

## **CABINET**

**25 SEPTEMBER 2018**

### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY 2018-22**

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 an update on the progress made against the School Place Planning Strategy, 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 Medway Council, as the local authority, has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. In 2011, Medway's Cabinet decided that having a strategic plan for school organisation would provide a framework for decisions to ensure an appropriate supply of good school places. The School Place Planning Strategy describes the principles, methods, and challenges of this duty.
- 1.2 All proposals put forward in this update are consistent with the School Place Planning Strategy Principles, the Council Plan Priority of 'Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential', and the outcome of 'All children achieving their potential in schools'. 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 July 2018, as part of the School Place Planning Strategy, Cabinet approved the School Place Planning Strategy Principles. These were produced 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 are based upon improving schools and raising standards.
- 2.2 Annual updates to the School Place Planning Strategy will highlight specific proposals for developing provision in Medway over the lifetime of the Strategy. These proposals

will be informed by the most up-to-date available information and data, which will be used to forecast the future need for places in Medway schools, as well as an analysis of local and national policy and strategy.

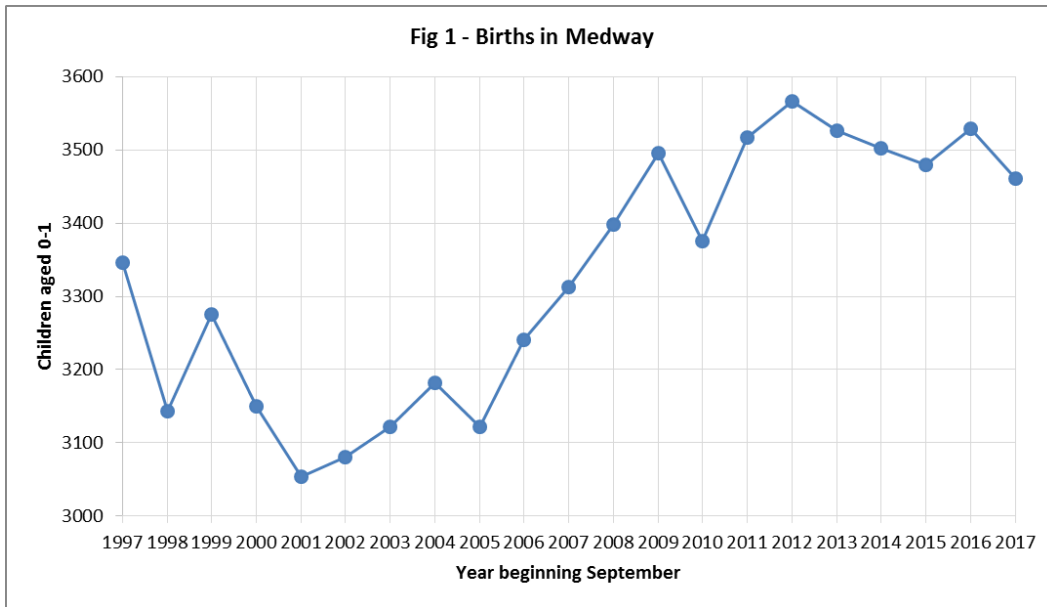
- 2.3 This annual review report identifies areas of emerging need based upon the latest annual round of forecasting undertaken in April 2018.
- 2.4 The duty to ensure sufficient school places, coupled with the local and national policy of successful schools expanding, means that when deciding upon which schools to expand, a number of factors must be taken into consideration. These include the OFSTED rating of the school, its current known performance, and its popularity with parents. In the most recent scorecard published by the Department for Education (DFE) Medway was rated as joint first nationally in providing additional good or outstanding places. On the same scorecard, Medway's school place forecasts were shown to be within 1% error margin on all secondary place planning benchmarks and at 1.5% for primary. Therefore, Members can be confident that the recommendations made within the School Place Planning Strategy and its reviews are based upon robust evidence and analysis.
- 2.5 Birth rates have reduced since peaking in 2012, but remain reasonably constant. Inward movement of families with pre-school age children is lower than in 2012, but remains steady. This, combined with the number of ongoing, approved and proposed housing schemes, means that the demand for school places is expected to continue to rise in the foreseeable future.
- 2.6 Medway's Local Plan, currently under consultation, highlights the need for an additional 29,000 homes across Medway by 2035. It is expected that the total population will increase from 278,000 to 317,500 in that time. Therefore, demand for school places is likely to continue to rise.
- 2.7 The forecasts, which this report is based on, include all approved housing developments. Those schemes either proposed, under consideration, or at the appeal stage 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.
- 2.8 Data on the numbers of pupils produced from housing developments, based upon research by MORI, indicates that on average for every 775 two+ bedroom houses built, there is a requirement for an additional primary provision equivalent to 1 Form of Entry (210 children).
- 2.9 Surplus capacity is planned into the system 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 nationally accepted that a 5% surplus is a reasonable level to ensure places are available without the viability of schools being endangered. However, given the high proportion of families moving to Medway, a 5% surplus has proven to be insufficient in certain areas in the long term. It is recommended therefore, that for the reception year group, Medway works to an initial 8% surplus level at planning area level, ensuring sufficient spaces as classes move through the school. This may be a little higher than the average surplus levels, but will ensure a sufficiency of places in areas of demand, and avoid the need and costs for emergency bulge classes and schools admitting over number which can prove difficult for schools to organise at short notice. Working to 8% surplus should not endanger the financial viability of schools generally, however, in certain circumstances, where all or

most of the surplus is at one school in an area, the local authority will work in partnership with the Schools Forum to help mitigate the financial impact.

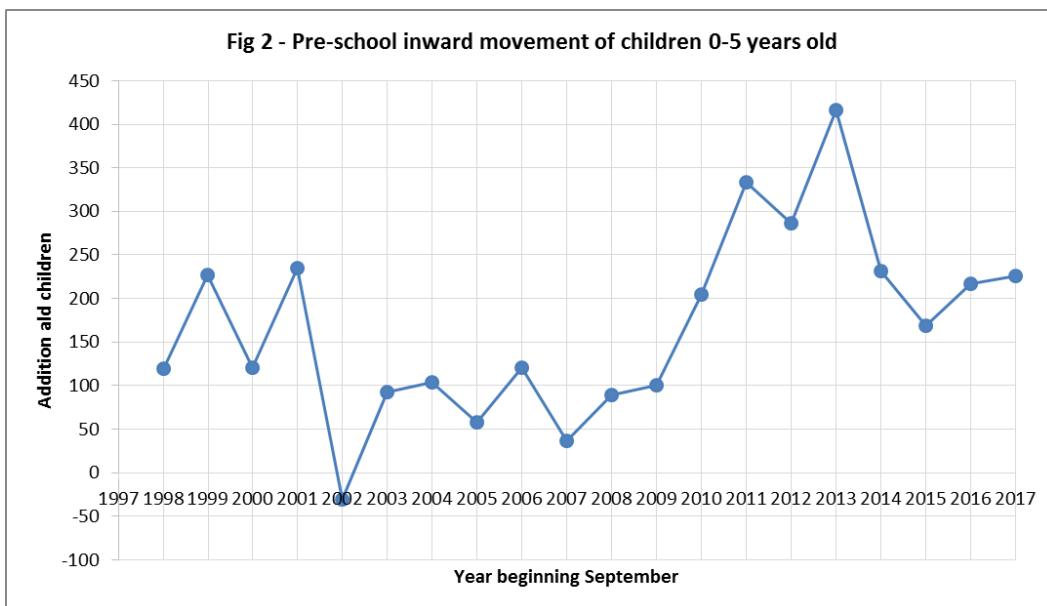
### 3 Analysis of latest data and information

#### Pre-school and primary phase

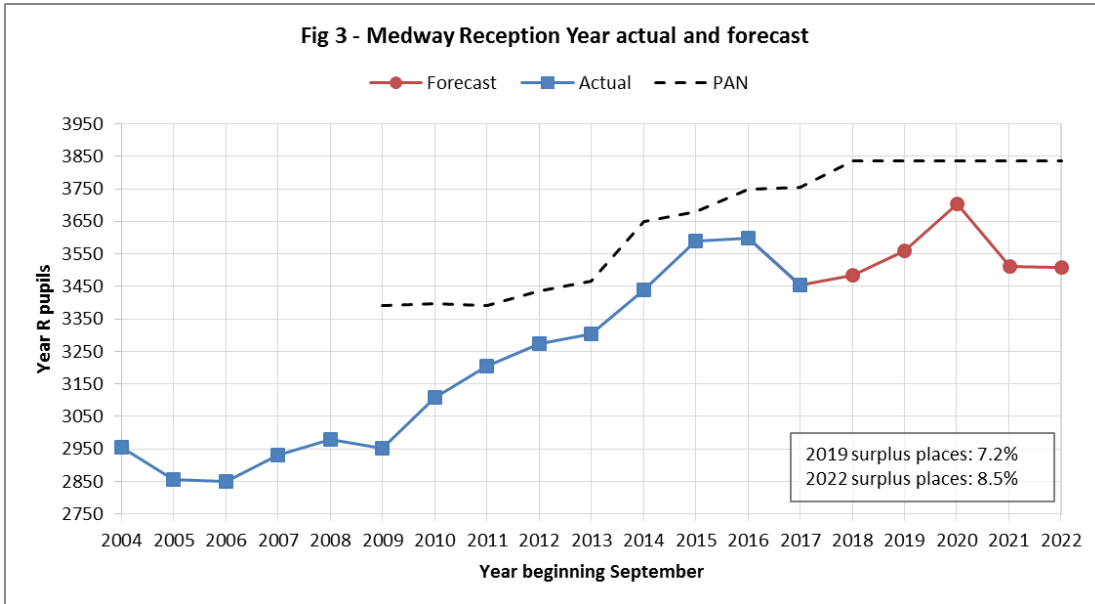
3.1 Fig 1 below shows that births remain high compared to pre-2009 levels, although there has been a slight reduction from the peak in 2012.



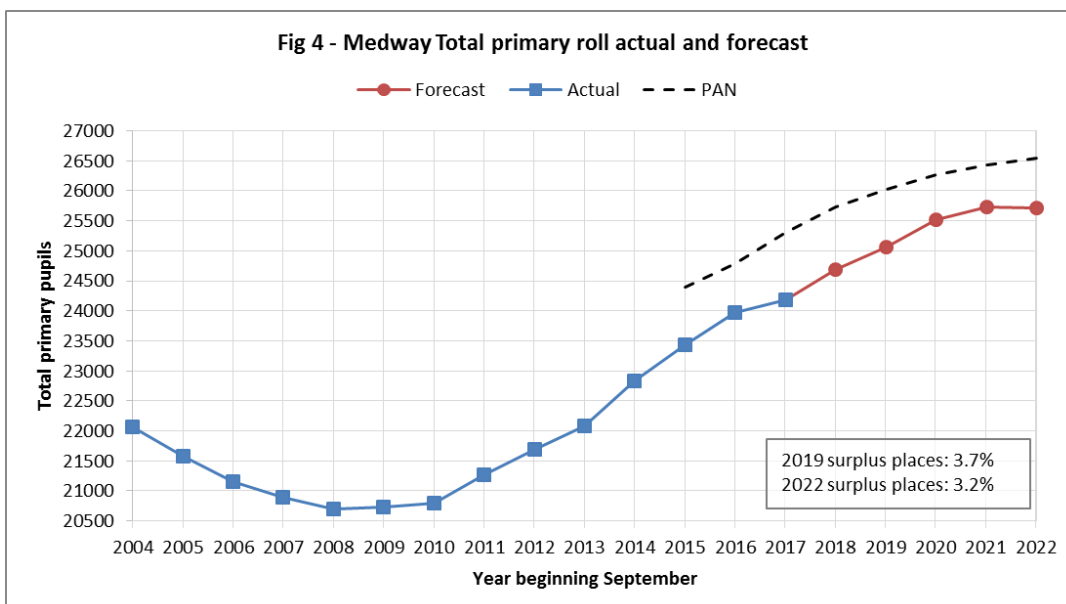
3.2 The inward movement of families with pre-school age children in 2017 has increased compared to 2015 (fig 2). As the local plan progresses, an increasing number of housing schemes will come forward. Inward movement of pre-school age children can, therefore, be reasonably expected to increase again in the future. This will add to demand for reception places in the future and forecasts will be regularly monitored to ensure the Council is in a position to react accordingly.



3.3 Both of the factors in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 mean that the demand for reception places is forecast to rise gradually to 2020 and then fall again (fig 3), although it is reasonable to expect that the four and five year forecasts will increase as new housing schemes are approved. 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 7.2% of the total for 2019 and 8.5% for 2022. This aligns with the flexibility levels suggested in paragraph 2.9 and ensures sufficient places for that cohort as it progresses through the year groups.



3.4 Overall pupil numbers in primary schools have increased to 24,191, up by 225 children compared to last year and the highest level since 2002, and are predicted to continue to rise for at least the next five years to 25,706 (fig 4). The expansion and new build work actioned as part of the capital programme up to September 2018 has enabled the Council to meet demand when and where it is needed. This additional capacity is expected to meet the forecast demand, although some further primary capacity is likely to be required in future years as housing development accelerates. There may be some areas with more surplus capacity than others, but this is because parental preference can change year on year. This makes it challenging to determine in advance which schools will be popular, and which will fill more than others.



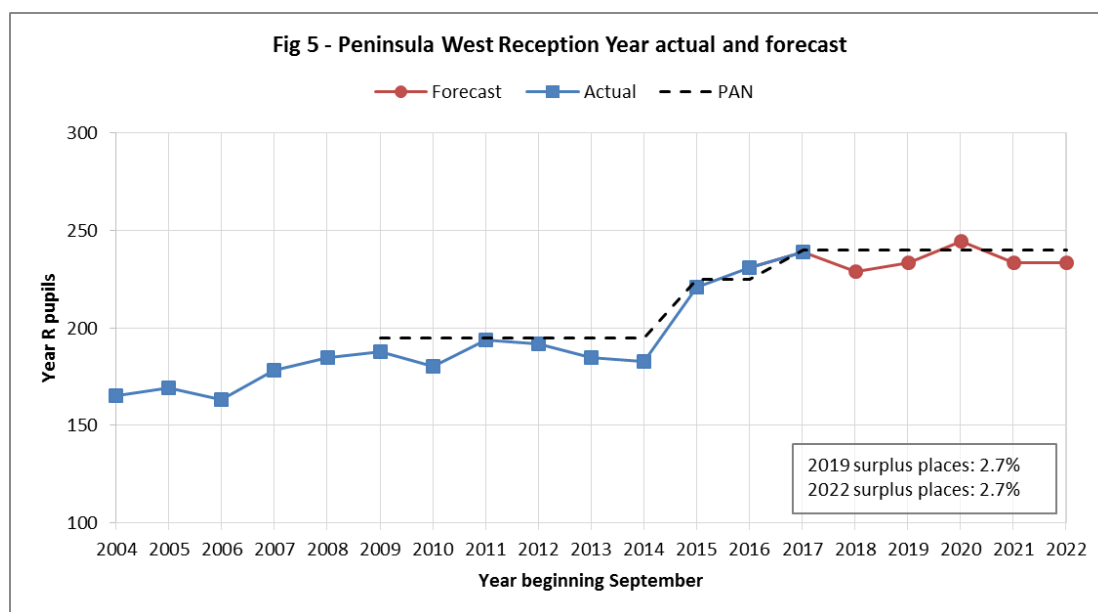
- 3.5 Medway operates ten primary pupil place planning areas based on local geography. Previously there were nine planning areas, but having Peninsula as a single area masked the differences in school rolls in the east and west of the area. Therefore, it was split into Peninsula West and Peninsula East.

When planning school places, it is necessary 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.

### 3.6 Peninsula East and West

This place planning area originally encompassed the whole of the Hoo Peninsula. This year it has been split into two. Peninsula West covers the area from Four Elms Hill to High Halstow, including Hoo St Werburgh, Cliffe, and Cliffe Woods. Peninsula East covers the remaining area to the east of High Halstow, including the villages of Grain, Stoke, and Allhallows.

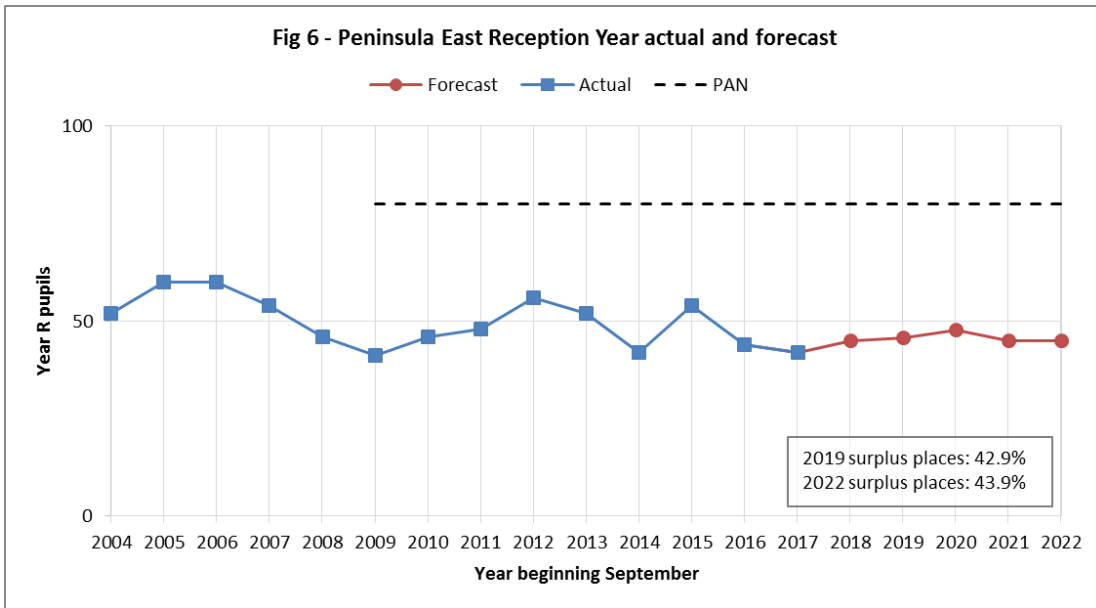
Peninsula West covers five primary schools, one of which, the primary phase at The Hundred of Hoo Academy, was established in 2015 to cater for demand from Hoo village due to the number of housing developments. The graph below shows the forecast for reception in the Peninsula West (fig 5).



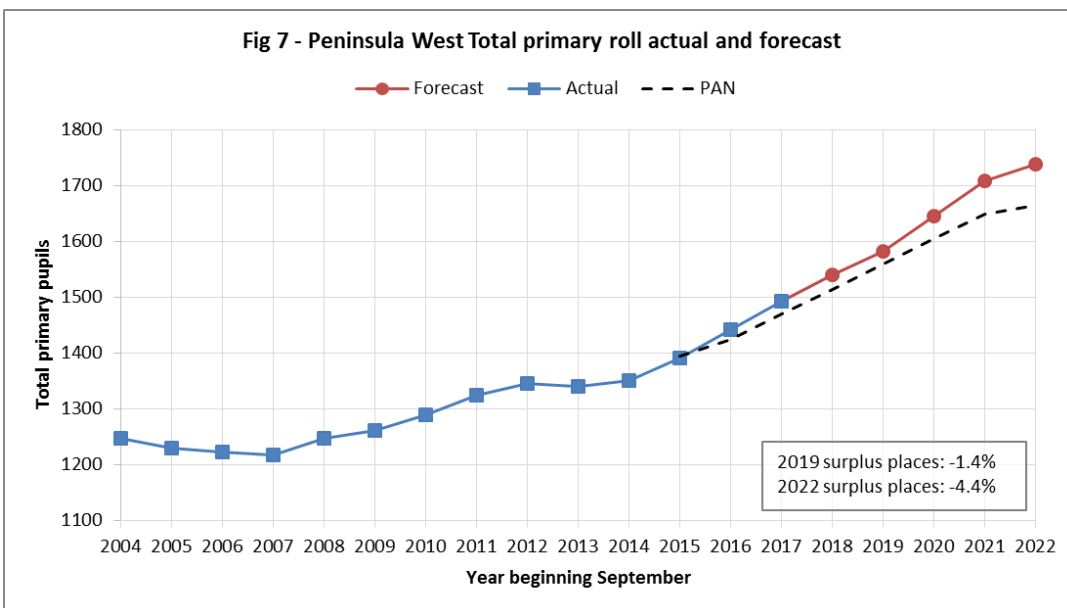
In 2016, Cabinet approved proposals to expand provision at Cliffe Woods Primary Academy from 1.5FE to 2FE. This project was completed in September 2017, providing an additional 105 places.

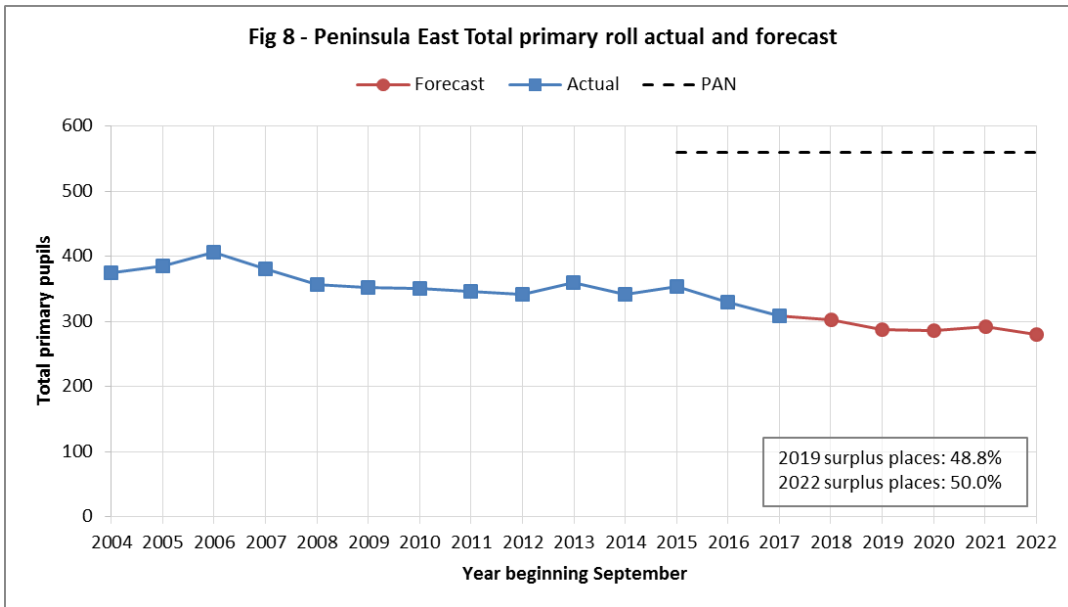
These two projects have added 315 primary school places into the western peninsula area. Forecasts suggest further additional capacity is likely to be required as more housing developments gain approval in the area. The new primary provision at The Hundred of Hoo Academy, whilst being built as a 1FE school to meet current demand, has been designed to enable efficient expansion to 2FE. The Cabinet is requested to authorise the feasibility and detailed costing for the addition of an additional one form of entry at Hundred of Hoo Academy Primary phase, as this school was designed with core facilities for two forms of entry in readiness for this expected need. A feasibility study has been undertaken at Chattenden Primary Academy to assess the viability of a future expansion there.

Peninsula East has three primary schools, all of which are small rural schools and as a result all have low roll numbers. The graph below shows the forecast for the Peninsula East (fig 6) area.



It is clear that currently the only spare capacity sits is within the schools in Peninsula East (fig 8). The schools in the west peninsula are generally full and forecasted to remain so (fig 7). 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 west peninsula area should continue to be monitored closely to ensure a good supply of places remains as the population increases as expected. In the eastern peninsula, the number of surplus places will be monitored to ensure schools in this area remain viable.



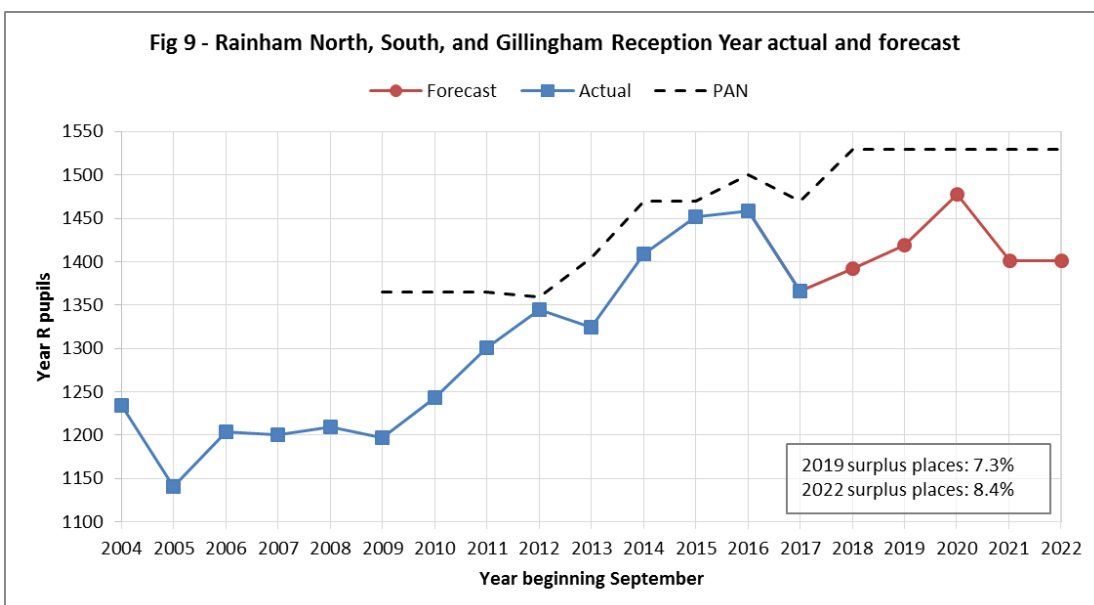


### 3.7 Gillingham, Rainham North and Rainham South

Whilst this section covers three place planning areas, the levels of pupil movement between them makes it sensible to consider the Gillingham and Rainham areas as a whole.

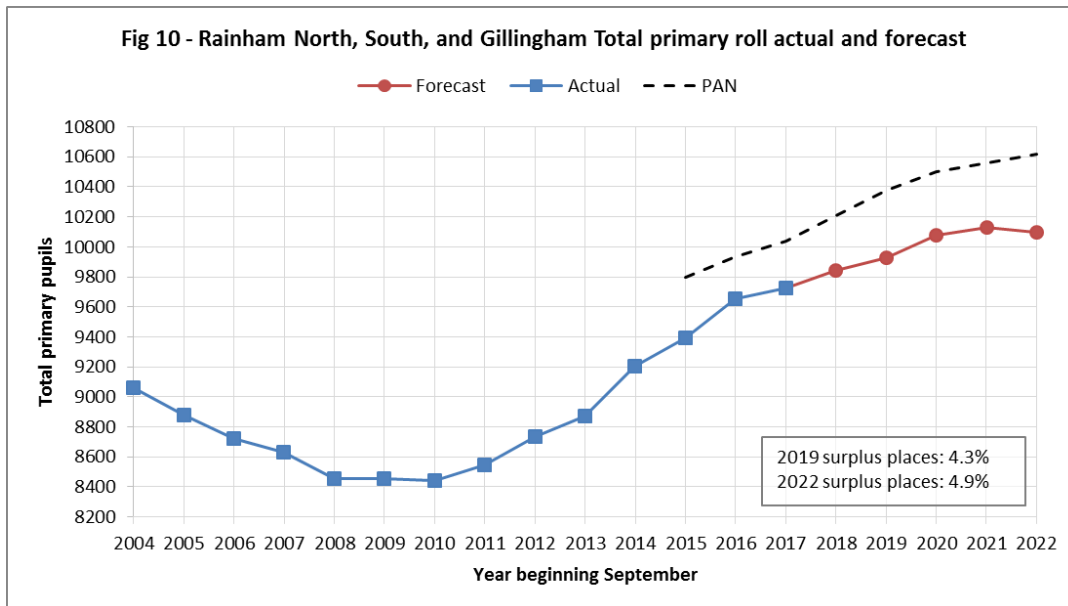
Recent expansions in the area at Brompton Westbrook, Woodlands Academy, Napier Primary, and Saxon Way, together with the bulge class at St Thomas of Canterbury for the 2016-17 academic year have ensured that sufficient places are available. Forecasting in this area has proved to be particularly accurate 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 around the Rainham boundary with Kent and in the west around St Mary's Island and the docks area. These are areas of significant housing developments, with some maturing and others underway or due to start. To meet this demand Riverside and St Mary's Island Primary Schools were approved for expansion in 2016's annual review and these projects have been completed and the schools have admitted the first year of additional pupils in September 2018.



The graph above indicates that there is some spare capacity at reception intake (fig 9), but this equates to 7.3% in 2019 and 8.4% in 2022 which will provide flexibility in the short term, and is close to the 8% surplus figure. However, it is anticipated that there will be much more pressure in 2020, where the surplus is set to drop to 3.4%. With further housing scheme proposals expected those surplus places could be filled quickly in the coming years.

When looking at overall primary roll forecasts (fig 10) the spare capacity in 2019 is 4.3% and 4.9% in 2022. The surplus capacity is forecasted to grow over time, and so should ensure that sufficient places are available during this time to meet demand from inward migration. Forecasts will be monitored to watch for any change to this situation.



It is therefore suggested that the actions taken in recent years, and those currently underway will provide the appropriate number of additional places to meet demand and no further expansion is recommended in the short term. As housing development in the area increases further this position can be reassessed to ensure a sufficient supply of places.

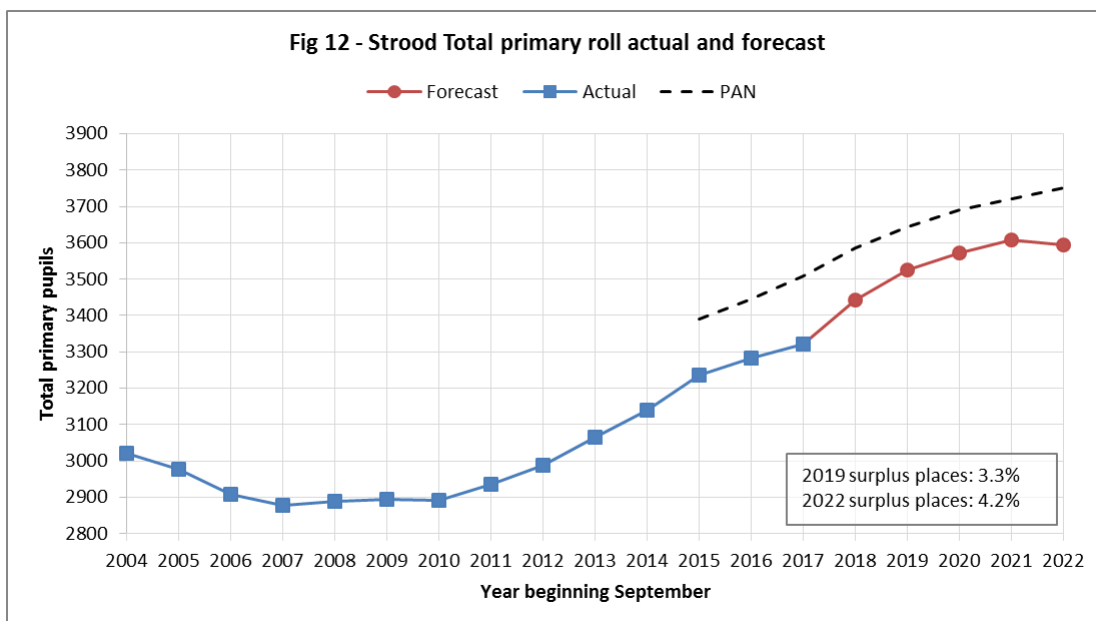
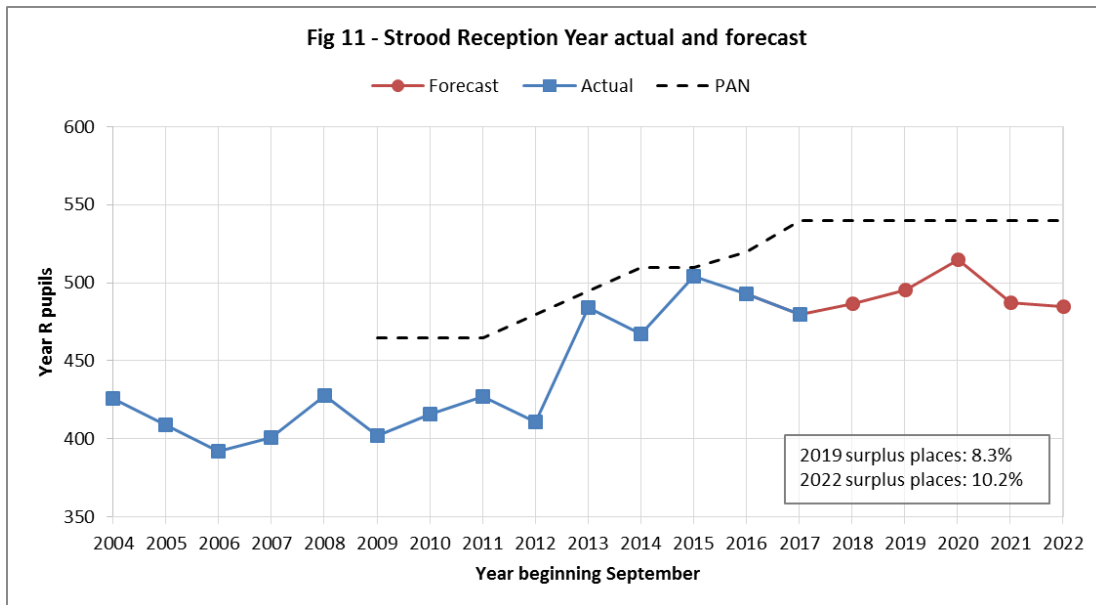
### 3.8 Strood

Strood, as an area, has experienced significant housing development in recent years including Liberty Park, Medway Gate, Templars Rise and a number of smaller schemes. As these become established, births from these developments are increasing. Further development is ongoing, all of which will add to school place demand. To meet this expected demand, a project to expand Bligh Infant and Junior Schools was undertaken. This added places for 30 pupils per year group from September 2017.

With the addition of this provision, reception class 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 e.g. 400 dwellings at Temple waterfront, 130 at Commissioners Road, as well as around 1000 proposed along Canal Road and the Civic Centre, additional primary phase capacity may be required over time.



Overall, total roll forecasts (fig 12) suggest that current capacity caters for the known demand. Future demand could be met from the approved Maritime Free School which include 3 Forms of entry primary provision. Beyond that, should additional capacity be required, options are available and feasibility studies have been actioned at Temple Mill, All Faiths and St Nicholas in readiness.



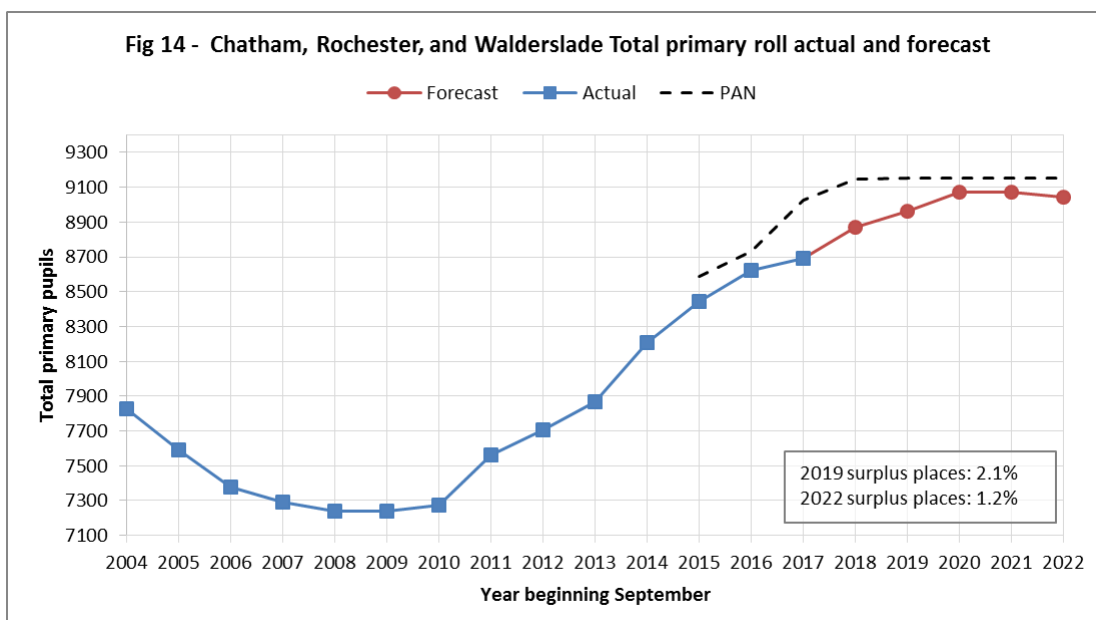
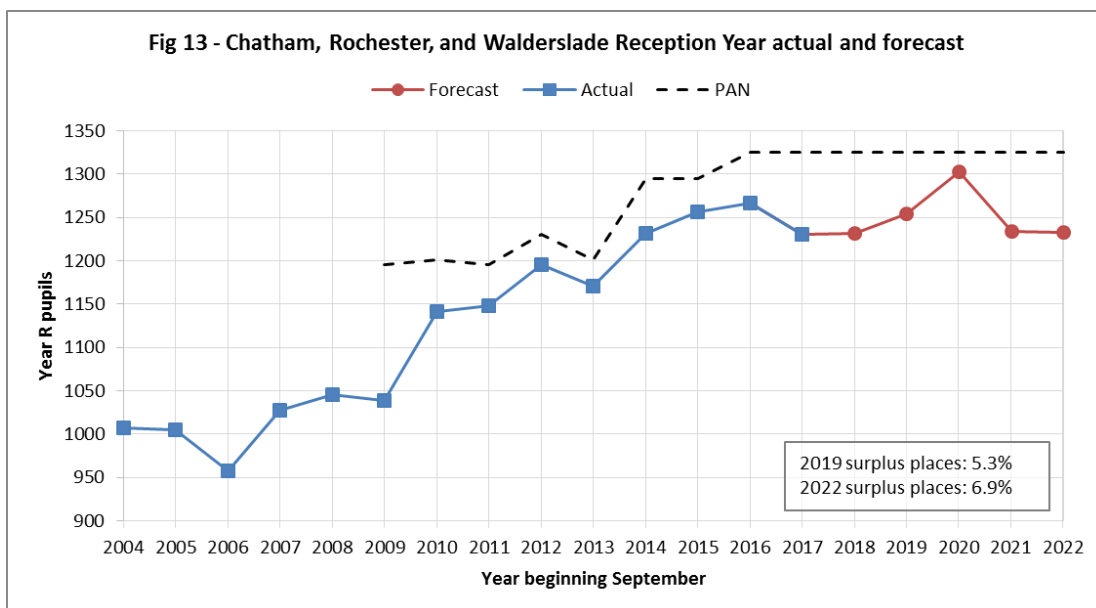
### 3.9 Chatham, Rochester and Walderslade

These three planning areas are intrinsically linked by the cross boundary movement of pupils to attend schools. Primary capacity was increased in 2014 with the creation of New Horizons Children’s Academy. This added 630 primary places, and the ESFA approved proposals by Delce Junior Academy to establish a 1FE infant stage from September 2016, 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 in the future. The graph below (fig 13) shows that there is sufficient capacity for reception rolls, but the housing development at Rochester Riverside will generate additional pupils. The development will come with a school, but the timing of the development,

and the construction of the school may result in a mismatch of supply and demand of school places.

The overall rolls graph (fig 14) indicates that capacity will be tight in 2019, with only 2.1% spare capacity, and only 1.2% in 2022. This does not include pupils who will be produced by Rochester Riverside, as a new school will be provided to cater for these pupils. This new primary school needs to be taken into account when making a decision on expansion. However, at this time, it is not certain when the school will be operational. Current indications are for September 2021 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 to cater for those families that move into the new development prior to the school being ready.



### 3.10 Cuxton and Halling

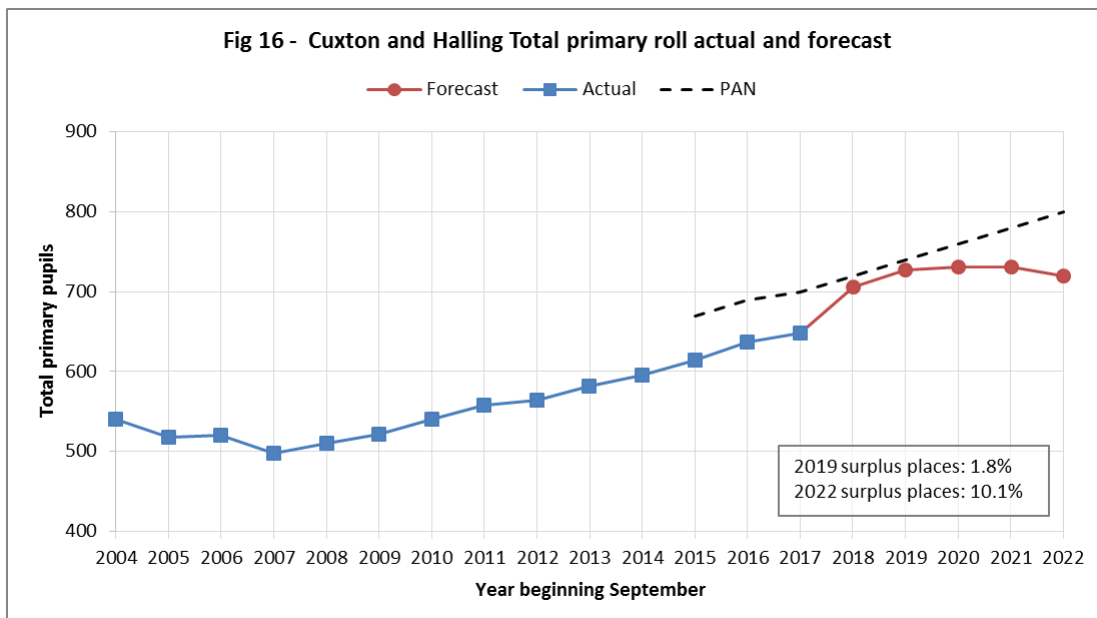
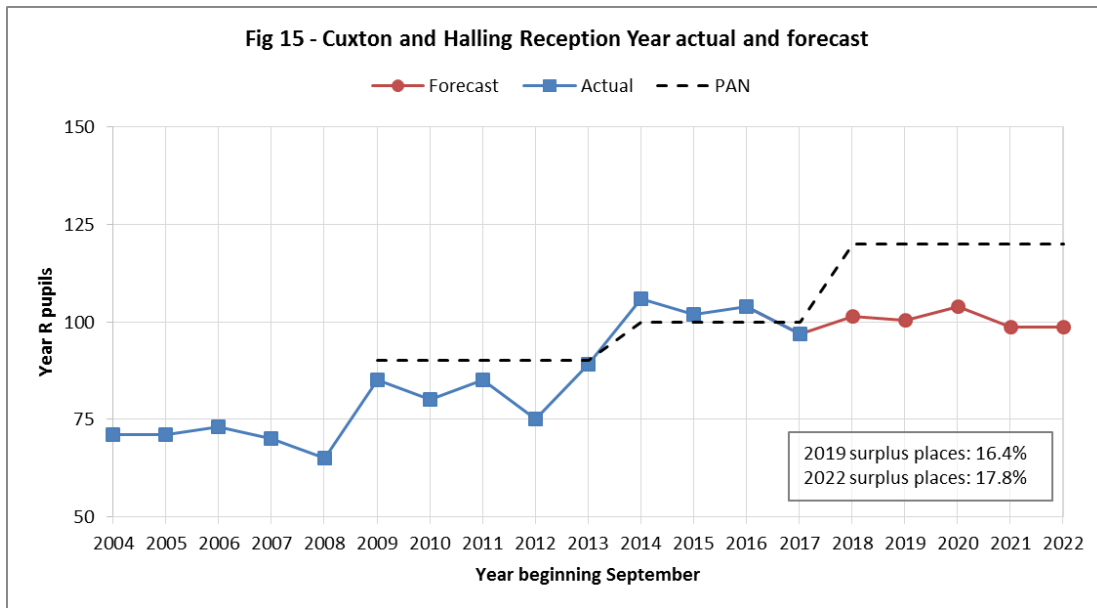
This mostly rural area extends from the M2 motorway bridge south-westwards to the border with Kent County Council at Snodland and is covered by two primary schools. One of them, Cuxton, has been expanded recently resulting in an increase in its

capacity by 70 pupils, which has ensured sufficient places are available in the short term.

Previous forecasts suggested that, with the number of housing developments in the area on both sides of the boundary, further capacity was required. Therefore, the expansion of Halling Primary School was approved as part of 2016's review.

This will provide an additional 20 places per year group 140 in total. Fig 15 below highlights the intake position, with the Halling expansion included, and indicates that sufficient capacity is expected to be available to meet demand from 2018.

The total roll forecast (Fig 16) shows that there may be pressure on overall rolls in 2018 and 2019, but this is due to the phasing in of the additional capacity.



### 3.11 Primary summary

The table below highlights the significant number of additional primary school places provided between 2013 and 2018. This has, and will, ensure that the Council continues

to meet its duty to provide sufficient school places over the period of the strategy. These places have been successfully provided when and where required.

School	Planning Area	Number of additional places	Year implemented
Wainscott Primary School	Strood	210	2013
Brompton Westbrook	Gillingham	105	2013
Napier Primary School	Gillingham	210	2013
Saxon Way Primary	Gillingham	210	2014
Cedar Primary School	Strood	105	2014
New Horizons Academy	Chatham	630	2014
Woodlands Primary	Gillingham	210	2014
Cuxton Infant and Junior	Cuxton	70	2014
Hundred of Hoo	Peninsula	210	2015
St Thomas of Canterbury	Gillingham	30 (Bulge Class)	2016
Delce Academy Infant Phase	Rochester	210	2016
Bligh Infant and Junior	Strood	210	2017
Cliffe Woods	Peninsula	105	2017
St Mary's Island Primary	Gillingham	210	2018
Riverside Primary	Rainham	210	2018
Halling Primary	Cuxton	140	2018
<b>Total</b>		<b>3075</b>	

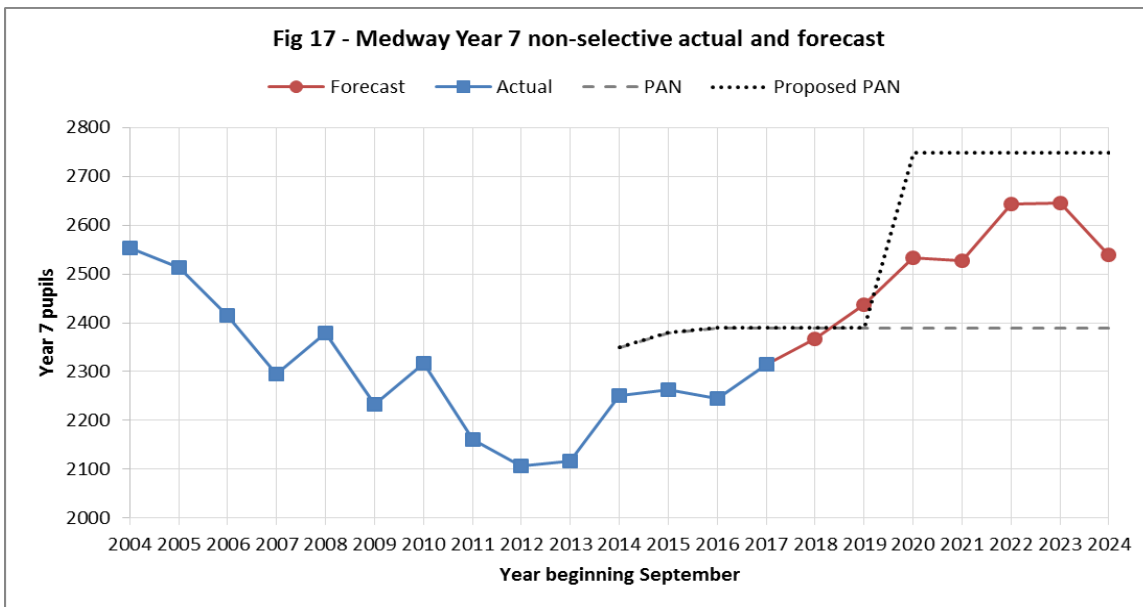
No significant action is proposed in the primary school sector at this time as the additional capacity built into the system should ensure demand is met for the foreseeable future. Forecasts will continue to be monitored twice each year, together with weekly birth numbers and inward migration, and the position will be assessed accordingly. Options are already in place should additional capacity be required in the future so that the Council are in a position to react quickly. Development put forward through the Local Plan as a whole will be monitored, and any requirements for additional places to best meet overall need determined.

### 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 18,924 in 2017-18 to 22,234 in 2024-25. 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 all year groups over time.

#### 3.12.1 **Non Selective**

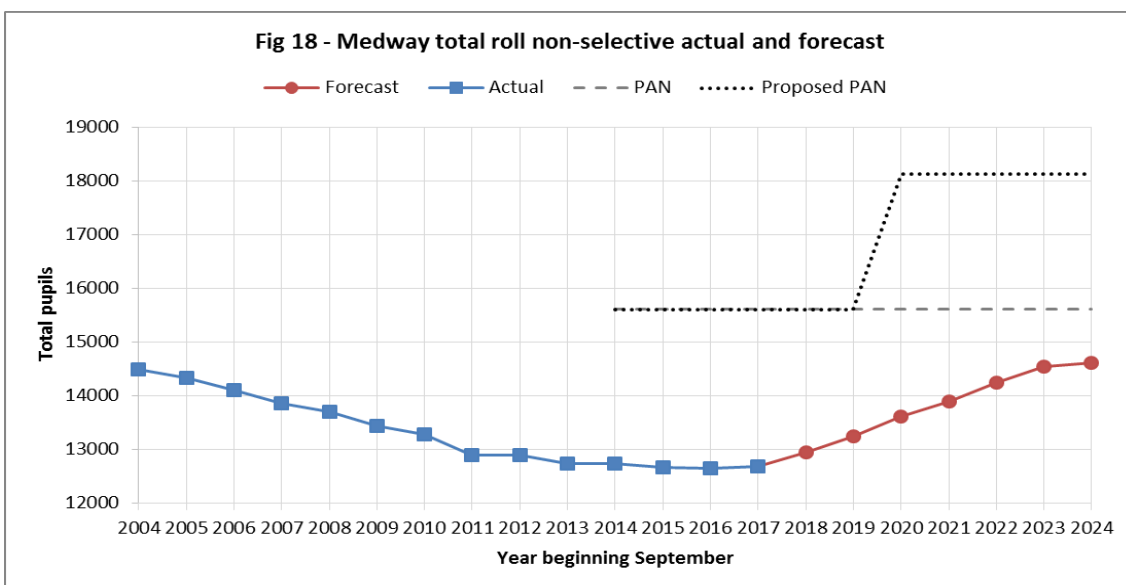
Figure 17 below shows how the forecasted demand for year 7 non-selective places rises steeply from 2016 onwards. Sufficient capacity exists to 2018 due to spare capacity in older year groups and it is likely that 2019 intakes can be absorbed into the spare capacity too. From this point additional capacity will be necessary to avoid a widespread oversubscription of places. For example in 2020 there could be a shortfall of 144 places which equates to the need for 5 forms of entry and by 2022 the need for 9 forms of entry.



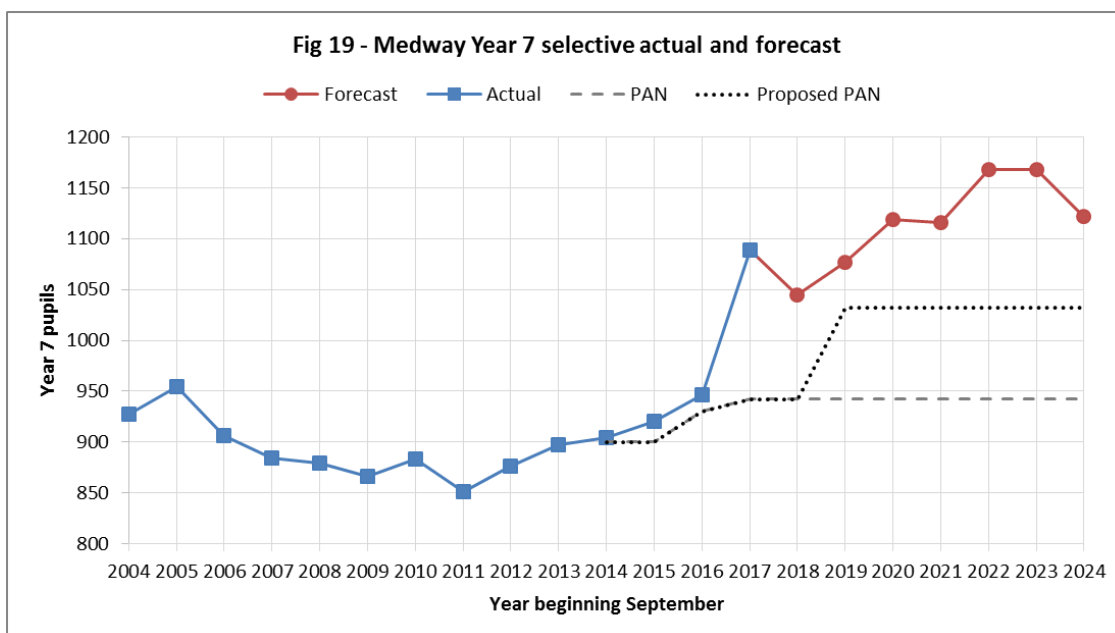
This shortfall will be met through the provision of the two Free Schools (Medway and Maritime Free Schools) awarded to Medway; this is shown on the graph as the proposed Published Admission Number (PAN) dotted line. These would be delivered and funded through the Government’s Free School programme. It is anticipated, subject to the availability of sites, that these schools will be operational from 2020/21.

Fig 18 below shows the overall school forecasts against capacity and highlights that sufficient places will be available as a result of the new free schools. During the scope of the graph there appears to be surplus places, however, these will be filled year on year as the larger numbers progress through, providing flexibility and certainty of places into the mid-twenties. These figures are based upon the current primary school rolls and approved housing. As housing developments come forward under the Local Plan, there is likely to be a corresponding increase in secondary numbers.

Current funding availability indicates that the Council would not be in a position to fund either sufficient expansions or the new schools required without the Free Schools Programme. The estimated cost of a new 6 form of entry secondary school would be approximately £25-30m. The biggest risk to Council’s ability to meet its obligation to provide sufficient school spaces is the Free Schools not materialising. The ability to secure suitable sites in Rainham and Strood forms the majority of this risk and Members are asked to support the location of suitable sites in Rainham and Strood.



### 3.12.2 Selective



*The deficit of year 7 places shown in fig 19 above can be absorbed by the additional capacity created as part of the expansion programme for older year groups. This additional capacity can be seen in fig 20. This capacity will fill year on year as cohorts' progress through the school.*

Fig 19 highlights that the selective sector is experiencing similar issues as the non-selective. Year 7 intakes follow the same pattern; by 2020 there will be a shortfall of 177 spaces and by 2022 a deficit of 226 spaces. The deficit of places in 2017 has been absorbed into the current capacity with schools agreeing to admit over their PAN, and the expansion programme will enable this to continue for the next few years. However, this is not sustainable in the longer term without additional physical capacity being made available. It is likely therefore that additional capacity will be required beyond the expansions planned for 2019-20.

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 funding becomes available, potential projects will be assessed for their viability, value for money and cost per pupil. It is likely that over time all six Grammar Schools will require some additional capacity.

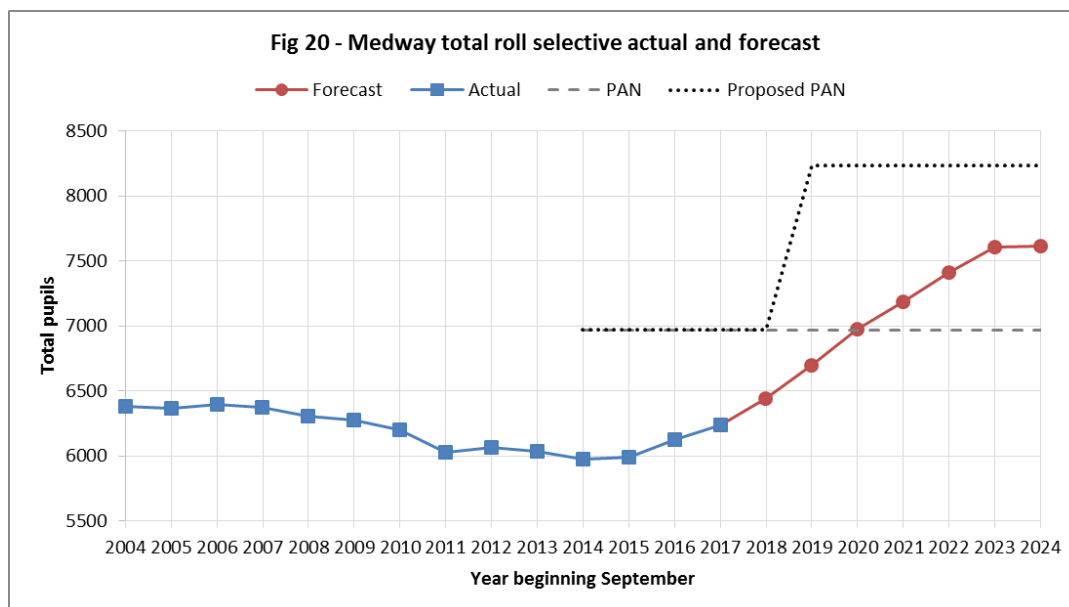
A formal study to identify where the largest number of places can be provided cost-effectively in order to meet demand when necessary has been undertaken. The schools selected are shown in the table below, and the impact of the expansions is shown on the above graph (Fig 19) as the proposed PAN dotted line.

School	Additional places	Year from
Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School	150	2018
Rainham Mark Grammar School	150	2018
Holcombe Grammar School	150	2018

Demand for grammar school places from pupils living on the Hoo Peninsula is growing, and currently 414 pupils travel daily from the peninsula area as well as 687 from Strood into Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham to attend a grammar school. With housing numbers expected to grow in future years, demand for places is likely to increase further. Therefore, it is recommended that the opportunity for providing selective education on the peninsula is explored, and a feasibility study undertaken.

Having grammar school provision on the peninsula area will significantly reduce travel patterns through Medway and in turn pupil time spent travelling. Over time this will free up places in the urban grammar schools for local children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Fig 20 below highlights the overall grammar school forecasts against actual and proposed capacity, and indicates that once the current grammar school expansions are complete, then sufficient space should be available into the next decade. However, it is important to note that the graph only takes approved housing schemes into consideration, and therefore it is reasonable to expect that as more housing schemes come forward following the adoption of the Local Plan, demand will increase beyond current capacity.



### 3.13 **Special Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

3.13.1 In line with increasing pressure on mainstream places, demand for special school provision has also risen. 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 was completed in 2016 and a project resulting in an expansion of 68 pupils and relocation to provide new purpose built accommodation for Abbey Court was completed in December 2016 with the school taking up occupation in April 2017.

There has also been additional secondary aged special capacity for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties provided through the Inspire Free School.

3.13.2 The former Abbey Court primary building in Long Catliss Road, Rainham has been leased to the Rivermead Inclusive Trust for the purposes of providing provision for secondary aged pupils with mental health needs from September 2018. This will provide a reduction in costs in excess of £370,000 per year by providing local provision instead of placing children out of area when they are discharged from hospital. This will provide dedicated mental health provision, which is rare nationally. No capital investment is required from the Council as the provision is funded separately and benefits from having funding already in place to adapt the building for their needs.

The lease is for an initial period of 20 years at a peppercorn rent. The building is of sufficient size to enable a site share. The lease has been written so that the Council can place other associated and appropriate services in the building as necessary.

- This supports the SEND Strategy of increasing local provision for children with special educational need and disability.
- The proposal offers a reduction on potential out of area placements of approximately £370,000 per annum based on current numbers and population projections.
- Refurbishment of the building and maintenance and repair during the time of the lease would be the responsibility of the Rivermead Trust.

3.13.3 A Hearing Impaired Unit for secondary aged pupils has been created at Thomas Aveling Secondary School. This will provide places for up to 20 pupils over time and will provide a cost saving where these children would have previously been placed out of area away from their families.

3.13.4 The SEN Capital Programme, a central government initiative has meant that a total of £1.3m will be allocated to Medway to provide additional places and facilities for pupils across Medway with Education Healthcare Plans. This will be received in equal instalments over three years from 2018.

3.13.4 A needs analysis is being undertaken to assess future demand for SEND provision, the results of which will inform this and future reviews.

3.13.5 The needs analysis, has highlighted that additional SEND provision will be required going forward, and currently officers are exploring the options of when and where to provide this as well as seeking appropriate funding streams. Central Government has announced a round of SEND Free School bidding, and it is recommended that the Council supports a submission to take advantage of this opportunity.

3.13.6 It is recommended that the Council supports wider work to explore the opportunity of providing residential accommodation within Medway to reduce the reliance upon potentially expensive and distant out of area provision.

## 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 not be implemented.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
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 To meet unexpected inward movement of children requiring a school place.	A3

## 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. Developments resulting from the Local Plan will be considered in combination to identify the most suitable use of developer contributions or developer provided schools.
- 6.3 Occasionally, additional funding sources and initiatives become available. Where possible the Council will seek to make use of those opportunities to reduce the

demands upon the funding currently available. For example, central government is making available £200m nationally to provide additional special school and unit provision; Medway has been allocated £1.377m over the three years from 2018 to 2020. A programme for this funding is being prepared and will be made available in the new School Organisation Plan. This programme will sit outside of the Basic Need programme.

- 6.4 The Government's Free School programme provides an opportunity to create additional provision without the responsibility for funding and all opportunities to benefit from this source of funding will be explored. This is particularly relevant to secondary provision, which requires significantly higher capital funding than primary schools; however the availability of land is an issue. Officers will seek to secure Free School provision for Medway as required and discussions with the ESFA 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 2020/21. The table shows that the ESFA has determined that Medway will receive a nil grant award for 2020/21. This is due to Medway being positioned with sufficient primary school places, and with two new free schools approved which will cater for secondary demand. 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
2018 - 19	£3.1m
2019 - 20	£4.9m
2020 - 21	£0

- 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.

Funding remaining (up to and including 2020-21 allocations)	£10,100,000
Approved schemes – estimated post-tender costs	
St Mary's Island C of E Primary School expansion	£2,350,000
Riverside Primary School expansion	£1,400,000
Halling Primary School expansion	£1,400,000
Awaiting approval – estimated pre-tender costs	
Grammar School expansion programme	£4,950,000
Total of outstanding projects	£10,100,000
Remaining funding up until March 2021	£ 0.00

- 6.7 Whilst the table above outlines a significant level of funding, this is allocated to the completion of the projects named and currently underway. There is currently no funding remaining for projects to further expand primary, secondary or special

provision, which will need to rely either entirely upon future years funding beyond 2020, or will be funded as a result of future Free School programmes or through developer contributions. It is uncertain at this time whether Medway will receive grant funding beyond 2021, and this will not be announced until the spring of 2019.

6.8 All other financial information is contained in the body of this report.

## **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 statutory 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 and School Place Planning Strategy frameworks, which have ensured that the Council meets its duty and sufficient school places are available to meet the increasing demand.

8.2 The Cabinet is asked to authorise officers to undertake feasibility studies to provide additional grammar school places, subject to funding being available in the future, at one or more of the following schools:

- Holcombe Grammar School (phase 2);
- Chatham Grammar School for Girls;
- Rochester Grammar School;
- Fort Pitt Grammar School; and
- Provision on the Hoo Peninsula.

8.3 The Cabinet is requested to authorise officers to undertake the feasibility and detailed costing of an additional one form of entry at Hundred of Hoo Academy Primary Phase.

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.

8.5 The Cabinet is asked to note the ongoing work being undertaken to ensure sufficient SEND provision is available within Medway and to support the submission of a free

school bid and the exploration into the provision of residential accommodation for pupils with SEND within Medway.

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

- 9.1 While the actions highlighted in section 3.12.2 of the report will provide additional grammar school places, there may be a need to provide further places to accommodate increasing pupil numbers.
- 9.2 As noted in section 3.6 of the report, there is expected to be a need for additional primary places in the Peninsula West planning area. The Hundred of Hoo Academy was designed with core facilities for two forms of entry in readiness for this need.
- 9.3 By supporting the SEND Free School bid as set out in section 3.15.5 and the continuation of the work being undertaken to assess the required provision including residential provision, the Cabinet is ensuring that the Council is aligning with the SEND Strategy which prioritises that children with SEND should be educated alongside their peers within their local community.
- 9.4 By approving the recommendations in section 8, the Cabinet will be 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**

School Place Planning Strategy -

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgconvert2pdf.aspx?id=42617>

## **Appendices**

None