
CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Cyndi Hughes,
Children and Young People Portfolio
Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of People**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Members' agreement to:
 - (a) the proposed Children, Families and Learning Capital Programme for 2011/12; and
 - (b) releasing the capital funds in relation to this programme.

Summary

2. The Council has been allocated £3,586,198 for the period 2011-12 to support a range of projects and initiatives across Schools and Sure Start facilities in the Borough. Appendix A provides a full breakdown of all funding streams which are available.
3. All funding has been allocated in line with rigorous assessment processes that support Asset Management priorities.
4. Appendix B provides a full breakdown of each of the projects identified as a priority for the allocation of capital funding.
5. All projects will be managed in line with the Corporate Capital Process Review procedures.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that Members :-
 - (a) agree to formally release the capital funding of £2,059,845 outlined in Appendix A
 - (b) agree to release funding to support the priorities identified in Appendix B;
 - (c) agree the proposed prioritised capital investment programme for Children's Services identified in Appendix C and in paragraph 32, with delegated authority to the Director of People to enter into an agreement with schools to specify the use of funding, and
 - (d) agree the proposed prioritised capital investment programme for Children's Services identified in Appendix C, with delegated authority to the Director of People to manage the authorisation of this funding.

Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
- (a) Release of the funds will enable capital investment to be undertaken in the areas identified with the greatest need, in terms of asset management priorities; and
 - (b) Detailed planning to identify priorities has been undertaken which ensures effective use of all investment.

Murray Rose
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

Schools Capital Allocations 2011-12

Rachel Jones: Extension 2026

S17 Crime and Disorder	Capital investment to improve facilities and provide better building maintenance will contribute to the reduction of crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	The capital strategy outlined in this report will continue the Council's drive to provide buildings that enhance childrens' life chances and opportunities to thrive.
Sustainability	All work undertaken will be designed and constructed with the highest regard to sustainability and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources.
Diversity	All capital projects will add to the diversity of buildings and technology available in Darlington.
Wards Affected	Capital projects are being undertaken within most schools in the Borough. Therefore, all wards are affected.
Groups Affected	Children and young people (from birth to 19 years) in childcare or full time education.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision due to the amount of funding Members are requested to release, and also because it affects all schools in the Borough.
Urgent Decision	For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The Capital Programme is consistent with Aspiring Darlington: providing high quality facilities that support modern approaches to education in schools and for lifelong learning.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. The Authority funds the capital maintenance and improvement of schools from a variety of sources including capital allocations received from the Department for Education (DfE) and bid based submissions for Central Government funding programmes (compiled and submitted by Officers or individual schools).
9. Attached at Appendix A is a summary of each of the capital allocations available for 2011/12. Additional funding may be secured throughout the year and if this occurs, reports will be brought to Cabinet to formally request the release of the additional funding.
10. There have been some movements in secured funding since the Capital Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which are detailed below:

	£
Medium Term Finance Plan 20011/12	3,867,474
Add	
Short Breaks for Disabled Children	59,516
Low Carbon Build Programme	43,496
Community Sustainable Energy Programme	40,000
Less	
LCVAP funding for VA Schools directly passed to Diocese	-333,210
DFC allocation for VA Schools directly passed to Diocese	-75,992
Confirmed figures of DFC for maintained schools reduced to take account of pupil numbers	-15,086
Total funding available in 2011-12	3,586,198

Prioritisation Process

11. The Children, Families and Learning Section within People Services is responsible for ensuring all funding is targeted to meet the highest priority needs across the schools sector and additionally since April 2011 the network of 7 Sure Start facilities.
12. To guide local priorities for investment, officer's work with Headteachers of all maintained schools within the Borough to develop a Local Asset Management Plan Agreement

(LAMPAs) for each individual school. These agreement plans are agreed in partnership with each school and concentrate on ensuring that school based Devolved Formula Capital is targeted to the highest need within each school. The LAMPAs also identify any larger more complex priorities at the school which may require a greater level of capital investment from centrally held allocations. If identified these projects are then brought forward for consideration against other strategic priorities.

13. In previous years the Capital Programme has been heavily influenced by the range of projects brought forward through the LAMPA arrangements. Recent funding has also heavily supported the Primary Capital Programme which has seen substantial re-build and refurbishment across the majority of schools within the primary sector. The 2011-12 programme differs from these usual arrangements in that there have been a number of strategic priorities identified for which funding has had to be committed over and above individual school LAMPA priorities.
14. Appendix B provides information about each priority that has been put forward to show how the funding will be allocated. In addition the following section of the report provides some additional background information about key priorities that have been put forward.

Programme of Works (Appendix B)

15. The Local Authority has been allocated £1,617,860 to address capital maintenance needs within the maintained schools across the borough. The funding should be targeted to strategic priorities and condition need within school premises. This funding is allocated to support maintained schools but additionally DfE have now stipulated that it should also be available to support Sure Start Centres within the authority. Once a school has converted to an Academy it is no longer eligible to be considered for this funding source. Academies can apply direct to the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) for capital maintenance funding as required.

Northwood Primary School

16. A paper presented to Cabinet on 8th March 2011, outlined on-going negotiations in agreeing the final account for the completion of the new build school project. Discussions are currently on-going and the project closure is being managed in accordance with the strategy agreed by Cabinet in March. Until the outcome of discussions is known it has been agreed that the full amount of risk should be held in reserve. This equates to £1,117,860.
17. Officers anticipate that it is unlikely that the full amount of reserve will be required to support the outcome of the final account. Therefore, once the outcome is known, the balance in funding will be made available for other capital projects. It is proposed that the funding will be allocated to the projects identified in Appendix C, listed in priority order. Cabinet are asked to delegate authority to the Director of People to manage the authorisation of this funding in line with the prioritised list in Appendix C.

Hummersknott School

18. In 2009 the school completed a major investment project which resulted in the significant refurbishment of the school premises and additions to the grounds such as the installation of a 3G pitch. The project included some improvement works to the playing field areas

including resurfacing to 2 football pitches. The work was completed in accordance with specifications outlined by the national Football Foundation and was sub-contracted to a specialist contractor through the main contract. Although it has been 2 years since the work to the football pitches has been completed the area is unsuitable for playing. Many investigations have been undertaken to identify the reasons and it has been concluded that extremely poor weather conditions (very cold winters and dry hot summer periods) have led to the poor development of the ground and the seed. In addition the areas have been hit by an infestation of St Mark's fly which has damaged the grass roots and rabbits who have created holes within the ground, causing a health and safety concern.

19. The specialist advice has concluded that the current state of the pitches is outside of the scope of the original contracted works and cannot be attributed to latent defects. A recommendation has been put forward to remedy the situation and improve the quality of the playing fields with the anticipation that they will be useable by September 2011. This funding is separate to the original contract value and release is sought from the 2011 capital programme to support this work.

Blackwell Meadows

20. The Council is required to provide an area roughly equivalent to 3 new pitches within the town to accommodate for the loss of playing pitches on Hundens Lane site as a result of the development of St Aidan's CE Academy. At the time of developing the new school it was envisaged that additional playing pitches would be provided as part of a proposed development at Darlington Football Club. However, this did not come to fruition and as a result the Council is still under an obligation to provide replacement pitches.
21. This report seeks the release of £50,000 to undertake feasibility and design work and begin site investigation works. Until this feasibility study has been completed the full costs of the project are unknown. However, an additional indicative funding allocation of £250,000 has been set aside for this project and has been highlighted in Appendix C. Should the scope of the works be outside of this funding level a further report will be brought to Cabinet in the future.

The Bridge

22. The Behaviour and Attendance Partnership has been reviewing appropriate alternative provision for secondary age children within the Borough and as a result have recommended that the services previously provided by The Bridge (KS4 Engagement Centre) will be subsumed within The Phoenix Centre from September 2011. As a result, the former premises occupied by The Bridge, located on the corner of Hundens Lane and Yarm Road, will become vacant with effect from 31st July 2011. The Council no longer have a need for such premises and as such an allocation has been set aside to enable the building to be secured and demolished within due course.

Additional priorities identified through the LAMPA process (Appendix C)

23. With a significant proportion of the capital maintenance funding being held in reserve pending the outcome of the Northwood final account negotiations, it has been difficult to allocate funding to a wide range of school based projects identified through the annual LAMPA process. However, appendix C lists (in priority order) projects which cabinet are

asked to consider funding as and when additional capital maintenance funding becomes available. These projects have been discussed and considered with Headteachers and Officers.

24. Once a school has converted to an Academy it is no longer eligible to be considered for an allocation under the Capital Maintenance funding source. If a school currently identified in Appendix C becomes an Academy before the funding is allocated they will be removed from the priority listing and any balance in funding re-directed to the maintained school sector. Academies can apply direct to the YPLA for capital maintenance funding if required.

Basic Need funding

25. The Local Authority has been allocated £1,554,153 to support the need for additional school places across the Authority. Unlike the capital maintenance funding, DfE have stipulated that the priorities for this allocation must be considered across all schools within the Borough, including maintained schools, Academies, Voluntary Aided schools and Free Schools.
26. For a number of years the authority has been experiencing a shortage of primary school places across the authority with particular hot spots in certain areas of the town. The Primary Capital Programme directed funding to address the priority areas of concern at the time (increasing places at Alderman Leach and Harrowgate Hill Primary schools) but other areas of the town are now becoming a priority. Although a total funding allocation of £1,554,153 is available, this paper seeks permission to release £20,000 which would enable detailed feasibility work to be undertaken, considering options to outline the most appropriate schools in which to provide additional places. Once the outcome of this initial feasibility study has been undertaken a further and more detailed cabinet report will present options and recommendations to take the full allocation of funding forward.
27. Cabinet is also asked to release £7,800 as a top slice contribution to staffing costs which will support the provision of School Place Panning arrangements to manage data collection and analysis, evaluation of information, presentation of information and support through the feasibility and consultation stages.

14-19 Funding

28. In 2008/09 the Department allocated those LA areas not in the Building Schools for the Future programme additional funding to support the provision of facilities for the delivery of 14-19 diplomas and SEN provision. At the time of allocation a strategic decision was taken to hold the funding in order to increase the availability of investment that could be made with BSF, for the three schools Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield. However, the demise of the national BSF programme in July 2010 clarified that future large scale capital investment would be unlikely in the short or medium term. The 14-19 Diploma funding was allocated as part of the Single Capital Pot which allows LA to have autonomy over how it is spent and when it is allocated.
29. The original allocation received was £8,000,000 but some of the funding has already been allocated for the following:

£657,895	Funding cut nationally in Summer 2010
£1,500,000	Allocated between Branksome, Hurworth, and Longfield to address highest priority condition items
£123,017	Allocated to Hurworth School to provide temporary classroom accommodation to support a high year in-take (5 year rental costs until Aug 2014)
£280,000	Allocated to Hummersknott school in relation to additional requirements in supporting the capital project
£31,676	Aborted fees in relation to preparing the BSF Strategy for Change document prior to the scheme being cancelled
£5,407,412	Remaining Balance

30. In October 2010, Cabinet gave approval to release the remaining funding of £5,407,412, but with the recommendation that further information was presented in due course to explain how the funding would be allocated and what would be the priorities for investment. The following section of this report provides members with further clarity about how the funding will be spent and committed by the schools.

Allocation of funding

31. This paper recommends that the funding is allocated using the distribution method originally agreed by the 14-19 Partnership at their meeting on 7th October 2009. The method was agreed by Headteachers at the time, as it was seen to be an equitable, simple and transparent distribution of funds between the three schools. The same method was used to allocate the £1.5m condition funding between the 3 schools.
32. The recommended method is for each school to receive a lump sum grant and then use pupil numbers to drive out the remaining resource. The table below provides the detailed allocations:

	Lump Sum	No of Children	Allocation Per Child	Total
			1,144	
Branksome	1,000,000	550	629,314	1,629,314
Hurworth	1,000,000	655	749,456	1,749,456
Longfield	1,000,000	899	1,028,642	2,028,642
	3,000,000	2,104	2,407,412	5,407,412

Priorities for investment

33. The £1,500,000 previously allocated between the 3 schools is being used to address the highest priority condition needs identified at the schools, but piecemeal amounts of funding

such as this will never be sufficient to address all the issues associated with the dilapidated buildings.

34. Hurworth is already an Academy and Longfield and Branksome are in the process of seeking Academy status. As a result of Academy conversion, the schools will each take on responsibility for the management and maintenance of their own premises will need to balance any capital funding received against aspirational developments and basic premises needs. The schools will also be eligible to receive funding from the YPLA.
35. Both Longfield and Hurworth Schools have had ambitions for a number of years to secure the 14-19 funding to support enhancements in the existing poor quality sporting facilities on both sites. As a Sports College, Longfield School would seek to create a new sports facility on the site, linked with the Synthetic Turf pitch installed during 2010. Hurworth School are also keen to enhance sporting facilities but by refurbishing and expanding the current facilities on site. The school would be keen to improve current provision but also to create areas for wider curriculum opportunities such as performing arts and drama. All facilities would be open for community use to the wider public.
36. Branksome School were initially keen to develop their sports provision when the funding was first made available a few years ago. However, their current situation with the interim management arrangements for the school, means that priorities are changing and developing all the time. The school are keen to use the funding to achieve the best possible outcomes for teaching and learning but would like to refrain from making any immediate decisions until a clearer picture about the future priorities has been identified. Members are asked to delegate authority to the Director of People to work with the school to identify future priorities for investment as and when appropriate.

Management of capital expenditure

37. As mentioned previously each of the schools have either already become an Academy or are in the process of converting to Academy status. Once this process is complete the LA will have significantly reduced opportunities to influence the priorities for investment in each of the schools or how spend would be managed.
38. Informal discussions with the schools have suggested that they would be keen to lead the development of these projects themselves and would be keen to test the market in terms of using external contractors.
39. This report recommends that funding is allocated in line with the arrangements outlined in paragraph 32 and that each of the three Headteachers are requested to submit outline proposals of how the funding will be prioritised, allocated and how best value will be achieved in procurement. Members are asked to delegate responsibility for approving these proposals to the Director of People.

Conclusion

40. Each project or programme of works has been developed in full consultation with key stakeholders. By developing individual asset management plans for each school and linking to key strategic objectives, it is possible to ensure that all needs are highlighted and through dialogue, a comprehensive capital investment programme has been defined that begins to

address the full range of needs at each school, whilst managing the development of strategic priorities identified at the Local Authority level