
CHILDREN'S SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Cllr Chris McEwan, Children's Services Portfolio
Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services**

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Council's approval for funding to support recent developments affecting the Children's Services capital programme.

Information and Analysis

2. At its meeting on 5th June 2007, Cabinet considered a report submitted by the Director of Children's Services on the department's Capital Programme Update. This report is attached at **Appendix A**.
3. Cabinet agreed that the recommendations within the report be referred to Council for approval.

Outcome of Consultation

4. In relation to creating additional primary school places, all primary school headteachers were consulted at a meeting with the Local Authority on 14th March 2007, with further discussions on an individual basis. In relation to Hummersknott School and Carmel College, consultation has been confined to within the Authority only and with the particular schools concerned.

Legal Implications

5. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

6. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

7. The issues contained within this report are required to be considered by Council.

Recommendations

8. Council is asked approve:

- (a) a contribution of £0.3million to the Hummersknott School and Language College targeted capital project;
- (b) a contribution of £0.2million to the Carmel RC College targeted capital project;
- (c) a £0.2million investment in Dodmire Infant and Nursery School, and Mount Pleasant Primary School to create additional primary school places; and
- (d) in relation to (a) to (c), for funding to be made available within the existing capital programme for Children's Services as outlined in the report to Cabinet on 5th June 2007 (attached at **Appendix A**).

Reasons

9. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:

- (a) The financial support of the Local Authority will allow Carmel RC College and Hummersknott School & Language College to direct their resources towards raising educational standards;
- (b) In respect of Hummersknott School & Language College, this proposal is made now to provide the school with a guarantee of future funding support so that they can make a decision to proceed with the scheme at this stage; and
- (c) To provide sufficient primary school places across the Borough.

**Murray Rose,
Director of Children's Services**

Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Rachel Jones: Extension 2026

**CABINET
5TH JUNE 2007**

ITEM NO.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Chris McEwan, Children's Services Portfolio

Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on some recent developments affecting Children's Services capital programme and to seek Members' agreement to recommend the suggested courses of action to Council for approval.

Information and Analysis

2. The Children's Services Capital Programme for 2007/08 was approved by Cabinet on 20th March 2007. Three emerging issues require some changes to be made to the approved programme. These issues are discussed in detail in the following sections and are listed below:-
 - (a) Hummersknott School & Language College targeted capital project
 - (b) Carmel RC College targeted capital project
 - (c) Primary school admissions and the provision of additional places
3. These issues can be contained within available funding in the Children's Services Capital Programme in 2007/08 and future years. A summary of the funding position taking account of these issues is included later in this report.

Hummersknott School & Language College Targeted Capital Project

4. The Hummersknott project has been in development for eighteen months. A brief was drawn up after close consultation with teachers, pupils, stakeholders and local residents. The project brief was interpreted into a design scheme to which Members granted planning permission in January 2007.
5. The school has maintained realistic aspirations and have made many compromises to accommodate reductions in scope from the original brief. The design team has produced a lean building with estimated average costs for new build and refurbishment, which are competitive by industry and DfES standards.
6. Tenders for the project have now been received which are generally around £1m above the available budget. An in-depth value engineering exercise, looking at reviewing and downsizing the plans, has been undertaken to attempt to bring the scope of the project within the available budget but there remains a gap in funding of £0.3m. This gap exists

even after the decision by the school to draw down Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) for all future years up to 2012, in accordance with government guidelines, to support the project.

7. While the project will still meet the acceptance criteria, it is felt that further reductions to the scheme will result in the loss of several opportunities to raise educational standards. It is therefore proposed to support the project, under the Local Authority's powers to assist, with a contribution of £0.3m from Children's Services Capital Programme in the financial year 2008/09, at the earliest. We are confident that this can be managed within available resources over the life of the scheme but this proposal is made now to provide the school with a guarantee of future funding support so that they can make a decision to proceed with the scheme at this stage.

Carmel RC College Targeted Capital Project

8. The Local Authority, Carmel RC College and the local Diocese jointly developed the Carmel project. The main aims of the project are to bring the current building up to modern standards, to raise the capacity of the school from 900 to 1,050 places and to create a building that will support staff and students in their aim to raise standards.
9. The overall budget for the project is £10.6m. As a Voluntary Aided School, Carmel RC College is obliged to find 10% of the overall project cost. The school has financed its contribution of £1.06m with borrowing from the Diocese, which will be repaid from revenue savings to be made over forthcoming years.
10. While the school has a business plan to repay the contribution, it is felt that the financial support of the Local Authority will allow them to direct more revenue funding towards the delivery of expanded teaching support and other important areas which support the delivery of wider school services.
11. It is therefore proposed to support the project, under the Local Authority's powers to assist, with a contribution of £0.2m from Children's Services Capital Programme in the financial year 2007/08.

Primary School Admissions and the Provision of Additional Places

12. Due to inward migration and a continuing upward trend in the birth rate the Council will have a shortage of places available for reception age children wishing to start school in September 2007. Information recently received from Joint Strategy Unit confirms that this is not a one-off occurrence and will continue into the future. As it stands there will be a shortage of 20 places in September and this is likely to be a continuing trend.
13. Over the last couple of months Officers have investigated a number of options involving an analysis of each school across the Borough to consider the admission numbers against the total net capacity of each school. The emphasis has been on creating as many additional places as possible to build in some capacity for the medium term. Schools with the potential to accommodate additional places have been identified which, when overlaid with the data showing where the additional places are required, has produced a shortlist of four schools with which to explore the possibility of them taking additional pupils. These schools are:-
 - (a) Dodmire Infant and Nursery – 30 additional places
 - (b) Mount Pleasant Primary - 30 additional places

- (c) North Road Primary - 30 additional places
- (d) Corporation Road Primary - 10 additional places

14. Discussions have taken place with the Head Teachers of these schools to agree the way forward. North Road Primary and Corporation Road Primary have sufficient space available to accommodate the additional pupils. However, to accommodate the additional places at Dodmire Infant & Nursery School and Mount Pleasant Primary School, it has been identified that capital works are required either to provide an additional temporary classroom unit at each site or to undertake remodelling works to provide a more permanent solution. Officers are still working on proposals but it is estimated that costs are likely to be in the region of £0.2m.
15. It is therefore proposed to fund these works through the Children's Services Capital Programme in 2007/08. Officers will keep Members informed of progress through the Council's capital budget management process.
16. Members should also note that revenue funding will be allocated to each of the four schools to cover the additional costs incurred but this will be dealt with through the Children's Services Revenue Medium Term Financial Plan.

Funding

17. A summary of the funding position for the Children's Services Capital Programme is attached at **Appendix A**. This shows the programme of £19.5m approved for 2007/08 but also includes the carry forward from 2006/07 and an extract of the programme for 2008/09.
18. This demonstrates that the commitment to support the three issues described above is manageable within the existing resources when taking into account the uncommitted resources and the scale of the slippage carried forward from one year to another. Additionally there may be flexibility in the programme to push some smaller non-urgent school schemes back but we are not at this stage recommending any major variations to the programme of works already approved. However this will leave less flexibility within the programme to deal with unforeseen emergencies.
19. It is proposed to attempt to manage these issues within existing resources by utilising available funding in the most effective way. Officers will keep Members informed of progress through the Council's capital budget management process.
20. Members should also note that the issues in this report make no material difference to future investment plans for the three secondary schools still requiring capital investment, namely Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield. As outlined in the Secondary School Capital investment report to Cabinet on 16th January 2007, Officers will take a report to Members prior to the submission deadline date for Targeted Capital Funding bids outlining the assessment process undertaken and recommending the bid or bids to be submitted for these schools.

Legal Implications

21. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those

highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

22. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

23. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.

Decision Deadline

24. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Key Decisions

25. This report is a key decision as it affects more than two Wards in the Borough and has significant financial implications.

Recommendations

26. Members are asked to:

- (a) Recommend to Council approval of a contribution of £0.3m to the Hummersknott School & Language College targeted capital project;
- (b) Recommend to Council approval of a contribution of £0.2m to the Carmel RC College targeted capital project;
- (c) Recommend to Council approval of £0.2m investment in Dodmire Infant & Nursery School and Mount Pleasant Primary School to create additional primary school places; and
- (d) That in respect of recommendations (a) to (c), funding be made available from within the existing capital programme for Children's Services as detailed in **Appendix A**.

Reasons

27. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:

- (d) The financial support of the Local Authority will allow Carmel RC College and Hummersknott School & Language College to direct their resources towards raising educational standards;

- (e) In respect of Hummersknott School & Language College, this proposal is made now to provide the school with a guarantee of future funding support so that they can make a decision to proceed with the scheme at this stage; and
- (f) To provide sufficient primary school places across the Borough.

Murray Rose
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

No background papers used in the production of this report other than those referred to in the report.

Ian Coxon : Extension 2327