
**DIPLOMA DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FOR
BRANKSOME, HURWORTH AND LONGFIELD SCHOOLS.**

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Cyndi Hughes
Children and Young People Portfolio**

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

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval from Cabinet for the disbursement of Capital Funding to three Secondary Schools in the Borough.

Summary

2. Some capital resources have been made available to the Council to facilitate the delivery of Diplomas and the 14-19 curriculum. Since the suspension of the national Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme, it is now necessary to use some of the capital funding available to provide for required improvements to three of the Secondary Schools within the Borough.
3. Although the Government has given an indication that some capital funding may still be forthcoming in the future there is no clear picture of how any funding would be distributed. There are also indications that funding previously reserved for the secondary sector would be re-directed to address necessitous basic need issues in the primary phase.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Members approve the distribution of £1,500,000 Diploma Development funding to address the most urgent condition, health and safety and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) works required at each of the three Secondary Schools: Branksome; Hurworth and Longfield.
 - (b) Members approve the remaining £5,453,974 be held in reserve for further planned investment in the three schools once the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review is known in detail.

Reasons

5. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) The proposed share-out of funds would see improvements made to the three secondary schools in the Borough which have not benefitted from capital investment.
 - (b) To try to ensure that children continue to be educated in warm, safe and dry conditions.

Murray Rose
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

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

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|----------------------------------|---|
| S17 Crime and Disorder | There are no issues arising from this report. |
| Health and Well Being | Capital investment will provide the opportunity to improve health and safety issues in three of the Borough's schools, bringing parts of their buildings up to current H & S standards. |
| Sustainability | The additional funding for schools which have not had recent improvement to the fabric will provide opportunities to embed sustainable building and carbon reduction techniques which will contribute to decreasing energy usage and the Council's carbon reduction target. |
| Diversity | The capital funding will allow schools to continue to offer a wide and varied curriculum to pupils. |
| Wards Affected | All wards in the Borough are affected, as pupils from across Darlington attend the schools affected. |
| Groups Affected | Pupils aged 11-16 |
| Budget and Policy Framework | This does not represent a change to the Budget and Policy Framework. |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Urgent Decision | No |
| One Darlington: Perfectly Placed | The report is consistent with the Aspiring Darlington theme: Addressing the gaps in educational attainment and raising the performance of schools across the Borough to match the best. |
| Efficiency | The Capital funding will allow improvements to be made to three of the schools in worst condition. There should be consequent savings on unplanned maintenance and utilities. |

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Background

6. In October 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (now the Department for Education) allocated £8,000,000 to Darlington. The funding was to provide those local authority areas not currently in the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme with additional funding to support the provision of facilities for the delivery of 14-19 diplomas and / or to improve facilities for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
7. There has been a delay in taking decisions to allocate the funding to routine repairs and maintenance and capital improvements as the Council were awaiting the outcome discussions with Partnership for Schools regarding successful entry into the BSF programme.
8. On 30th November 2009, Darlington was judged 'ready to deliver' by Partnership for Schools and was invited to join Wave 7 of the National BSF programme. However, on 5th July 2010, the new coalition Government announced a significant review of the national Building Schools for the Future programme and as a result Darlington's proposed projects were 'stopped' with immediate effect.
9. This news was very disappointing for Darlington and particularly disappointing for the pupils, parents, staff and Governors of the three schools most affected.
10. Since the announcement, discussions have taken place with the Headteachers of the three schools to determine their revised capital strategy for the future. The Local Authority, with the support of the Schools, will continue to strive for significant capital investment in order to replace and renew the outdated and unsuitable buildings, whether this is through annual funding allocations or through future bidding processes.
11. A review of Partnerships for Schools, led by Sebastian James is underway. There are not likely to be any indications of future funding methodology before the spring of 2012 although high level policy intentions may become clear through the Comprehensive Spending Review scheduled for the 20th October 2010.

Capital Investment Strategy

12. In the meantime proposals have been considered and are being developed to invest the 14-19 funding allocation at the three schools in an attempt to address the most significant elements of condition and to help to address areas of suitability in line with the provision of accommodation for the delivery of the 14-19 curriculum.
13. Of the £8,000,000 funding allocated to Darlington, £6,953,974 remains available for allocation to schools. The difference has previously been allocated during the development of BSF and in a need to support other schools across the Borough. In addition a further

£657,895 has been cut from the allocation following an announcement by Government issued in July this year.

14. Initial consultations have taken place with the Headteachers of each school and options put forward for consideration. Work undertaken on the BSF Strategy for Change documents have informed these discussions. Obviously, with considerably reduced resources, the transformation element has given way to meeting suitability and condition needs. Briefs, outline schemes, initial costs and option appraisals are currently being developed to enable an overall scheme for each school to be put forward.
15. In line with the Asset Management Plan arrangements for Darlington Schools, the funding will initially be focussed on the highest level of condition need. Survey work is being undertaken to confirm the areas of greatest need, but it is envisaged that this would cover work to:
 - (a) Electrics
 - (b) Windows and external cladding
 - (c) Heating systems, pipework and drainage issues
 - (d) Roofs
 - (e) Significant Health & Safety and DDA issues.
16. The first call on any resources would be to address all high priority condition issues which have the potential to seriously affect the operation of the school. The aim would be to address areas of work which are particularly high maintenance, limiting the need for further 'patch and mend' investment over the next 5 year period. Investments to the fabric of the buildings, for example a reduction in heat loss by improving levels of insulation in the building fabric, would also be in line with the Council's carbon reduction agenda and support the targets in the Carbon Management Plan.

Funding

17. The funding allocated to Darlington was £8,000,000. During the development of BSF and in a need to support other schools across the Borough some funding has already been committed and the total has been reduced. In addition a further £657,895 has been cut from the allocation following an announcement by Government issued in July this year.
18. Cabinet are requested to release £1,500,000 in total which would be spent in the three schools to address urgent condition needs.
19. The tables below show an illustration of the type of condition work required for each school and of estimated costs for the possible schemes. The planned works would be contained within the funding envelope agreed through this report.

Hurworth

| Element | Condition Survey Base Cost | + allowance for inflation (5%) and professional fees (15%) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Electrical | £240,738.00 | £288,886.00 |
| External Walls and Windows | £121,401.00 | £145,681.00 |
| Mechanical | £52,233.00 | £62,680.00 |
| Roofs | £59,712.00 | £71,654.00 |
| Sanitary Services | £2,037.00 | £2,444.00 |
| Total | £476,121.00 | £571,345.00 |

Branksome

| Element | Condition Survey Base Cost | + allowance for inflation (5%) and professional fees (15%) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Electrical | £209,314.00 | £251,176.80 |
| External Walls and Windows | £376,613.00 | £451,935.60 |
| Mechanical | £79,288.00 | £95,145.60 |
| Roofs | £78,722.00 | £94,466.40 |
| Sanitary Services | £2,740.00 | £3,288.00 |
| Total | £746,677.00 | £896,012.40 |

Longfield

| Element | Condition Survey Base Cost | + allowance for inflation (5%) and professional fees (15%) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Electrical | £88,444.00 | £106,132.80 |
| External Walls and Windows | £177,600.00 | £213,120.00 |
| Mechanical | £80,596.00 | £96,715.20 |
| Roofs | £199,301.00 | £239,161.20 |
| Sanitary Services | £1,306.00 | £1,567.20 |
| Total | £547,247.00 | £656,696.40 |

20. The release of £1,500,000 funding between the three schools should address the worst condition elements required at each. It would be prioritised to ensure that the highest priority work was undertaken and any H&S or DDA priority issues would also be addressed. This prioritisation of funding would be undertaken following the completion of intensive surveys and investigations and planned investment would take place in full discussion with the schools.
21. The remaining £5,453,974 Diploma Development funding would be held in Council reserves but earmarked for further spending on the three secondary schools. Spending would be considered in the case of an emergency at any of the school sites or would be used to secure further funding in the future once the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review is known.

Outcome of Consultation

22. No direct consultation has taken place in preparing this report. However, schools are fully engaged with the LA Asset Management Planning Process which identifies priorities of capital work required for each premises.