

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	10 April 2013	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2392
TITLE:	Capital Project Approvals – Schools Schemes 2013/14	
WARD:	All but particularly Chew Valley North, Bathavon North, Twerton	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 To seek approval for capital schemes at primary schools for inclusion in the 2013/14 schools 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 Capital allocations are approved for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2013/14 for projects at the following schools :

Chew Magna Primary School - £208,000 –Replacement of temporary classrooms

Bathampton Primary School - £30,000 – Land purchase

St Michaels C of E Junior School - £143,000 – Remodelling of special needs facility

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Allocations from the Department for Education (DfE) under the two main funding headings of Basic Need to provide additional pupil places where there is population growth and Capital Maintenance to address condition issues, have since 2011/12 being made on an annual basis. The very late announcement of capital funding for 2013/14 (March 1st 2013) has delayed the commitment of developed schemes which will now be taken through the necessary approvals process for 2013-14 but reduced on previous year as a result of the expansion of the Academies programme.
- 3.2 Basic Need for 2013/14 is £1.203m and a similar amount has been received for 2014/15. The receipt of two years funding is welcome as it enables projects to be planned and developed with more certainty of delivery. A number of priorities have already been earmarked against this funding in line with the projected growth in pupil numbers. It is likely that Maintenance Grant will be required to support basic need projects in 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 3.3 Capital Maintenance funding for 2013-14 is £2.016m which is a reduction of £387k from the previous year reflecting the number of secondary schools which have become Academies. There is carry forward of £1.403m from 2012/13 making a total of £3.419m. An allocation of £1m has been earmarked for the 2014/15 Schools Planned Maintenance Programme leaving £2.419m available for allocation primarily against Basic Need projects for 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 3.4 Projects recommended for approval in this report total £381k. A compensation sum of £25k has been allowed for pending settlement of the insurance claim for Chew Magna Primary leaving £356k to be funded. This can be met from the carry forward of Capital Maintenance Grant from 2012/13.
- 3.5 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 is no borrowing requirement on the Council.
- 3.6 There are no revenue implications for the Council arising from the expansion of schools as these will be met by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The proposed project at St Michaels Junior School will potentially avoid costs of approximately £100k per pupil by enabling their special educational needs to be met within B&NES rather than out of the authority.

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 The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for every child resident in the Local Authority who requires a place. It also prioritises investment in schools to improve poor condition accommodation via the annual capital repair and maintenance programme as well as individual projects. The projects requested for approval are in line with these priorities.

Projects

5.2 Chew Magna Primary School, Chew Valley - £208,000

A double classroom temporary building at the school suffered two incidents of flooding in 6 weeks. The building is in a poor condition, 20 years old and of wooden chalet type construction where the wooden flooring was extensively damaged. The second flooding caused considerable doubt about the long term future of the building taking into account of its clear vulnerability to flooding; the condition of the building; acute disruption to the school of emergency evacuation of two classes of pupils; loss of resources and materials; and the longer term impact on educational standards and morale. Therefore it was decided the building should be replaced with a modular build/off site construction building which can be provided in the most timely and cost effective manner. The pupils are currently in temporary hired accommodation and September 2013 is target date for completion. The project and budget (including capital compensation sum currently being negotiated with the Loss Adjuster) has received the approval of Capital Strategy Group.

5.3 Bathampton Primary School, Bath - £30,000

A temporary building is located on the school site to provide two classrooms to meet Basic Need growth in the area. The projected growth is likely to be sustained and it is anticipated the temporary building will require replacement with permanent build in future. Land adjoining the school playing field recently came onto the market and the Strategic Director Youth and Communities authorised proceeding with an offer for a strip of land bordering the school playing field. It would not be proposed to build on this land which is subject to restrictions from green belt, AONB and SSSI designations, but it will provide more flexibility when future replacement of accommodation on the school site is being considered. The owner has accepted the LA offer and Capital Strategy Group has approved the budget of £30,000 to cover the purchase price and legal fees.

5.4 St Michaels C of E Junior School, Bath - £143,000

The school has hosted a dedicated space for up to 8 primary children with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) for many years but it has become unfit for purpose with inadequate equipment and layout suitable to meet the particular needs of BESD children. A recent Ofsted inspection reinforced this view and in order to protect the provision and to enable the school to manage and organise much more efficiently it is proposed to remodel and refurbish the room. SEN senior staff has discussed an outline scheme with the Head and governors. This provision is important as there is evidence of an increase in primary age children with complex needs and a lack of suitable provision for them. An outline budget has been approved by Capital Strategy Group and target completion is September 1, 2013.

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 to ensure schools remain open and operational, statutory duties are met and longer term strategic planning is embedded.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 The proposals reflect the most appropriate options given the emergency nature, strategic priorities and prudent long term planning.

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; Corporate; Health & Safety; 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	Fiona Randle 01225 395151
Sponsoring Cabinet Member	Councillor Dine Romero
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	