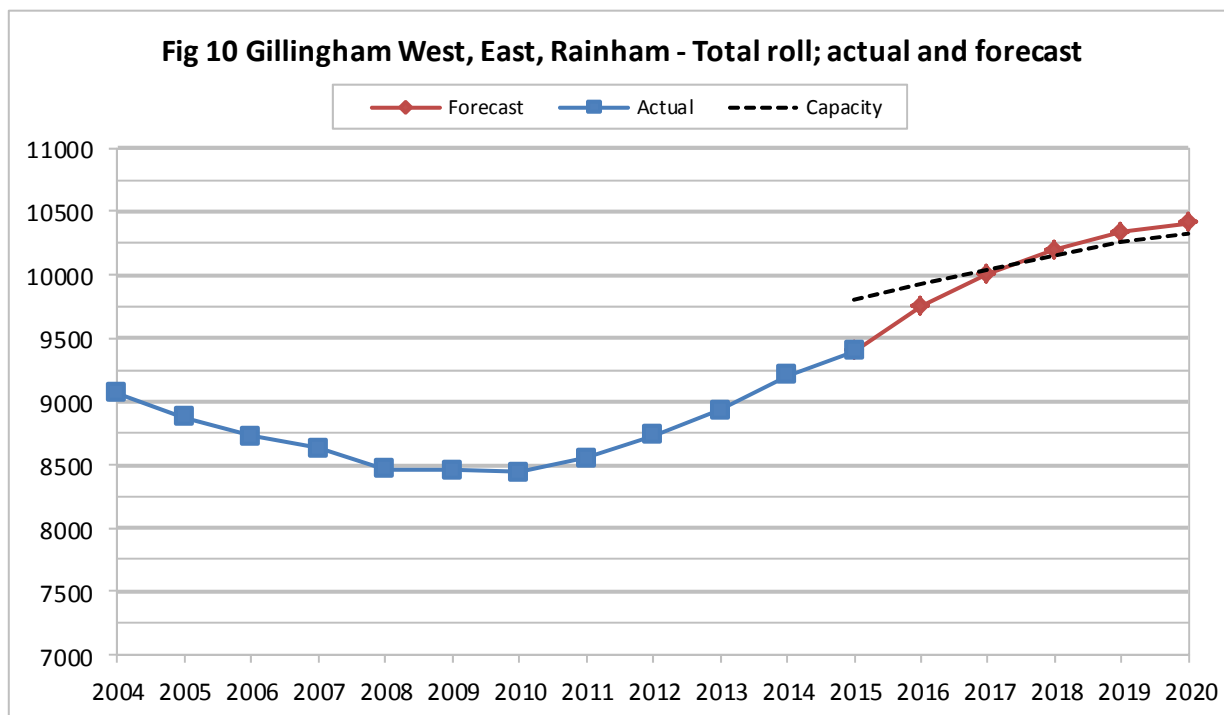
Fig 8 Proposed housing schemes and schools around St Mary's Island



The graphs below indicate that there is some spare capacity at reception intake (fig 9), but this equates to 2.5% which, although providing some flexibility in the short term, is some way below the ideal 5%. With further housing scheme proposals likely those surplus places could be filled quickly in the coming years.



When looking at overall primary roll forecasts (fig 10) the spare capacity reduces to a deficit position from 2018, with only minimal surplus in 2017 of 0.3%, a position likely to result in a number of parents unable to secure a place for their child in a local school as they move into the area.



It is, therefore, recommended that at least 2FE of additional provision is planned to ensure that sufficient places remain within the system. For 2019 this would provide a 3.2% surplus. The options for providing the additional places are;

- 1) Previously Cabinet has granted approval for St Thomas of Canterbury to expand as and when required and whilst a bulge class is in place for this year, it is recommended that extending this to a permanent provision remains as one of the options.
- 2) Feasibility studies have been undertaken at St Mary's Island and Riverside Primary Schools as these schools are the closest to the majority of proposed housing schemes and should also be considered for future expansion.
- 3) When Abbey Court Special School relocates to Strood around Easter 2017, its current Rainham site will become vacant. Recent proposals have been presented to expand Rivermead onto this site, however Rivermead is currently exploring the opportunity afforded them under the Free School Programme to acquire a brand new special school on a separate site instead. Therefore, should that bid be successful then an option for the buildings site would be the expansion of Deanwood Primary School which shares the site.
- 4) That a site is identified for the creation of a new mainstream Free School. This could either be a Council owned site, or privately owned, where the owner would be willing to sell the site to the EFA. A number of sponsors have already indicated that they are interested in operating a Free School in the area. This would, however, be reliant upon a bid being successful.

Increasing capacity in the area by 2FE over the medium term is recommended and this could take the form of a new Free School subject to a site being identified, a suitable sponsor being in place and the EFA supporting the proposal. The advantage of this approach is that any capital expenditure would be funded by the EFA rather than the local authority. Outside of that option, officers recommend that consideration be given to 1FE expansions at Riverside and St Mary's Island for 2018/19. Both are affordable within the current funding envelope (see section 6).

This would provide sufficient places and some flexibility within the system to meet demand from the housing developments planned for the immediate areas around these schools and would benefit from funding from developer contributions. Both schools are rated as 'Good' by Ofsted and were oversubscribed for the reception intake in September 2016.

St Mary's Island Primary School is currently under pressure from casual admissions across the year groups as families move into the immediate area, and this situation is likely to be replicated at Riverside as the developments shown in the Rainham map (fig 7) above progress.

Beyond that, should further provision be required, St Thomas of Canterbury, rated as 'Good' by Ofsted, would be the next school recommended by officers for expansion. Whilst previously approved for permanent expansion, it is recommended that this school now becomes the third option behind Riverside and St Mary's Island. The rationale for this is that since approval for St Thomas of Canterbury, which is providing a bulge class for September 2016, a number of housing development applications have been forthcoming which are centred around Riverside and St Mary's Island. Section 106 agreements have been ring-fenced for these schools making funding more readily available for these expansions than St Thomas of Canterbury.

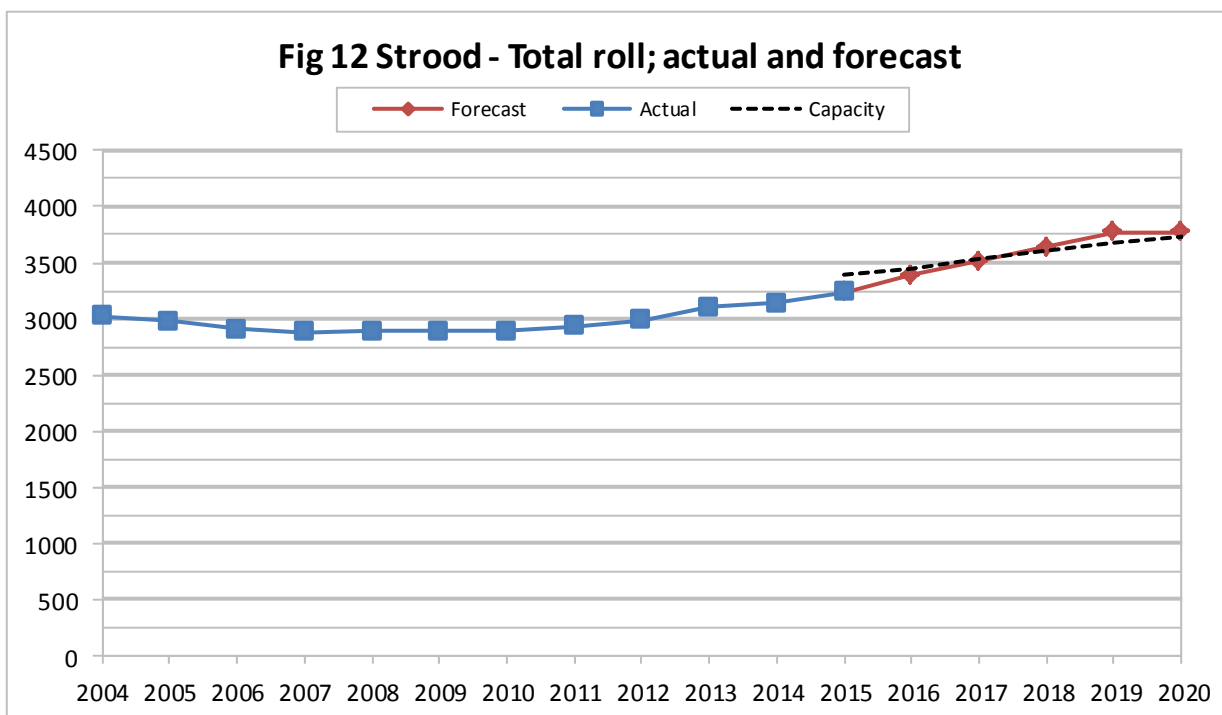
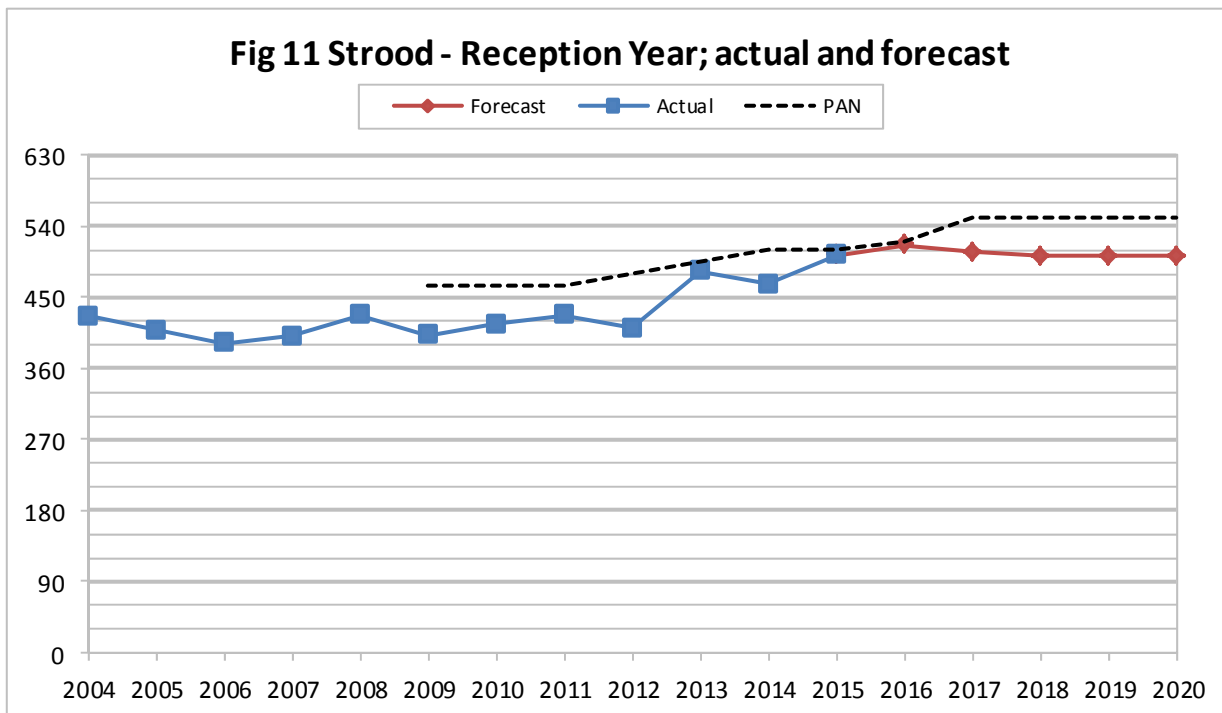
However, the situation remains fluid due to changing circumstances outside of the Council's control around Free Schools and should Rivermead no longer require use of the Abbey Court buildings in Rainham, then Deanwood should be considered as a potential option. It is recommended that a feasibility study be undertaken to assess the level of work required to adapt the Abbey Court site for use as a mainstream primary provision, to provide the accommodation for Deanwood Primary School to expand. Deanwood is rated as 'Good' by Ofsted and is currently undertaking conversion to academy status.

### 3.8 **Strood**

Strood, as an area, has experienced significant housing development in recent years with Liberty Park, Medway Gate and a number of smaller schemes. As these become established births from these developments are increasing, however, inward migration of families with children has decreased in the last year. To meet expected demand, a project to expand Bligh Infant and Junior Schools is underway. This will add 30 pupils per year group from September 2017. With the addition of this provision, forecasts suggest that sufficient capacity is in place to accommodate intakes over the next few years (fig 11). However, with further housing developments underway, planned and proposed additional primary phase capacity is likely to be required over time.

Overall, total roll forecasts (see fig 12) suggest that capacity virtually matches demand and in 2019 could potentially slip into deficit. Officers are aware of a bid by a local academy trust to open an all-through Free School in Strood, which if successful would provide sufficient capacity for years to come.

Options appraisals and feasibility studies have been undertaken in the area and potential options for expansions are available at All Faith's, St Nicholas and, subject to sustained improvement, Temple Mill should the need arise for additional provision. It is therefore recommended that officers continue to monitor the situation in Strood and be ready to react accordingly should the Free School bid be unsuccessful, the outcome of which should be known during the autumn of 2016.



### 3.9 Chatham, Rochester and Walderslade

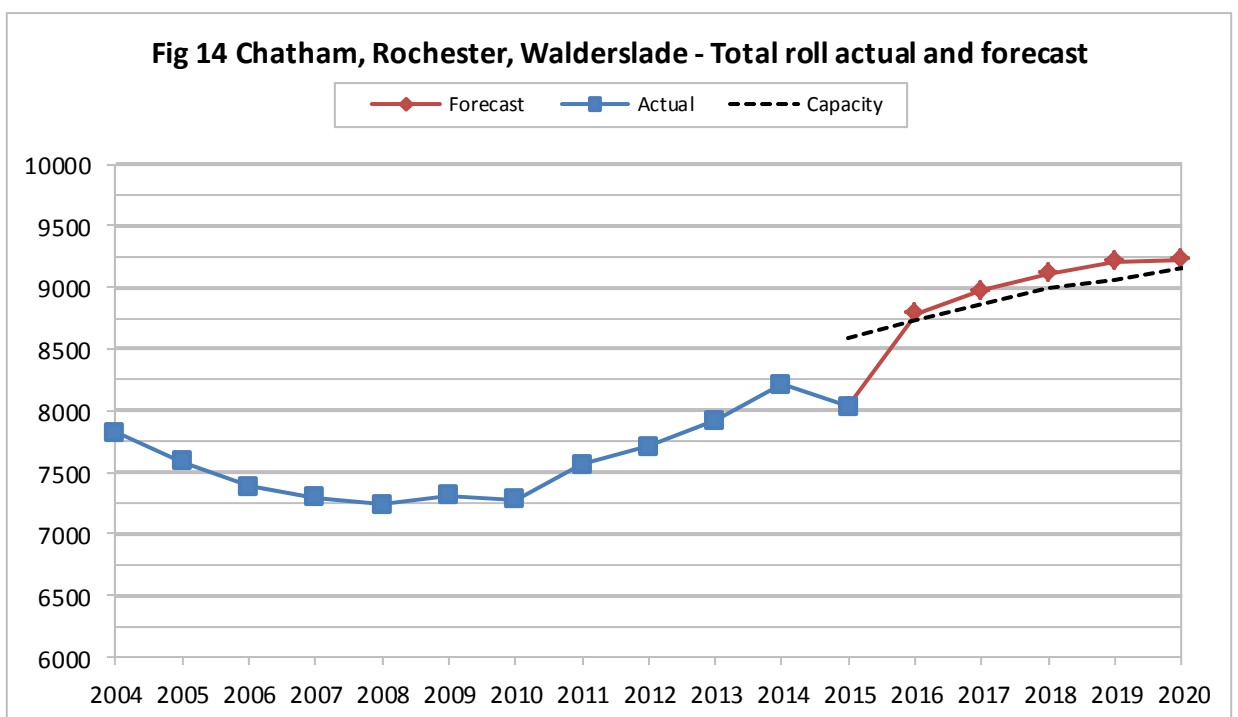
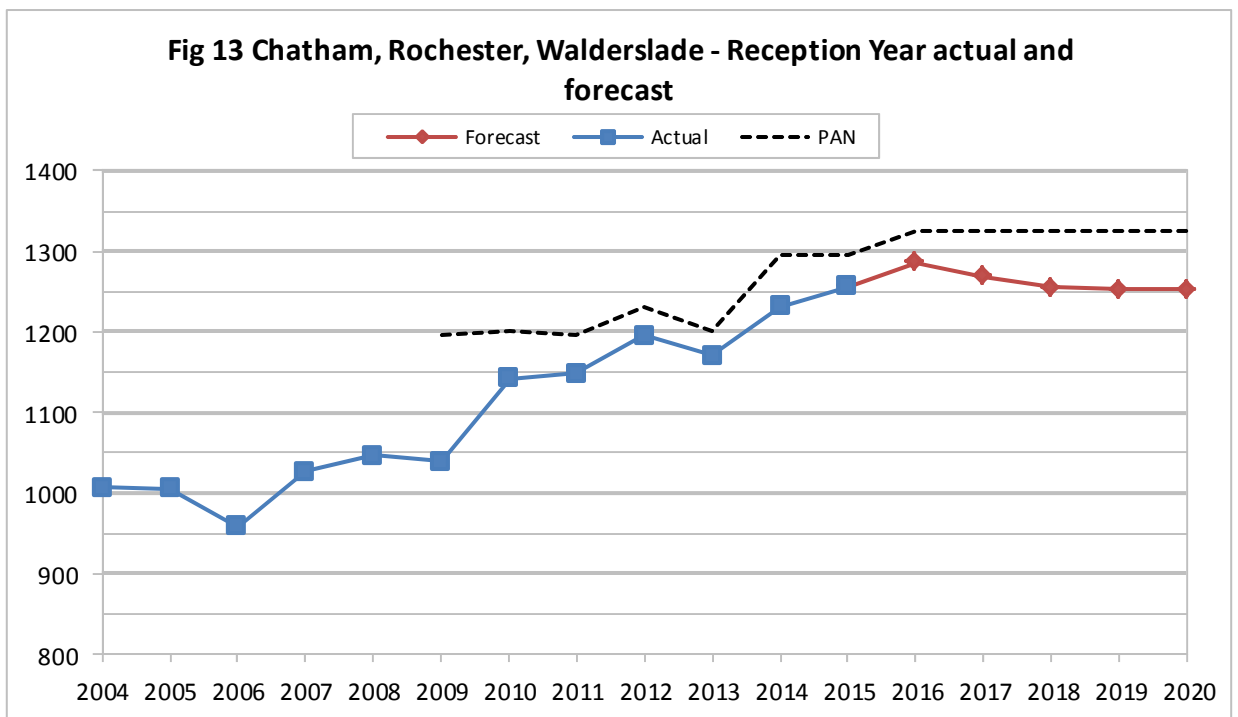
These three planning areas are intrinsically linked by proximity and the cross boundary movement of pupils to attend schools. Recently, significant primary capacity has been added to the area with the creation of New Horizons Children’s Academy adding 630 primary places, and this year the EFA approved proposals by Delce Junior Academy to establish a 1FE infant stage, adding another 30 places per year group (210 total).

However, despite this additional capacity, which has successfully catered for increased demand, there remains some concern that there will be pressure on places as we move forward. The graph below in (Fig 14) shows that overall rolls will struggle to meet capacity, the reception year graph (Fig 13) on the other hand indicates that sufficient spare capacity will become available over the course of the next five years, which will roll into whole school forecasts. However, to be certain

that sufficient capacity is maintained, officers will look at the options for future expansion to be ready to react should the need dictate.

It is recommended that feasibility studies are undertaken in the area to look at the options available to provide additional capacity across this area, particularly in the Chatham and Rochester areas as this is where the centre of the demand appears to be.

The new primary school to be provided as part of the Rochester Riverside development also needs to be factored into consideration and decision making. However, at this time, we cannot be certain when the school will be operational and it may be that some temporary provision in the form of bulge classes is required in the area until the new school is ready.



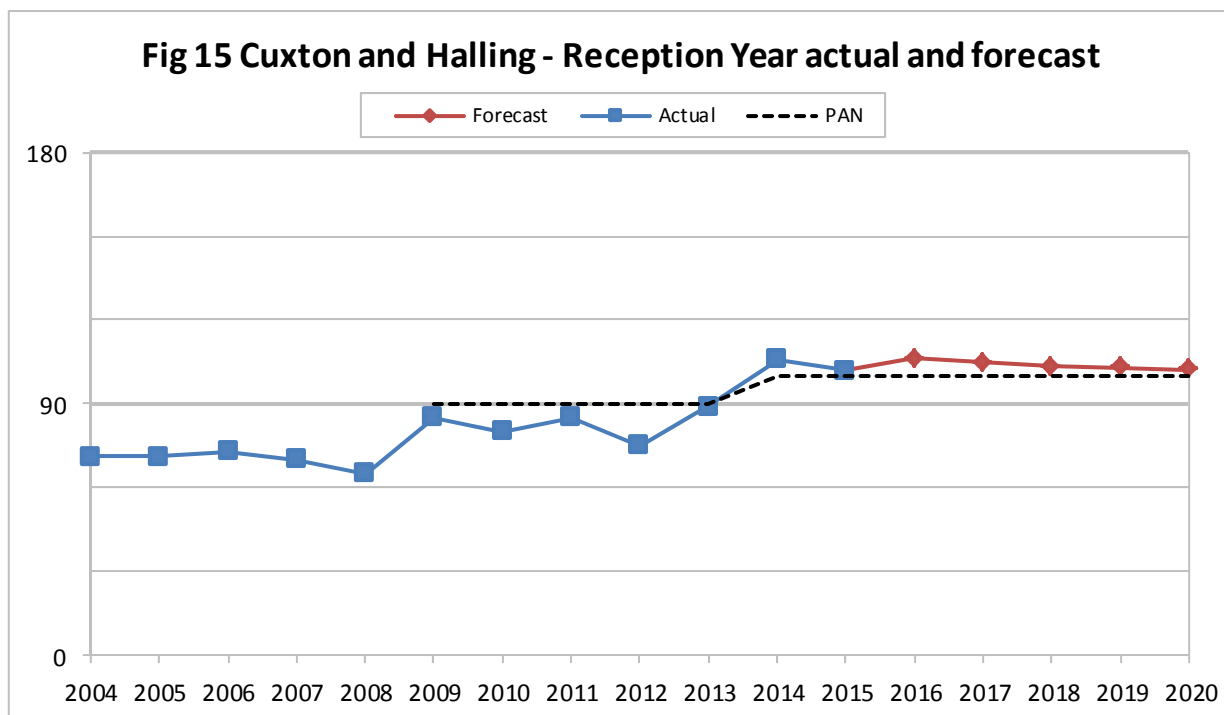
### 3.10 Cuxton and Halling

This area extends from the M2 motorway bridge south-westwards to the border with KCC at Snodland and is covered by two primary schools. One of them, Cuxton, has been expanded recently resulting in an increase in its capacity by 70 pupils, which has ensured sufficient places are available in the short term. However, forecasts suggest that with the number of housing developments in the area on both sides of the boundary, that further additional capacity is required. Fig 15 below highlights the intake position and indicates that insufficient capacity may be available to meet demand from 2016 with whole school capacity (Fig 16) insufficient from 2018 and as new developments fill and mature it is likely that demand could exceed supply in the future.

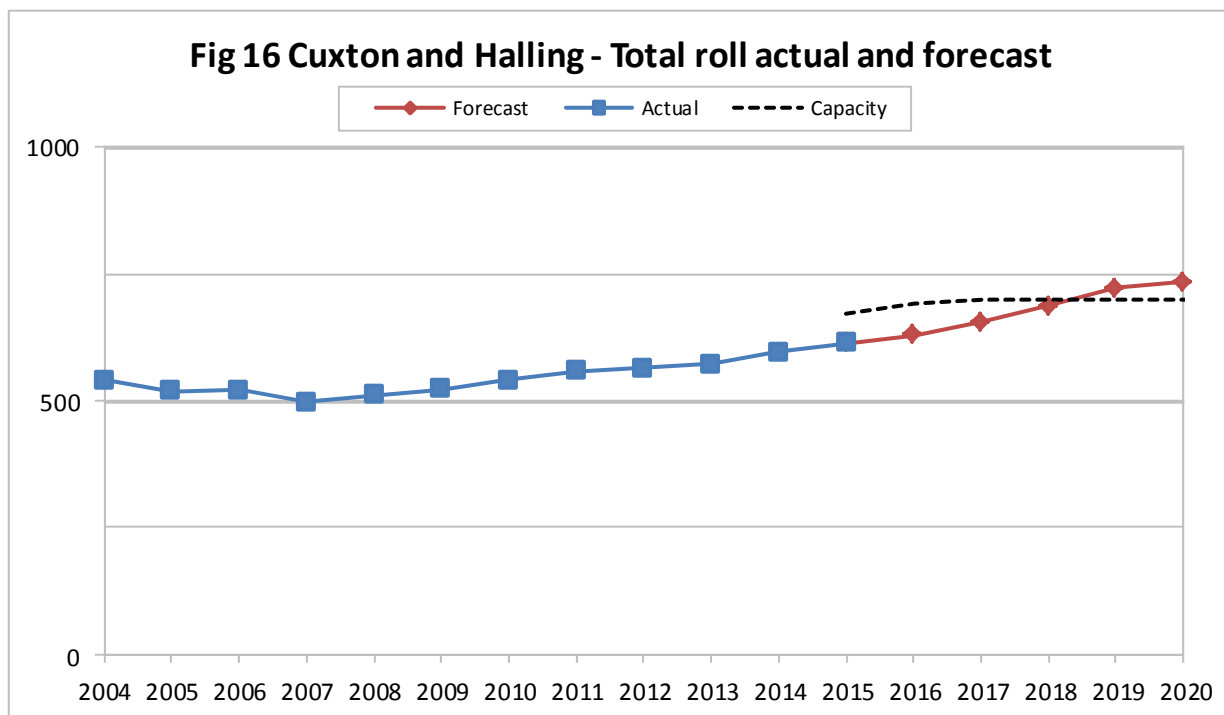
It is therefore recommended that additional provision be added to the area to provide sufficient places and to provide some flexibility into the system.

Options to provide additional capacity in this area are limited. No further expansion at the Cuxton Schools would be feasible and the creation of a new Free School could potentially lead to an over-provision of places and, notwithstanding this, no obvious site for a new school is available.

Feasibility studies have been undertaken to explore the potential to expand Halling Primary School by 20 places per year and Cabinet is asked to approve the expansion here and to authorise officers to commence the detailed design process and the appropriate consultation process. This will increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Halling from 40 to a full 2FE (PAN 60), which aside from creating the additional capacity would assist the school in organising its classes into two per year group rather than mixing year groups as they do currently. The increased numbers would also boost the school's financial viability.







### 3.11 **Primary summary**

It is recommended that no immediate action is taken in the following areas, although forecasts should be monitored regularly to ensure sufficient places are available as demand dictates, with plans prepared and in place to enable the Council to react to increases in demand in a timely manner. Specific proposals will be presented to Cabinet for approval at the appropriate time;

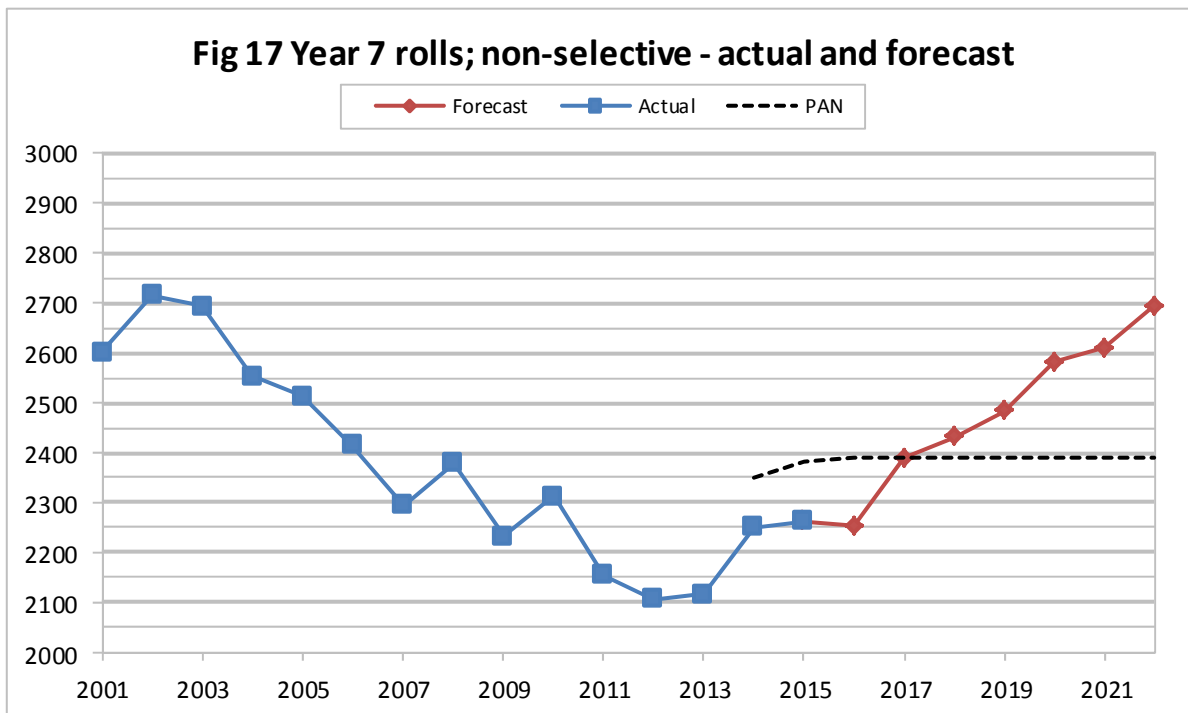
- Chatham, Rochester and Walderslade
- Hoo Peninsula
- Strood

In the following areas it is recommended that additional provision be progressed and appropriate consultation started, subject to the outcomes of any free school bids being unsuccessful.

- Gillingham West – increase by 1FE from September 2018 at St Mary’s Island
- Rainham – Increase by 1FE from September 2018 with the recommended option being Riverside Primary School and to undertake a feasibility study to expand Deanwood School into the current Abbey Court premises to future proof the Council’s position in the area
- Cuxton and Halling – increase by 20 places per year from September 2018 at Halling Primary School.
- Gillingham East – Revisit the feasibility study previously actioned at St Thomas of Canterbury to ensure it remains appropriate to trigger action for a permanent expansion when required and as funding allows.

### 3.12 **Secondary**

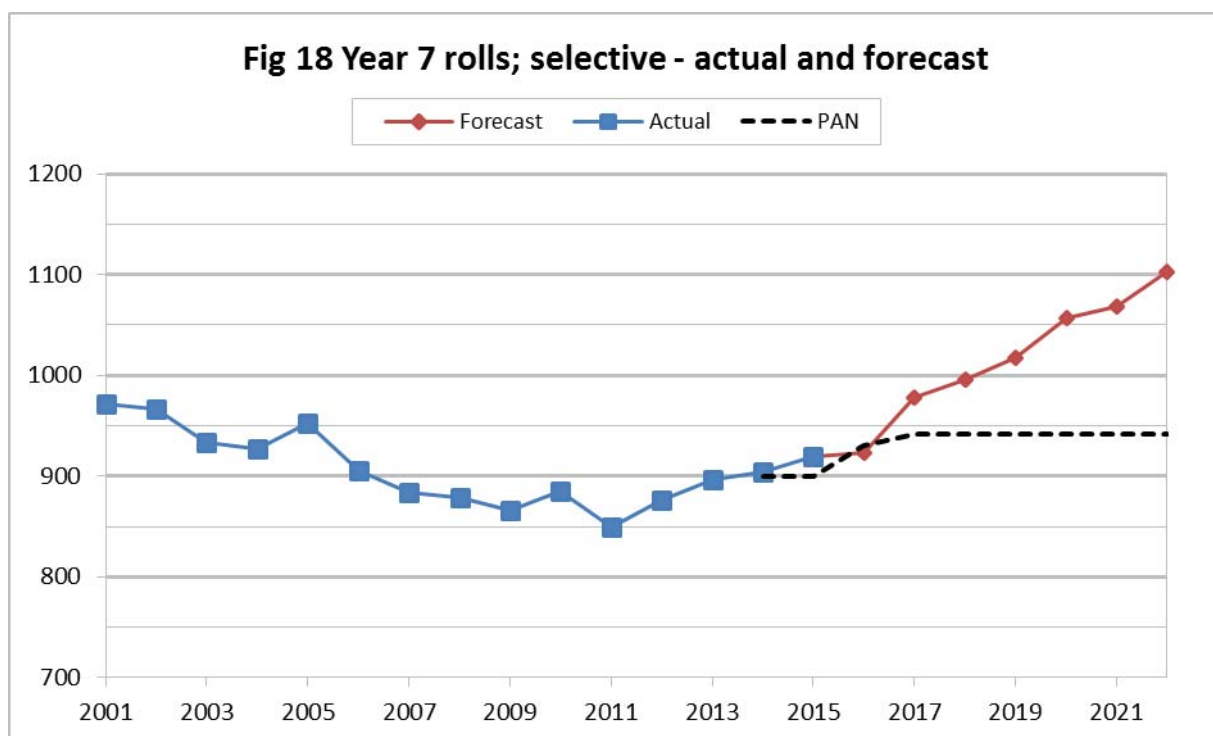
The increasing number of primary pupils will start to impact upon secondary numbers over the next few years with overall numbers expected to rise from 18,661 in 2015-16 to 21,615 in 2022-23. The pressure will initially be most severe in year 7 as the larger numbers of primary school children start to feed into secondary education. This will extend through the schools as the years progress.



3.12.1 Figure 17 above shows how the demand for year 7 non-selective places rises steeply from 2016 onwards, and whilst sufficient capacity exists to 2017 due to spare capacity in older year groups and it is likely that 2018 and possibly 2019 intakes can be absorbed into the spare capacity too. From this point additional capacity will be necessary to avoid a widespread oversubscription of places. For example in 2020 there could be a shortfall of 190 places which equates to the need for over 6 forms of entry and by 2022 the need for 10 forms of entry.

This could either be resolved by the expansion of a number of schools by 1 or 2FE; all Medway’s secondary schools are willing to work with the Council to ensure that demand can be met, or by the creation of new 6/7 Form of entry schools in Rainham and Strood. These would be delivered and funded through the Governments Free School programme as set out in section 2.12, subject to the availability of sites and bids being successful.

Current funding availability indicates that the Council would not be in a position to fund either sufficient expansions or the new schools required, should free school bids not be successful. The estimated cost of a new 6 Form of entry secondary school would be approximately £20-25m. This represents the biggest risk to the Council’s ability to meet its obligation to provide sufficient school spaces.



3.12.2 Fig 18 highlights that the selective sector is experiencing similar issues as non – selective. Year 7 intakes follow the same pattern and by 2020 there will be a shortfall of 114 spaces and by 2022 a deficit of 160 spaces.

The Government’s Free School programme will not include new grammar schools and therefore the responsibility for ensuring sufficient spaces in this sector will fall to the Council.

As section 6 shows, there is little funding available for this purpose; the continuing primary expansion programme is ongoing and reliance upon future years funding means uncertainty exists around how additional selective capacity can be provided.

All grammar schools have been contacted and all were willing to assist the Council in addressing this issue. As funding becomes available, potential projects will be assessed for their viability, value for money and cost per pupil. At the appropriate time proposals will be presented to Cabinet for approval.

There is further uncertainty in the selective phase, as the outcome of a consultation by Chatham Grammar School for Boys to become a co-educational establishment is awaited. The decision rests with the EFA and until determined, we cannot be certain how many boys and girls places will be available to students, and therefore how and where best to address the shortfall of places.

### 3.13 **Special needs**

3.13.1 In line with increasing demand for mainstream places, demand for special school provision has risen too. In recent years the Council has taken action to provide appropriate additional provision and to reduce the numbers of pupils placed in expensive independent or out of area settings.

A project to expand capacity by 40 children at Danecourt Special School has completed this year and a project resulting in an expansion of 68 pupils and

relocation to provide new purpose built accommodation for Abbey Court is underway with completion expected in December 2016.

Proposals have been consulted upon to expand Rivermead by 60 primary pupils and relocate into the buildings due to be vacated by Abbey Court. However, as set out in section 3.7, the Trust, which operates the school, intends to apply to establish a Primary Free School which would provide the required additional capacity elsewhere, and if successful would free up the Abbey Court buildings for alternative uses.

There has also been additional secondary aged special capacity for pupils with behavioural difficulties provided through the Inspire Free School, whilst the Castle Academy Trust has successfully bid for a Free School on the Delce Academy site in Rochester to provide for primary aged children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### 3.13.2 Secondary aged Hearing Impaired provision.

Medway does not have local specialist educational provision for secondary age pupils with a hearing impairment. Currently specialist provision is sought either in a state-funded Kent school, or more often at an independent residential special school in Brighton.

Medway has previously “purchased” additional places at the state-funded Kent school, but this is becoming a less viable option as Kent County Council need to place more Kent pupils in the provision, the school can no longer offer full British Sign Language (BSL) facilities due to a changes in staff and parental dissatisfaction since the full BSL facility ceased.

The independent special school charges for the residential element and increased costs by 7.6% in 2014-15. Medway’s SEN team succeeded in negotiating a lower increase, but the school has advised that as there was no increase in costs between 2010 and 2014 further cost increases are likely over the coming years.

It is therefore proposed to create specialist provision for secondary age Medway pupils with a hearing impairment within a state-funded mixed non-selective mainstream secondary school.

The provision will be for 8 places in 2016-17, building to 18 places by the end of the academic year 2018-19 to reflect the number of places for primary age pupils with hearing impairment attending the specialist provision based at All Faiths Primary School.

If Medway are no longer able to purchase places at the state-funded Kent school, the potential cost of placing 18 children in independent special school provision could grow to around £691,000 by September 2019.

Local provision means that we are able to keep children in their local area, and living with their family for the entire week.

With regards to Post 16 education, the children who attend a residential provision invariably continue to attend a local mainstream college close to the independent school with support from the same. With more young people with hearing impairment in the Medway area, local provision could be developed within Mid Kent College (as has occurred for pupils with visual impairment).

All mixed non-selective schools have been considered and the preference to host the provision is The Thomas Aveling School. The school are supportive of this proposal.

Subject to Cabinet's approval of the recommendation to establish a Hearing Impaired Unit at the school, officers will undertake a detailed feasibility at the school to ascertain the level of capital works required to enable the provision to operate successfully, which will be determined through the Council's procurement processes.

#### 4 Risk management

4.1 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 be implemented or not.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action to avoid or mitigate risk</b>	<b>Risk rating</b>
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	C1
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.	A1
That the level of forecast pupils fails to materialise	Should the expected numbers of pupils fail to materialise, then any funding committed could have been better spent elsewhere	Continue to monitor births, migration and housing developments and accuracy of forecasting	D3
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 Councils wider pupil place planning strategy	A2

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.	A3
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## 5 Consultation

- 5.1 No consultation is required for this report; however, any specific proposals that are progressed as a result of this report will include a consultation process as appropriate.
- 5.2 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.

## 6 Financial implications

- 6.1 All projects approved and undertaken as a result of this report will be funded through the Children and Adults' Capital Programme. Funding implications for proposed projects will be included in subsequent procurement board reports requesting funding approval for each individual project.
- 6.2 Where appropriate, Developer Contributions will be sought from new housing schemes to assist with the provision of school places in areas of demographic growth.
- 6.3 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. For example, central government is making available £200m to provide additional special school and unit provision; notification of how this funding can be accessed will be made available later during 2016, and officers will make use of this opportunity where possible.
- 6.4 The Government's Free School programme provides an opportunity to create additional provision without the responsibility for funding and all opportunities benefit from this source of funding will be explored. This is particularly relevant to secondary provision, which requires significantly higher funding than primary schools; however the availability of land is an issue. Officers will seek to secure Free School provision for Medway and discussions with the EFA will continue.
- 6.5 Medway Council receives a basic need grant from central government annually. The table below highlights the levels of funding due to be received until 2018/19. Beyond then, Medway could reasonably expect further Basic Needs allocations of at around £2-3 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



6.6 This table outlines the remaining available funding within the Capital Programme from central government basic need grants together with developer contributions and lists the current approved projects and adds in the recommendations from this report with indicative costs for projects based around the initial feasibility studies. As each project progresses more detailed costs will be developed and reported accordingly.

Funding remaining (up to and including 2018-19 allocations)	£16,400,000
Approved schemes – estimated pre-tender costs	
Hundred of Hoo Academy New Primary Phase	£5,900,000
Bligh Infant and Junior School 1FE expansion	£2,900,000
Saxon Way Primary Academy 1FE expansion	£2,000,000
Cliffe Woods Primary Academy 0.5FE expansion	£0,600,000
Abbey Court relocation – additional funding	£0,500,000
St Thomas of Canterbury Bulge class	£0,025,000
Awaiting approval – estimated pre-tender costs	
Riverside Primary School 1FE expansion (if required)	£1,540,000
St Mary’s Island Primary School 1FE expansion (if required)	£1,875,000
Halling Primary School 140 place expansion	£0,800,000
Secondary Hearing Impaired provision	£0,100,000
Total of outstanding projects	£16,240,000
Remaining funding up until March 2019	£160,000

6.7 Whilst the table above outlines a significant level of available funding, this funding is allocated to the completion of the projects currently approved and underway or held for those recommended as part of this report. There is currently little funding remaining for the projects necessary to expand secondary and special provision, which will need to rely either entirely upon future years funding beyond 2018-19 as yet unknown, or will be funded as a result of the government’s Free School programme.

## 7 Legal implications

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

7.3 Where an academy is proposed for expansion it falls to the academy trust to ensure appropriate consultation is undertaken. In such circumstances the Regional Schools Commissioner is the decision maker on the proposals. As these are basic need proposals funding responsibility falls to the Council and all decisions on funding approval will robustly follow the Council’s procurement procedures.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 The Cabinet is asked to note the continued excellent progress made against the School Organisation Plan framework, which has ensured that sufficient school places are available to meet the increasing demand.
- 8.2 The Cabinet, is asked to consider the recommended primary proposals as set out in section 3.11 of the report and to approve the following;
- 8.2.1 To expand at St Mary's Island Primary School, from 2 to 3FE, which will meet demand from new housing, both ongoing and proposed, in the immediate and wider local area, subject to there being no successful free school bid in the area.
- 8.2.2 To expand Halling Primary School to a full 2FE to meet demand and parental preference in the area as a result of significant housing development and the inward movement of families.
- 8.2.3 To expand Riverside Primary School from 1 to 2FE to mitigate the effect of a number of housing developments planned for the immediate area and the subsequent expected additional demand, subject to there being no successful free school bid in the area.
- 8.2.4 To authorise officers to commence the consultation, detailed design and procurement processes on the recommendations outlined in sections 8.2.1 to 8.2.3 above.
- 8.3 The Cabinet is asked to establish a Hearing Impaired Unit at Thomas Aveling Secondary Academy, as set out in section 3.13.2, to meet the needs of Medway's secondary aged pupils with hearing impairment, resulting in fewer pupils being placed at out of area provision.
- 8.4 The Cabinet is asked to authorise officers to undertake further feasibility studies as necessary to ensure that forward planning is in place to meet demand as and where it emerges.

## **9. Suggested reasons for decision(s)**

- 9.1 By approving the recommendations in section 8, the Cabinet is ensuring that the Council meets its statutory duty to ensure sufficient good quality school places are available.

### **Lead officer contact**

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### **Background papers**

Outcome of Consultation Period for School Organisation Plan 2011/2016 – Report to Cabinet 1 November 2011

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=2335&Ver=4>

### **Appendices**

None