

Cabinet – 18 April 2007

Education Capital Programme 2007/08

Portfolio: Children's Services

Service: Education Walsall

Wards: All

Key decisions: No

Forward plan: Yes

Summary of report

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

Recommendations

- (1) That Cabinet approves the schemes and budgets set out in Appendix B of this report.
- (2) That Cabinet approves a contribution of £260,000 from revenue and other funds towards the cost of a replacement school building by the governors of Mary Elliot Special School and adds this additional provision to the funding previously identified in the capital programme for this scheme.

Resource and legal considerations

There is a large backlog of condition and suitability works in schools and progress in addressing these is limited by the availability of resources. Capital resources are made available by the Department for Education and Skills and are supplemented by Walsall Council; however, the scale of the backlog is such that only limited progress can be made in terms of addressing it. In these circumstances, funding must be targeted at the highest priorities and these are identified from data on the condition and suitability of all aspects of school premises and from additional information held by the Council and Education Walsall. Inevitably, difficult decisions must be taken and it is not possible to support all high priority schemes. Priority is given to schemes which will remove the risk of closure, eg boiler replacement, to health and safety issues and also to those works which protect the integrity of the school building stock, eg roofing and window replacement schemes. Where a number of major works are required at schools, these

are undertaken in an appropriate order on a phased basis which takes account of the impact of the work on the operational effectiveness of the school.

Cabinet has provided additional resources of £2 million in the 2007/08 financial year to enable further progress to be made in addressing the backlog of Priority 1 condition works in Walsall schools. This additional funding will enable significant improvements to be made to pupils' learning environments at many schools across Walsall. A programme of works based upon condition surveys and more detailed information held by the Council are detailed in Appendix B of this report.

As yet, final accounts have not yet been settled for schemes carried out under the 2005/06 & 2006/07 Priority 1 Condition Backlog funding stream. Early indications are that an allocation from this year's funding will be needed in order to balance this expenditure. In view of this, it is proposed to set aside £200,000 for this purpose from this year's allocation until the exact requirements are known.

All schemes are to be funded in partnership with schools in order to maximise the number of schemes which can be taken forward. This will enable as many schools as possible to have their highest condition needs addressed. Such a partnership approach also takes account of the increased proportion of capital resources now made available to schools by the DfES as devolved formula capital (DFC). School contributions are being negotiated on an individual basis by Education Walsall and these contributions will be detailed in a report to a future Cabinet meeting. It is envisaged that, other than in exceptional circumstances, schemes will only be taken forward across all funding streams where a school contribution is secured.

Contribution levels take account of the devolved formula capital available to schools and schools' existing commitments. Some high priority works are being fully funded by schools (through DFC) outside this programme.

As Cabinet will be aware, the Government is conducting a Comprehensive Spending Review this year and the DfES has advised that it may not be in a position to announce capital allocations for 2008/9 and beyond until December 2007. In view of this, when drawing up the programme of schemes detailed in this report, priority has been given to those works which can be funded and completed within known allocations and spend periods. The DfES has advised that it would be prudent not to make any assumptions about the level of DFC allocations after the 2007/08 financial year, therefore, in cases where schools cannot contribute to schemes from their 2007/08 DFC allocation or their revenue budget, it is proposed to obtain an agreement from these schools to commit future DFC allocations once these figures are known.

This report also details schemes which have been identified as priorities for funding from the 'Modernisation Primary' and 'Modernisation Secondary' allocations.

The curtain walling at Aldridge School is in poor condition and it is proposed to carry out some concrete repairs and associated works. A future report will detail proposals to improve the existing dining and outdoor facilities at Brownhills Community Technology College; these facilities are inadequate for the number of pupils on roll at the school and have given rise to operational difficulties.

Final accounts for two schemes completed in previous years at Joseph Leckie have recently been settled and a cost of £65,739 is included within the figures in Appendix B.

Phase 2 of the window replacement programme at Pool Hayes Community School is considered essential in order to upgrade the existing building façade which is in poor condition and to improve working conditions in classrooms; the estimated cost of this is £120,000.

Replacement boiler works at Sneyd Specialist Maths College and Willenhall School Sports College at costs of £100,000 and £300,000 respectively are essential to alleviate considerable ongoing problems at both schools as a result of boiler failures.

Cabinet has committed £6 million for phase 1 redevelopment works at Joseph Leckie to commence the rebuild of the school. The roof of the main block is, however, in an extremely poor condition and it is intended to commence the process of reroofing this at a cost of £120,000.

A future report will detail proposals to improve sports facilities at Darlaston Community Science College. The swimming pool at the school has been taken out of use because of significant structural and condition problems. It is our intention to assess the remainder of the sports facilities with the school in order to secure delivery of the PE curriculum and sporting activities before detailing our proposals.

Serious structural problems have been the subject of detailed investigations at Birchills CE Community Primary School. These problems relate to the original construction of the building and previous works have not provided a long-term solution. Options are currently being considered in the light of the overall accommodation needs of the school as the space formerly occupied by the community association is no longer required and the opportunity to address some suitability issues. Proposals will be reported at a future meeting, however, it is envisaged that this scheme will require significant funding from the Modernisation Primary allocation.

Accommodation issues at Bloxwich CE JMI School are being considered with the Council's Estates Manager and the Church of England Lichfield Diocese. Consideration is being given to the possibility of the former neighbourhood office on Bloxwich High Street being incorporated into the school. This would provide an opportunity to provide improved staff accommodation and teaching spaces and enable a mobile classroom in very poor condition to be removed. The matter is complex and in view of this a separate report will be brought to a future Cabinet meeting.

The mobile classrooms at Caldmore Primary School are considered to be the worst mobile classrooms in Walsall and as such are the highest priority for replacement. In addition to providing an extremely poor working environment for pupils and staff, their location some distance from the main school building has been identified as a security concern. Cabinet is asked to approve design fees of £30,000 to enable a scheme to be developed and details of the cost of the works will be brought to a future Cabinet meeting.

Roof problems at Greenfield Primary School are compounded by the fact that the current covering is asbestos tiles. This makes repairs extremely difficult and £180,000 is included to commence the re-roofing of the main teaching block.

A scheme to carry out rewiring and various electrical works at a cost of £100,000 at Rosedale Infants School is required to upgrade the existing system.

Further discussions are required regarding ongoing condition items at Salisbury Primary School. Once these works have been fully identified a scheme will be detailed at a future cabinet meeting.

Figures of £110,000 and £100,000 respectively are included in Appendix B to cover unforeseen works that became necessary during complex construction works at Moorcroft Wood (Single Siting scheme) and Mossley Primary (Rationalisation scheme).

It has been established that final accounts for a number of schemes carried out over recent years have not been settled. Work is ongoing to finalise these accounts and a significant allocation from both Modernisation Primary and Modernisation Secondary has been identified to resolve these outstanding financial commitments. It is envisaged that resources will be freed up once there is some cost certainty regarding these accounts and that further schemes can be added to the programme.

A report elsewhere on this agenda outlines progress with the scheme to provide a replacement school for Mary Elliot. In order to secure enhanced facilities, the Governors wish to make a contribution of £260,000 from revenue and other funds towards the project. Cabinet is asked to approve this and add this additional provision to the funding previously identified in the capital programme.

As stated above, capital allocations for 2008/09 and beyond are unlikely to be announced by the DfES until December 2007. It is therefore imperative that the schemes identified in this report are fully funded from the 2007/08 allocations and a contingency sum has been included in all funding streams to allow for any unforeseen occurrences.

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 £200,000 has been identified in this report to support the continuation of DDA works to ensure the schools involved meet the required minimum standard.

Castle Special School has been awarded Specialist Business and Technology Status. In order to support the provision of suitable specialist facilities, the DfES has awarded a grant of £100,000 in 2007/08. The school has raised £20,000 of sponsorship and has allocated £15,000 from their revenue budget to provide a total of £135,000 towards capital developments.

A summary of schemes approved to date for 2007/08 is provided in Appendix A: Appendix B sets out schemes and expenditure for schemes which Cabinet is asked to approve.

Citizen impact

All schemes will contribute to an improved learning environment for Walsall pupils.

Community safety

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

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.

Performance and risk management issues

The programme addresses the priorities identified in the Statement of Priorities and reduces the risk of disruption to education from premises related issues.

Equality implications

The proposed schemes provide opportunities to improve learning environments for pupils in Walsall schools.

Consultation

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

Vision 2008

The proposed consultation would contribute to the delivery of Walsall's vision for 2008 – Section 4 Make Our Schools Great – by improving the learning environment for Walsall pupils.

Background papers

Asset Management Plan 2003/2006

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Signed:



Executive Director: David Brown

Date: 19 March 2007



Signed:

Managing Director, Education Walsall

Date: 19 March 2007

Signed:



Councillor Zahid Ali
Portfolio Holder

Date: 3 April 2007

Appendix A

Modernisation (Primary)		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£2,009,678
Bfwd from 06/07		£0
Funding Available		£2,009,678
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Castlefort JMI	Mobile / group room / WC	20,000
Edgar Stammers Primary	Demolition of part of Infant building	60,000
New Invention Junior	Phase 2 classroom development	10,000
St John's CE Primary	Replace nursery	20,000
Total		110,000
Balance Available		1,899,678

Modernisation (Secondary)		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£1,898,226
Bfwd from 06/07		£44,117
Funding Available		£1,942,343
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Joseph Leckie Community Technology College	Temporary classrooms	153,600
Mary Elliot Special	New 110 place school	152,000
Total		305,600
Balance Available		1,636,743

New Pupil Places		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£929,999
Bfwd from 06/07		£0
Funding Available		£929,999
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Fibbersley Park Primary	New school	662,000
Mary Elliot Special School	New 110 Place School	267,999
Total		929,999
Balance Available		0

Schools Access Initiative		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£521,579
Bfwd from 06/07		£0
Funding Available		£521,579
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Mary Elliot Special	Hydrotherapy pool	250,000
Total		250,000
Balance Available		271,579

Appendix B

Priority One Backlog		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£2,000,000
Commitments		£0
Allocation 07/08 - Balance Available		£2,000,000
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Alumwell Junior	Roofing	50,000
Blackwood Primary	Roofing	75,000
Butts Primary	Heating Plant	85,000
Castle Special	Roofing	60,000
Chuckery Primary	Roofing	100,000
County Bridge Primary	Rewire, fire alarm & distribution	120,000
Delves Junior	Replacement ceiling & asbestos removal	50,000
Edgar Stammers Primary	Distribution pipework (Junior Block)	180,000
Leamore Primary	Roofing/Brickwork	100,000
Leighswood	Distribution & Gas Main	160,000
Lodge Farm Primary	Replacement Boilers	100,000
Ogley Hay Nursery	Rewire, Heating & Lighting	60,000
Pelsall Village	Toilet Refurbishment	60,000
Rosedale Infant	Rewire / Fire Alarm / Power Upgrade / Distribution	100,000
Walsall Wood	Roofing	100,000
Various	Outstanding final accounts from 2005/06 and 2006/07	200,000
Various	Contingency	100,000
Total		1,700,000
Balance Available		300,000

Modernisation (Primary)		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£2,009,678
Commitments		£110,000
Allocation 07/08 - Balance Available		£1,899,678
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Caldmore Community Primary	Replacement Mobiles - design fees	30,000
Castlefort JMI	Additional costs to cover from 06/7 scheme	20,000
Greenfield Primary	Roofing	180,000
Moorcroft Wood Primary	Single Siting - settlement of final account	110,000
Mossley Primary	Rationalisation - settlement of final account	100,000
Various	Outstanding final accounts from previous years	300,000
Various	Contingency	100,000
Total		840,000
Balance Available		1,059,678

Modernisation (Secondary)		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£1,898,226
Commitments		£305,600
Allocation 07/08 - Balance Available		£1,636,743
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Aldridge School - A Science School	Concrete repairs to curtain walling	150,000
Barr Beacon Language College	New Language Block retention payment	10,000
Joseph Leckie Community Technology College	6th Form Block - settlement of final account	65,739
Joseph Leckie Community Technology College	Roof Repairs (Main Block)	120,000
Pool Hayes Community	Window Replacement (Phase 2)	120,000
Sneyd Community - A Specialist Maths and Computing College	Replacement Boilers	100,000
Willenhall School Sports College	Replacement Boilers	300,000
Various	Outstanding final accounts from previous years	300,000
Various	Contingency	100,000
Total		1,265,739
Balance Available		371,004

Schools Access Initiative		2007/08
Allocation 07/08		£521,579
Commitments		£250,000
Allocation 07/08 - Balance Available		£271,579
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Various schools	Upgrade to minimum standard	200,000
Total		200,000
Balance Available		71,579

Secondary School Specialist Status		2007/08
School	Project	2007/08 Allocation
Castle Special School	Specialist Status Scheme *	135,000
Total		135,000

* This scheme is funded by £100,000 Specialist Status Grant, £20,000 Sponsorship money, and £15,000 from the school budget.