

TITLE OF REPORT: Kingsmeadow School – Basic Need Scheme

REPORT OF: **Colin Huntington, Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities**
Helen Ferguson, Strategic Director, Children’s Social Care and Lifelong Learning

Purpose of the Report

1. This report asks Cabinet to approve the scheme and estimate to create additional school places at Kingsmeadow School.
2. To enable the Service Director, Property and Assets to enter into a contract with Pinnacle Schools for the build project.

Background

3. Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to ensure there are enough school places available in their area. The Department for Education provides Basic Need capital grant funding to local authorities to support them to meet that statutory responsibility. In 2023/24, Gateshead received a capital allocation of £13.078 m.
4. In December 2022, included as part of the basic need proposals across the borough, Cabinet approved the allocations of Basic Need grant to the scheme at Kingsmeadow School to deliver an additional 75 school places across year groups 7-11.
5. In June 2020, following consultation, the Council extended the school age range to create post-16 provision.
6. Kingsmeadow School is one of Gateshead’s seven PFI schools in a consortium led by Pinnacle Schools (Gateshead) Limited who are responsible for maintaining the sites for 25 years before handing control to the local authority on 8 August 2033.
7. Planning consent has been given to a scheme to create 75 additional 7-11 places and 100 sixth form places on the Kingsmeadow site.

Proposal

8. The proposal is to approve a contract with Pinnacle Schools (Gateshead) Ltd for a build project which will expand Kingsmeadow School on its existing site off Market Lane from a planned admission number of 180 to 195 to accommodate growing pupil numbers.

9. This project will also deliver an extra 100 sixth form places.
10. The scheme cost is £3.4m - £1.8m for the sixth form to be funded by Kingsmeadow School, and £1.6m from Basic Need Grant allocation to create the additional places for year groups 7-11.
11. The contractual relationship under the PFI Service Agreement is between the Council and Pinnacle Schools (Gateshead) Ltd. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Council to enter into the contract for this project.

Recommendations

10. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees the scheme and estimate of £3.4m and authorises the Service Director, Property and Assets to enter into a contract with Pinnacle Schools (Gateshead) Ltd to provide additional spaces at Kingsmeadow School, £1.8m for the sixth form to be funded by Kingsmeadow School, and £1.6m from Basic Need Grant allocation to create the additional places for year groups 7-11.

For the following reasons:

- i) To ensure best value for money for the Council.
- ii) To enable the Council to meet its statutory requirement to provide sufficient school places.

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Policy Context

1. The proposals in this report are consistent with statutory duties of the Local Authority to provide sufficient school places and with the council's vision for children and young people in Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives,

Background

2. Every year the Department for Education (DfE) asks local authorities to provide a variety of data to enable Government to predict funding requirements in future years. The Local Authority returns an annual report on the capacity of maintained schools and academies in Gateshead along with the numbers of any surplus places in those schools.
3. Since 2019, following the closure of Thomas Hepburn Community Academy, all secondary schools in Gateshead have been allocating places to an enhanced PAN, to enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory obligations.
4. The review of pupil projections along with local planning knowledge of future housing developments has highlighted that there is a requirement for secondary school additional places in the short or medium term.
5. The Department for Education provides Basic Need capital grant funding to local authorities to support them to meet that statutory responsibility. In 2023/24, Gateshead received a capital allocation of £13.078 m.
6. In December 2022 Cabinet approved an allocation of Basic Need grant to the scheme at Kingsmeadow School to deliver additional secondary school places across year groups 7-11 in the Inner West.
7. Kingsmeadow is one of Gateshead's seven PFI schools in a consortium led by Pinnacle Schools (Gateshead) Limited who are responsible for maintaining the sites for 25 years before handing control to the local authority on 8 August 2033. The contractual relationship under the PFI Service Agreement is between the Council and Pinnacle Schools (Gateshead) Ltd. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Council to enter into the Contract for this build project.
8. Kingmeadow's PAN is 180 but they have taken up to 190 in the past two years and are oversubscribed again for 2022/23.
9. In June 2020, the Council consulted on the extension of the school age range to create post-16 provision.
10. There is a total project budget of £3.4m which is made up of £1.8m funding from Kingsmeadow School and £1.6m from Basic Need Grant. Planning permission has now been granted for a build project within the school site.

Consultation

11. All secondary schools have been consulted on proposals to increase the capacity in secondary school places across the borough.
12. Consultation has taken place on increasing the age range at the school to create post 16 provision.
13. As part of the planning consent, a formal consultation period was undertaken involving neighbouring residents.
14. The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and ward councillors have been consulted.

Alternative Options

15. There are no alternative options in order for the Council to continue to fulfil its statutory obligations to provide sufficient school places in the Inner West of the borough.

Implications of Recommended Option

16. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms the funding allocations from the Department for Education and the funding contribution available from the school confirms there are no financial implications arising from this report. There will need to be a back-to-back funding agreement with the school to secure the £1.8m contribution to the scheme before entering into contract. The school will have to seek a variation in their funding agreement with the DfE.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resources implications arising from this report.
- c) **Property Implications** – There are no direct property implications arising from this report.

17. **Risk Management Implication** – Planning permission has now been obtained. There is a need to increase secondary school places for September 2023, which has been accommodated with temporary units.

18. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - The Equality Act 2010 consolidates the law prohibiting discrimination, harassment and victimisation. All schools must have due regard to their obligations under the act and an admission authority must not discriminate on grounds of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation as to who is offered admission as a pupil. All schools must have due regard to their obligations under the Act and review their policies and practices to make sure these meet the requirements of the Act, even if they believe that they are already operating in a non-discriminatory way.

- 19. Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report
- 20. Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from this report.
- 21. Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - The sustainability implications are considered as part of developing and implementing individual capital projects.
- 22. Human Rights Implications** - It is a convention right that no person should be denied the right to education, expanding secondary schools is the only way to ensure this and continue to provide both choice and diversity for parents.
- 23. Ward Implications** - Dunston & Teams