

Cabinet – 18 June 2008

Primary Capital Programme – The Strategy

Portfolio: Councillor Zahid Ali, Children's services

Service: Education

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Summary of report

This report seeks Cabinet's approval for the Primary Capital Strategy that is appended to this report.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet approves Walsall's Primary Capital Strategy

3. Background information

The Primary Capital Programme is an initiative that will nationally make available approximately £500m a year over 15 years to rebuild or refurbish approximately 50% of all primary and primary special schools.

4. Resource considerations

- 4.1 **Financial:** For the period covering the financial years 09/10 and 10/11 Walsall has been allocated £11m for this programme subject to the submission of a satisfactory Strategy. Walsall's allocation over the 15 year life of the programme will be enhanced to reflect levels of deprivation in the Borough. This enhanced funding will lift Walsall from the national assumption that 5% of schools in the worst physical condition will be rebuilt or taken out of use and 45% improved to 15% of schools being rebuilt or taken out of use and 35% improved.

There is an expectation that schools will make contribution to schemes using both their devolved capital and delegated budgets and Local Authorities using other education capital and Sure Start budgets, capital receipts and the imaginative use of collocation of facilities. Authorities are also expected to combine Primary Capital Programme activities with regeneration projects.

5. Process

In Walsall Headteachers have led the development of the Strategy through a Strategy for Change Group. This small group of Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers discussed the principles of the strategy and led a consultation day to which all schools were invited.

6. Resource considerations

- 6.1 Financial:** The Primary Capital Programme will be funded from ring fenced capital funding. For Voluntary Aided School grants will be at 90% with governors being expected to contribute 10%. The Authority will be expected to contribute sums from the education capital budget and capital receipts to the Programme
- 6.2 Legal:** Schemes agreed under the Primary Capital Programme will be subject to the consultation processes for schools that are established by legislation and regulation.
- 6.3 Staffing:** There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

7. Citizen impact

The Primary Capital Programme will contribute to improved learning environments for Walsall pupils, their families and the wider community.

8. Community safety

Security issues will be considered as part of the development of schemes.

9. Environmental Impact

All rebuilding and refurbishment schemes will, where possible, include the use of sustainable resources and designs will have minimal impact on the environment.

10. Performance and risk management issues

- 10.1 Risk:** With building projects, there are always risks of delays that impact on both time lines and costs. Such risks are managed within the management of projects.
- 10.2 Performance Management:** The DCSF has not announced specific performance management of the Primary Capital Programme but have stated that they will require evidence of the impact of the programme on the education and wider lives of children, their families and the wider community.

11. Consultation

Regular briefings of Headteachers and governors have been made and access to the results of discussions at the full day consultation exercise and other presentations have been made available. The school unions and diocesan officers have been kept up-to-date on developments. Consultation with pupils and parents on the draft strategy have taken place.

Where appropriate the results of the consultation have been reflected in the draft strategy.

Appropriate elected members have been consulted on the draft strategy.

Background papers

- Education Asset Management Plan

Author

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Signed: 

Executive Director: David Brown
Date: 30 May 2008

Signed: 

Managing Director, Education Walsall
Date: 30 May 2008

Signed: 

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Zahid Ali
Date: 5 June 2008