

Cabinet – 18 March 2009

Education Capital Programme – Further Schemes

Portfolio: Councillor Zahid Ali, Children's Services
Councillor Adrian Andrew, Regeneration

Service: Walsall Children's Services, Serco

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Summary of report

1.1 The report sets out schemes from the Education Asset Management Plan for approval. These projects will provide improved learning environments for Walsall pupils.

1.2 **Appendix A** of this report details schemes previously approved by Cabinet.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet approves the schemes and budgets set out in **Appendix B** of this report;

2.2 That Cabinet delegates authority for the expenditure of the Primary Capital Programme contingency sum detailed within the report to the Interim Director of Children's Services.

3. Background information

3.1 Willenhall School Sports College has received a grant of £105,000 to upgrade existing playing fields including enhancements to drainage arrangements. Discussions are ongoing with the school regarding spend deadlines and the possible impact of this scheme on proposals for this school under Wave 7 of the Building Schools for the Future programme.

3.2 In March 2008, Cabinet approved a scheme at Jane Lane School to develop a vocational unit on the site. This scheme is part funded by the DSCF through capital allocated in relation to the schools specialist status for "cognition and learning". As a result of pre tender estimates provided by Property Services, the school has identified a further £200,000 from its own resources to enable this project to proceed as planned.

- 3.3 LCVAP – Discussions have been held with diocesan authorities and representatives of other VA schools to agree a programme of additional schemes to be funded through the LEA Co-ordinated VA Programme (LCVAP) in 2008/09 and 2009/10. Details of the work to be undertaken at St Mary of the Mount and St Patrick's Catholic Primary Schools are provided in Appendix B.
- 3.4 Primary Capital Programme – Cabinet will recall that the local authority's strategic plan, the Primary Strategy for Change, was approved by the DCSF and the first round of schemes incorporating this funding stream were reported to cabinet in January 2009. Estimated costs for individual projects have been provided and Cabinet is asked to approve the sum of £200,000 to be used as a contingency across the whole programme. This will enable some flexibility to approve schemes as tenders are returned. To avoid delays to the delivery programme for each scheme, Cabinet is asked to delegate authority for the expenditure of this contingency sum to the Interim Director of Children's Services.
- 3.5 Phase 1 of the rebuild of Joseph Leckie (to replace unsuitable temporary duplex teaching units) is on site and progressing well and is expected to be completed in good time for the start of the 2009/10 school year. To enable the new block to benefit from sound field systems in teaching and drama areas, it is proposed to allocate £20,000 from the Schools Access Initiative budget. This system will significantly improve facilities in the building for hearing impaired pupils, staff and visitors.
- 3.6 In addition to these schemes, work is continuing to upgrade schools to a minimum level of compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). Funding from the Schools Access Initiative budget in the sum of £250,000 has been identified in this report to support the continuation of DDA works to further increase the number of Walsall schools which meet the required minimum standard of physical accessibility.

4. Resource considerations

4.1 Financial:

- 4.1.1 As previously reported, Walsall has been advised of capital allocations for the three-year period from 2008/09 to 2010/11. Further schemes will be brought forward for consideration by Cabinet when details are finalised.
- 4.1.2 Schemes detailed in this report are funded in partnership with schools in order to maximise the number of schemes that can be taken forward. Such a partnership approach also takes account of the increased proportion of capital resources now made available to schools by the DCSF as devolved formula capital (DFC). School contributions are negotiated on an individual basis by Walsall Children's Services – Serco, and are detailed in **Appendix B** of this report. Any individual schemes where school contributions are not yet finalised will be reported to a future Cabinet meeting.

- 4.1.3 The majority of schemes detailed in this report are to be managed by Walsall Council Property Services who will ensure compliance with all Walsall Council Finance and Contract Rules. For schemes at Voluntary Aided schools, the trustees of the individual schools are responsible for ensuring compliance with the DCSF contractual and financial requirements.

4.2 Legal:

- 4.2.1 All schemes identified in this report will be managed through Walsall Council Property Services or external consultants appointed by the trustees of VA schools and these professionals will ensure that all statutory obligations in relation to the schemes are adhered to. These issues include building regulations, planning approvals, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Construction Design and Management Regulations (CDM). This is in addition to ensuring compliance with Walsall Council Financial and Contract Rules and compliance with the European regime and regulations covering the procurement of goods, services and contracts of work.

4.3 Staffing:

- 4.3.1 There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

5. Citizen impact

All schemes will contribute to an improved learning environment for Walsall pupils, their families and the wider community.

6. Community safety

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

7. Environmental impact

All schemes will incorporate the use of sustainable resources wherever possible and designs would incorporate developments to reduce the impact on the environment.

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 Risk:

- 8.1.1 Construction programmes are at risk of delays that might affect the timescales and cost of projects that may require adjustments to the programme. These risks will be managed as far as is practicable on an ongoing basis.

8.2 Performance management:

- 8.2.1 There are specific criteria established by the DCSF for the project management of schemes funded by the Capital Programme within the designated timeframe.

9. Equality implications

The proposed schemes would result in improved learning environments for pupils and families in Walsall schools.

10. Consultation

Relevant stakeholders including schools, Diocesan Authorities and Foundation representatives, as appropriate. Walsall Council: Property Services and Children's Services Finance.


Background papers

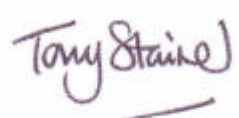
Education Asset Management Plan
DCSF letter dated 11 November 2008: Primary Capital Programme: Notification of Assessment outcomes


Author

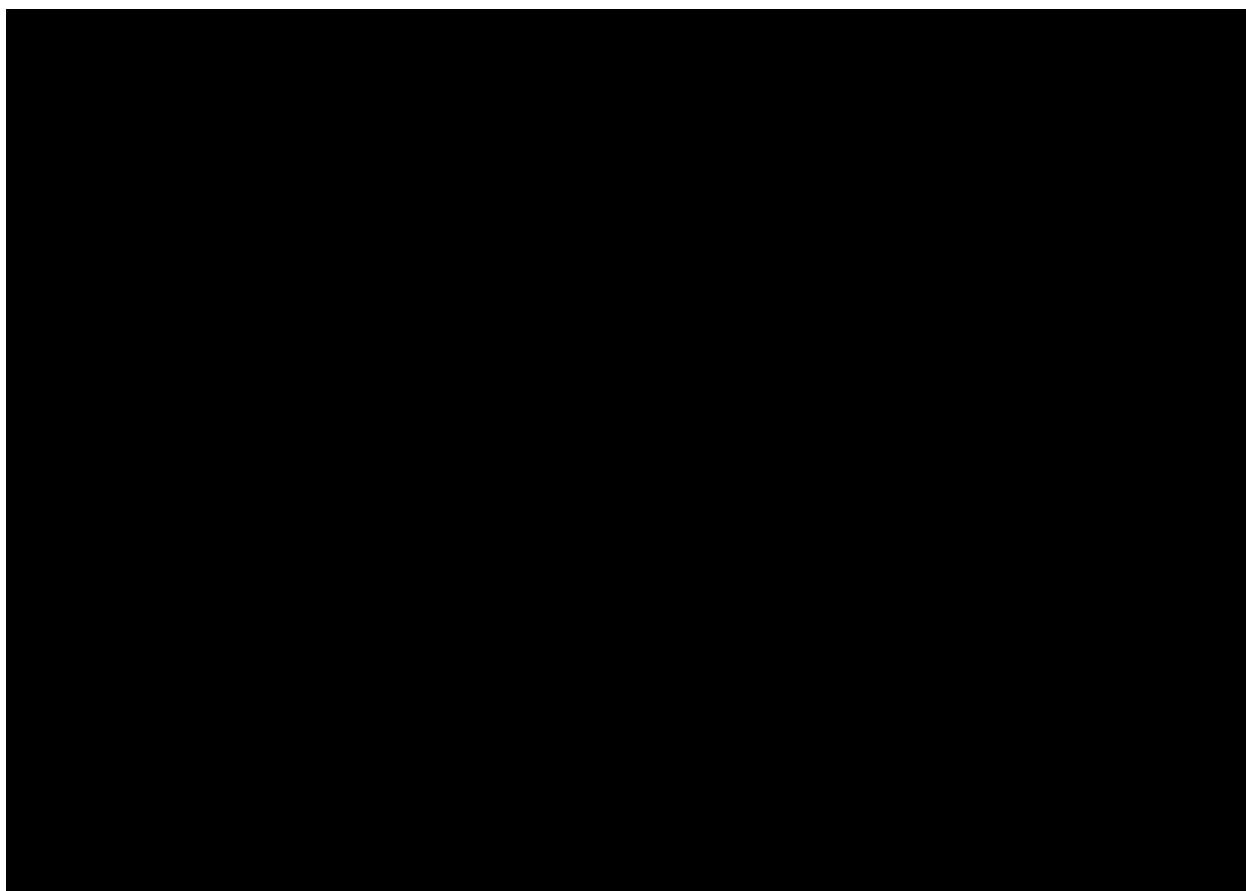
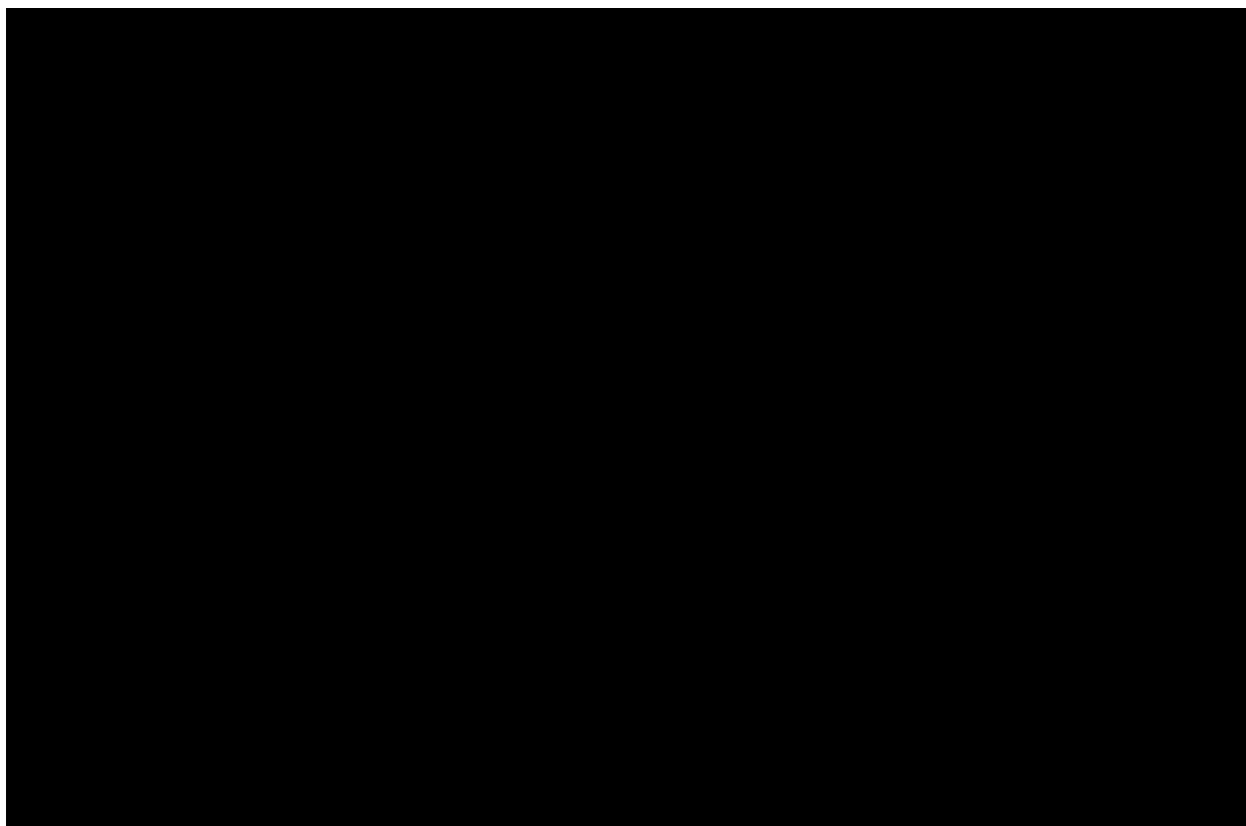
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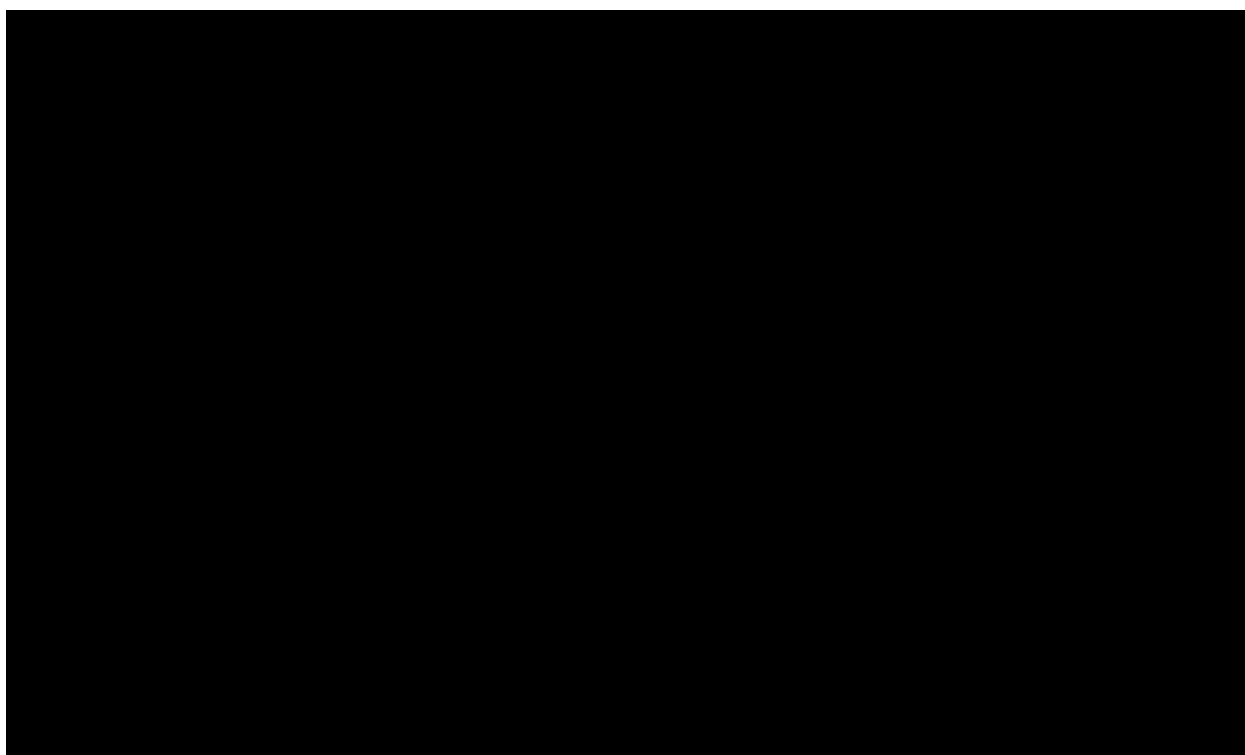
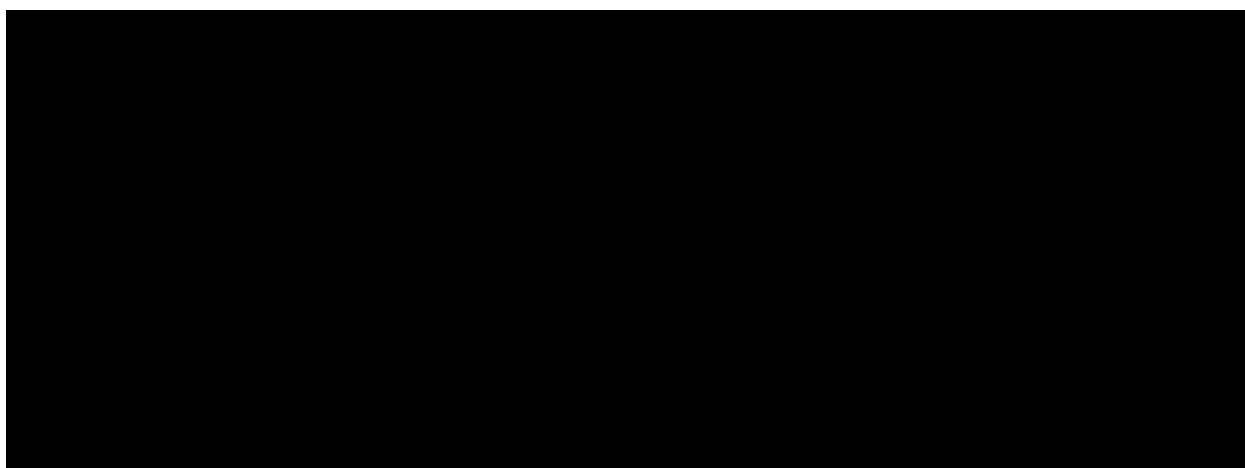
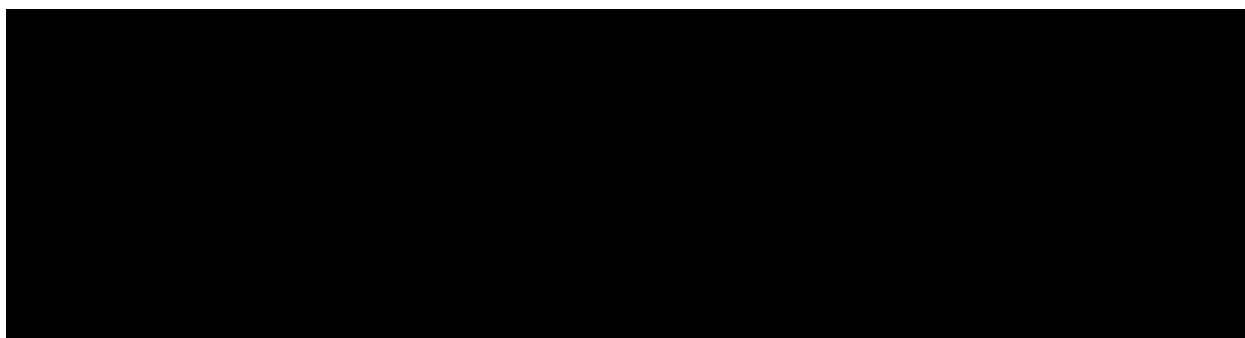

Signed:
Interim Executive Director: Pauline Pilkington
Date: 23 February 2009


Signed:
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Zahid Ali
Date: 6 March 2009


Signed:
Managing Director, Walsall Childrens Services, Serco
Date: 23 February 2009


Signed:
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Adrian Andrew
Date: 6 March 2009





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