

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cabinet	
DECISION DATE:	16th July 2014	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2669
TITLE:	Schools Capital Programme - Improvement Projects 2014	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Please list all the appendices here, clearly indicating any which are exempt and the reasons for exemption		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 To seek approval for inclusion in the 2014/15 schools capital programme improvement projects at two primary schools.

2 RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1 Approve for inclusion in the 2014/15 Capital Programme Capital Maintenance funding of £150,000 for improvements at Southdown Junior and Southdown Infant schools
- 2.2 Capital Maintenance funding of £50,000 for improvements at Peasedown St John Primary School
- 2.3 Capital Maintenance funding of £170,000 to add to funding received from the Government for works required to enable the provision of free school meals for all infant pupils from September 2014.
- 2.4 Agree the change in use of the Basic Need funding for Saltford Primary school to provide temporary classrooms whilst a permanent solution is developed.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 DfE Capital Maintenance funding for 2014-15 is £1.987m. Due to carry forwards in previous years the 2014/15 Schools Planned Maintenance Programme (SCPM) to address worst condition issues in schools is already funded at £1m and is included in the approved 2014/15 capital programme. In April Cabinet allocated an additional £500,000 to the 2014/15 SCPM to enable additional projects to be undertaken bringing the total programme to £1.5m.
- 3.2 Members also approved an allocation of £500,000 from Capital Maintenance for improvement projects which were to be identified. In total Cabinet approved £1m from Capital Maintenance leaving a balance of £987,000.
- 3.3 DfE has also allocated specific funding of £353,269 in 2014/15 for capital costs associated with works to kitchens associated with the introduction of free school meals for all infant pupils from September 2014. This amount is based on pupil numbers rather than an evaluation of actual costs. There is a separate allocation (£53k) for Voluntary Aided church schools. Academies are funded centrally.
- 3.4 Following further evaluation by Catering Services of the implications of providing additional school meals the need for additional funding of £170,000 has been identified, chiefly because remodelling of existing facilities is required to provide the capacity to prepare the additional meals required. It is proposed that this is met from the balance of Capital Maintenance funding available.
- 3.5 Two of the projects recommended for approval in this report totalling £200,000 will be funded from the £500,000 previously approved for improvement projects.
- 3.6 The additional allocation required for kitchen works of £170,000 will be a call on the remaining balance in Capital Maintenance of £987,000 leaving £817,000 available. This provides a healthy contingency amount for unforeseen additional costs and emergency projects. Any unused balance could be earmarked against the 2015/16 SCPM which is in line with practice in previous years.
- 3.7 The proposed change to the Basic Need project at Salford Primary is within the funding previously approved for the project.
- 3.8 The DfE capital allocations are non - ring fenced grant funding to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duties in ensuring sufficient school places and addressing worst condition buildings. There are no borrowing requirements or revenue implications for the Council.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Relevant considerations: The Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient school places, Children and Young People, Planning, Social Inclusion, Property, Impact on Staff.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 As identified in Paragraph 3.2 funding of £500,000 from Capital Maintenance has been earmarked for improvement projects. It is planned to use this for a limited number of projects in schools where improvements to accommodation would have a positive impact on curriculum delivery or school management and organisation with priority projects to be identified and agreed with the Cabinet

Member before they are taken forward for full approval. Details of the first projects identified are shown below.

- 5.2 Southdown Infants and Southdown Junior School - The schools federated on 1st January 2014 and are led by a single Headteacher and governing body. A consultation exercise proposing the amalgamation of the schools has recently been completed and is the subject of a report elsewhere on this agenda. Following an Ofsted inspection the Junior school is under notice to improve and the Headteacher has identified the need for a small number of urgent improvements to the accommodation that would make an immediate difference to the environment for pupils, assist with behaviour, improve morale and ultimately contribute to improved standards. These include remodelling and relocation of toilets, provision of a central reception and administrative offices and an accessible link between the two schools and. It is planned to undertake these works during the summer holiday period ready for the new academic year. At the same time the opportunity is to be taken to create whole school IT and communications network. A feasibility study has identified that an allocation of £150,000 is required for all works.
- 5.3 Further investment in the accommodation at the Southdown schools will be required but proposals will be brought forward for approval as part of future reports to Members on the proposed amalgamation of the schools.
- 5.4 Peasedown St John Primary School – This is one of the largest schools in the authority with a net capacity of 525. The school's accommodation is in line with this number but suffers from some small classroom spaces and growth in pupil numbers in recent years has put pressure on the accommodation and the school site. This will be increased by the requirement to provide additional school meals in line with the introduction of free school meals for all infants. The school has indicated that this pressure could be eased by having access to the hall and hard court in the adjacent Peasedown St John Youth Centre. The Youth Service is agreeable to this proposal and pattern and terms of use will be agreed between the school and the youth centre. Management of the hall and hard court area will remain with the Youth Service. Extensive works are not required but it will be necessary to provide a secure access for pupils between the two sites and undertake some minor works to the hall and outdoor area. An allocation of £50,000 is proposed.
- 5.5 Kitchen Capital - As has previously been reported the allocation from the DfE is based on an assessment of the number of pupils eligible for a free school meal and not the actual costs of providing the equipment and facilities required to deliver them. The majority of schools use the Council's Catering Service so the lead responsibility rests with that service for ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to provide free school meals to all infant pupils by September 2014 as required by government. In authorities without a catering service both the funding and the responsibility has been delegated to individual schools.
- 5.6 Initial estimates by Catering Services suggested that the £353,269 allocated by the DfE may be sufficient to enable the additional meals to be provided. However further evaluation of the works required to ensure there is capacity to provide the additional meals has identified that additional funding of £170,000 will be needed. This is chiefly to fund the extension of the kitchen at St Michael's C of E Junior which will be a hub kitchen to provide additional meals for a number of schools in South Bath which do not have the capacity to do this e.g. Combe

Down C of E Primary. It will also be necessary to replace an SEN space at Chandag Infants that will be lost due to the need for a larger kitchen. The overall investment in school kitchens will also future proof the facilities to ensure that if a government decides to extend free school meals to KS2 pupils there is sufficient capacity to cope with this without having to undertake further adaptations to facilities.

- 5.7 Salford C of E Primary School – In April Cabinet approved Basic Need funding of £400,000 for the provision of two additional classrooms to enable the permanent expansion of the school required due to increasing pupil numbers in both 2014 and 2015. Cabinet was informed that it was originally hoped that the expansion could be achieved within the school's current accommodation but at the conclusion of discussions with the school the governing body decided in Autumn 2013 that they felt this was not possible. At that stage it was too late to consider a permanent building for September 2014 and in agreement with governors it was decided to explore the provision of a modular building. Modular prefabricated buildings are manufactured off site and then assembled on site and can offer savings in cost and programme whilst providing quality similar to a permanent building. This was felt to be preferable in terms of efficient use of resources to providing a temporary classroom for September 2014 which would eventually have to be replaced to provide permanent accommodation.
- 5.8 Unfortunately further evaluation of the modular build proposal including discussion with contractors has identified that the perceived benefits in cost and programme will not be achieved and this together with another issue at the school, has led to a re-evaluation of the options. The additional factor is the presence of badgers on the school site. There is a long standing issue with badgers on the site and their sett has undermined the ground below two temporary classroom buildings housing four classes. This has required repairs over the years and the classrooms are monitored to ensure they are structurally safe. Nevertheless the situation is not ideal and the buildings have been identified as requiring replacement. The permanent expansion of the school provides the opportunity to incorporate the replacement of these buildings which would see the provision of the two Basic Need classrooms and four replacement classrooms in a six classroom block. This proposal is in line with the approach endorsed by Cabinet in April that where appropriate, the opportunity should be taken for Basic Need projects to address other issues such as the option of replacing poor condition temporary classrooms that would not only remove future maintenance liabilities but provide more cohesive accommodation for the school e.g. a well located classroom block rather than just the one or two classrooms required for additional capacity.
- 5.9 It will now be necessary to hire temporary classrooms for September 2014 and these will remain on site until the completion of the new classroom block in 2016. This together with design and development costs for the new block total £137,500 and this can be set against the £400,000 previously approved by Cabinet. The balance of £262,500 can be retained for future incorporation in the funding for the new classroom block which will be brought before Cabinet for approval in the future.
- 5.10 The projects proposed for approval have been considered and approved by the Capital Strategy Group.

6 RATIONALE

6.1 The projects proposed in this report are in line with intended purpose of DfE capital funding and are priorities within the Schools Capital Programme to ensure schools remain open and operational, statutory duties are met and longer term strategic planning is embedded.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 It is considered the proposals reflect the most appropriate options given the needs identified and funding available.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Cabinet Member; Section 151 Officer; Strategic Director; Monitoring Officer.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

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Background papers	<i>List here any background papers not included with this report, and where/how they are available for inspection.</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	