

Officer Decision Record – Executive Decision

If Key Decision: Decision Ref. No.

B104/25

If not a Key Decision write n/a above

OFFICER DECISION RECORD ⁱ

Officer Key Decisions are subject to the Council's Call-In Procedure (Annex 9 of the Council's Constitution <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/who-we-are-and-what-we-do.aspx>)

Subject: To seek financial approval for capital funding to deliver the proposed enlargement of Woodfield School (Hemel Hempstead), Woolgrove School (Letchworth Garden City) and Southfield School (Hatfield).

Type of Decision: Executive

Key Decision (Executive Functions only): Yes

Executive Member/Committee Chairman: Chris Lucas

Portfolio (Executive Functions only): Resources and Performance

Officer Contact: Hannah Maher

Tel: 01438 845732

1. Decision

Whether or not to agree to capital approval of £4.242m to increase capacity at three Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) schools in Hertfordshire; Woodfield School (Hemel Hempstead), Woolgrove School (Letchworth), and Southfield School (Hatfield).

April 2020

2. Reasons for the decision

In December 2020¹, Cabinet approved the Special School Place Planning Strategy 2020-2023, which was subsequently extended in April 2024². The strategy shows that the need for special school places has risen sharply in recent years and that demand is forecast to continue to exceed supply.

As many of Hertfordshire's special schools are now at capacity, the strategy sets out longer term priorities which will deliver the additional school places required. In the short term, however, it identifies that additional capacity will be needed to meet the immediate need for special school places (Priority 3 in the strategy).

Woodfield School, Malmes Croft, Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 8RL, is an all-through community special school for pupils aged 3 to 19 with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD). This proposal would create an additional eight pupil places through the installation of a new modular building, increasing the school's capacity from 125 to 133 pupils.

Woolgrove School, Pryor Way, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 2PT, is a special academy for pupils aged 4 – 11 with Learning Difficulties (LD), with capacity to support a proportion of pupils with more complex needs, including SLD and autism. This proposal would create an additional 30 places, increasing the school's capacity from 126 to 156 pupils.

Southfield School, Woods Avenue, Hatfield, AL10 8NN, is a community special primary school for children aged 4 – 11 with LD, with the capacity to accommodate pupils with SLD. This proposal would create 26 additional pupil places through the installation of a new modular building on site, increasing the school's capacity from 100 to 126 pupils.

3. Alternative options considered and rejected

None

4. Consultation (see Summary of Requirements below)

Was any Councillor consulted? **Yes (delete as applicable)**

If yes:

(a) Comments of Executive Member

¹ [Agenda for Cabinet on Monday, 14 December 2020, 2.00 pm | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

² [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 18 April 2024, 2.00 pm | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

The Executive Member has no comments other than to concur with the Executive Director's intention to agree the proposal.

(b) Comments of other consultees

None

5. **Any conflict of interest declared by a councillor who has been consulted in relation to the decision**

None

(If a Councillor declares a conflict of interest DO NOT PROCEED without seeking advice from Democratic Services or Legal Services).

6. **Following consultation with the Executive Member, I am proceeding with the proposed decision.**

Signed: S Pilsworth

Title: Director of Finance

Date: 3rd September 2025

Copies of record to:

- All consultees
- hard & electronic copy (if required to be made available for public inspection) to Democratic Services Manager - Room 213 County Hall.ⁱⁱ

Summary of Requirements to Inform/Consult Councillors

Significance of Proposed Action	Controversial	Relevant Councillor(s) to be Consulted
Technical/Professional/ Routine	No	No need to inform or consult councillors
Technical/Professional/ Routine	Yes	Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member and, where appropriate, Local Councillor

April 2020

		Non-Executive Functions: Relevant Committee Chairman and, where appropriate, Local Councillor
Local	No	Executive Functions: Inform Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor Non-Executive Functions: Inform Local Councillor
Local	Yes	Executive Functions: Consult Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor Non-Executive Functions: Consult Local Councillor
General or County-wide	No	Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s) Non-Executive Functions: Consult relevant Committee Chairman
General or County-wide	Yes	Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s) and the Leader of the Council Non-Executive Functions: Consult relevant Committee Chairman/Leaders all Political Groups
