

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	11th July 2012	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2430
TITLE:	Children's Services Capital Programme Priorities 2012 -13	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix – 2012/13 Capital Projects		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 To brief the Cabinet on capital funding levels and agree priority projects for inclusion in the 2012/13 Children's Services capital programme.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet agrees that:

2.1 The projects put forward for approval are in line with Children's Services capital programme priorities

2.2 A capital allocation of £107,000 is approved for inclusion in the 2012/13 Capital Programme from Capital Maintenance funding to enable essential traffic management works to be carried out at Three Ways special school

2.3 A capital allocation of £150,000 is approved for inclusion in the 2012/13 Capital Programme from Basic Need funding for the provision of additional places for autistic pupils at the Margaret Coates Centre

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Government is reviewing schools capital funding following the James Review of the Building Schools for the Future programme and in light of the expansion of the Academies programme. As a consequence allocations from the Department for Education (DfE) under the two main funding headings of Basic Need and Capital Maintenance are being made on an annual rather than the previous three year basis and so there is no certainty of the levels of funding in 2013/14 or future years. As a consequence a prudent approach has been taken to capital spending with only the most pressing projects being prioritised in 2010/11 & 2011/12 resulting in a carry forward of funding.
- 3.2 Capital Maintenance Funding 2012/13 - £2.403m. This is to address worst condition items at schools. The allocation for 2012/13 is a reduction of £900k approx. from 2011/12 levels to reflect schools becoming academies.
- 3.3 Basic Need 2012/13 - £2.118m – This funding is to provide additional pupil places where there is underlying population growth. The allocation for 2012/13 is a revised increased figure following an additional allocation recently received from DfE in recognition of the general pressure on places being faced by local authorities.
- 3.4 The DfE capital allocations are grant funding with no borrowing requirement.
- 3.5 There is sufficient Capital Maintenance funding available to support the proposed allocation of £107,000 for the traffic management scheme at Three Ways school. There is also sufficient Basic Need funding available to support the proposed allocation of £150,000 for additional places at the Margaret Coates Centre. There are no revenue implications for the Council or the schools related to either proposal. However, if additional capacity is not provided to meet the increased demand for places for autistic pupils in Bath & North East Somerset there will be significant revenue costs arising from the requirement to place these pupils outside the authority.
- 3.6 With regard to the proposal to expand the Margaret Coates Centre for pupils with autism (see 5.4) the DfE have consulted on changing the revenue funding regime for special unit funding as part of its review of school funding. The new proposals are likely to create a different regime of commissioner and provider roles for the school and the LA. The potential revenue impact of this change will be incorporated into the PID process prior to any formal approval of a capital allocation by cabinet.

4 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Projects within the Children's Services capital programme provide modern facilities or improve existing ones and provide pupil places where there is demand. This leads to a better learning and teaching environment and in most cases enables parents and pupils to obtain a place at a local school. This contributes to the corporate priorities of promoting independence and positive lives for everyone and creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 As part of the report on Medium Term Service & Resource Planning considered by Cabinet in February Members gave full approval to a number of projects in the 2012/13 Children's Services Capital Programme. Provisional approval was also given to funding allocations from the Department for Education (DfE) under two headings a) Capital Maintenance and b) Basic Need with officers charged with bringing forward projects for further Officer and Cabinet Member scrutiny, including a formal Cabinet decision for Full Approval. This report identifies and seeks approval for projects which have been identified as priorities for inclusion in the capital programme.
- 5.2 Due to the uncertainty of future funding levels past 2012/13 and the likely further impact of secondary schools and possibly some primaries becoming academies, it is proposed to continue to take a cautious approach to investment addressing essential priorities only. Greater certainty of funding from 2014/15 onwards will hopefully enable the development of a longer term capital programme which can be brought forward for approval.
- 5.3 Appendix 1 provides details of those projects which have already received full Cabinet approval for inclusion in the 2012/13 Capital Programme although funded from previous years allocations. Also shown are new projects requested for approval which are in line with the intended purpose of the DfE funding heading and are regarded as priorities for inclusion in the 2012/13 Children's Services capital programme. Details of these projects are shown below.
- 5.4 **Basic Need** – Expansion of Margaret Coates Centre, St Martin's Garden Primary – £150,000 -This Resource Base for pupils with Autism aged 4-11 currently has places for 12 pupils. There is increased demand in the Authority for places for pupils with autism which if not met will require places to be found outside Bath and North East Somerset with significant revenue costs to fund these places. It is proposed that an additional 6 places are provided through the remodelling of the accommodation at St Martin's Garden Primary to provide an additional teaching space and there will also be works to the office and kitchen at the Centre. A feasibility study has been undertaken and the proposed allocation includes an appropriate level of contingency.
- 5.5 **Capital Maintenance** –Three Ways Special School – Traffic Management Measures - £107,000 - Concerns have been raised by Transport staff about safety of pupils d parents and staff due to the traffic congestion on site particularly at the end of the school day. Due to the needs of the pupils a large number of taxis and mini buses are required to transport them and the traffic arrangements on site as there is only a single entrance, leads to congestion increasing the risk of an accident. A new proposal has been developed which has the support of the Headteachers of both Three Ways and the adjacent Link Centre who share the site. This proposes a new exit enabling a one way system to operate on part of the site which together with new parking and drop off arrangements will hopefully improve things significantly. Subject to planning permission the summer holidays

provides an opportunity to carry out the works. Due to the urgency this project has already been reviewed by the Project Initiation and Delivery Group(PIDG).

5.6 Radstock Nursery – Separation works £486,000- This project arises from the conversion of Trinity VC Primary School, Radstock, to an academy in September 2011 and the requirement to separate the early years provision from the new academy. Due to the need to complete the works by September Cabinet received a full report on this project in June and were requested to approve it for inclusion in the capital programme

5.7 Officers will continue to draw up proposals for both Basic Need and Capital Maintenance projects against the unallocated funding for initial consideration by the Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth. Projects to be taken forward will be reviewed through the PID Group prior to submission to Cabinet for approval and inclusion in the capital programme.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 An equalities impact assessment has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

8 RATIONALE

8.1 The projects proposed in this report are in line with intended purpose of DfE capital funding and are priorities within the Children's Services capital programme.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 Given the level of unallocated capital funding available due to the prudent approach taken to approvals to date it would be possible to bring forward a more substantial capital programme. However given the uncertainty of future capital funding levels the continuation of a cautious approach to approval is justified.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 *Cabinet members; Other B&NES Services; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer*

10.2 Discussion with Cabinet Member and briefing of Cabinet and drafts of the report have been circulated to the Cabinet Member and officers

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 *Sustainability; Property; Young People; Human Rights; Corporate; Health & Safety; Impact on Staff; Other Legal Considerations*

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

Contact person	Chris Kavanagh 01225 395149
Sponsoring Cabinet Member	Councillor Nathan Hartley
Background papers	Report on Medium Term Service & Resource Planning considered by Cabinet in February 2012
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	