

**CHILDREN SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

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

**Responsible Director -  
Suzanne Joyner, Director of Children and Adults Services**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Members' agreement to:-
  - (a) the proposed Education and Inclusion Service Capital Investment Programme for 2019/20; and
  - (b) releasing the capital funds in relation to this programme.

**Summary**

2. This report seeks Cabinet approval for the release of School Condition grant funding of £141,894 for the 2019/20 financial year to support a range of projects and initiatives across maintained Darlington Schools. Additionally, an under spend of £97,000 from the 2018/19 capital programme is available to support this year's projects. All funding has been allocated in line with rigorous assessment processes that support Asset Management priorities.
3. The Council has been allocated Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) of £50,367 for the 2019/20 financial year. This funding is a formula-based grant provided to all maintained schools to help support the capital needs for their building. Additionally, in the Budget 2018 the Government allocated all schools a top-up to their 2018/19 DFC allocations. The total top-up for Darlington maintained schools is £84,171.
4. The Healthy Pupils Capital Fund is a one-off grant generated by the Government's 'sugar tax' on the soft drinks industry. The report seeks release of the awarded funding to support a project at Borough Road Nursery to improve independence and promote self-care and hygiene.
5. **Appendix A** provides a full breakdown of all funding streams which are available and details of each of the projects identified as a priority for the allocation of capital funding.
6. All projects will be managed in line with the Corporate Capital Process procedures.

## Recommendation

7. It is recommended that Members:
- (a) agree to formally release the total School Condition Allocation of £141,894 and agree the proposed prioritised capital investment programme for maintained schools, with delegated authority to the Director of Children and Adult Services to manage the authorisation of this funding.
  - (b) agree to formally release £13,581 of Healthy Pupil Capital Fund grant to support a suitability project at Borough Road Nursery.

## Reasons

8. 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 have been undertaken which ensures effective use of all investment.

**Suzanne Joyner**  
**Director of Children and Adults Services**

## Background Papers

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

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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 children's life chances and opportunities to thrive. The project at Borough Road will increased independence with toileting which is critical to children understanding how to keep healthy by managing their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully
Carbon Impact	All work undertaken will be designed and constructed with sustainability in mind and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources.
Diversity	
Wards Affected	Schools located in: Park East, Pierremont, North Road, Red Hall and Lingfield, Eastbourne and Whinfield.

Groups Affected	Children and young people of school age (3-16) in Darlington.
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.
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.
Efficiency	Defective materials and plant will be replaced with more efficient products e.g. increasing 'u' value on windows, insulation and modern highly efficiency boilers.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The proposed projects have no specific impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

9. The Authority funds the capital maintenance and improvement of maintained 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).
10. **Appendix A** provides a summary of the capital allocations available to support children's services capital programme and further details of the proposed works for each project.
11. 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.

### Devolved Formula Capital

12. Schools received a top-up to their 2018/19 allocations (previously released) announced in the Budget 2018. As with their new 2019/20 allocations schools will be encouraged to manage spend in line with agreed Local Asset Management Plan priorities.

### A Healthy Borough Road – Improving Independence in the Early Years

13. Borough Road Nursery have brought a suitability issue with their children's toilet arrangement to the attention of the LA. The children's toilets are located in a single location serving the entire nursery building. Due to staffing reductions over time, the arrangement is now having an impact on delivery in the 3 and 4 year old room as staff have to leave the room to accompany children to the toilets. A temporary solution of accessing a single toilet in an adjacent room reduces the time staff are out of the room, but the children must still be accompanied, as the layout does not afford passive observation.
14. It is important that the school has the necessary facilities to develop self-care skills particularly around toileting and general hygiene so that the children learn to operate independently within the environment. In addition, it is important that they have opportunities to develop sustained learning, which at this moment in time is interrupted by staff having to leave the 3 and 4 year old room to accompany children to the toilet.
15. The proposed project involves remodelling two small meeting rooms into an additional toilet area with hand wash and nappy change facility. Direct access for children and supervision by staff would be created by knocking a wide opening through from the 3 and 4 year old room. The area concerned was improved by Government grant funding in 2012 and in accordance with the funding terms the Secretary of State for Education must be consulted if making a change to the tangible asset. The Department for Education, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has confirmed that as the basic use of the asset remains unchanged and the freehold and control of the land remains in the ownership of the Council, there will be no consideration of recovery of value (clawback) of the original grant funding.

16. DBC Building Design Services have designed the proposal and provided a cost estimate of £39,000. Education capital grants have been identified to fully cover the estimated cost of the works. An underspend of £25,419 from the Funded Places for Two Year Olds programme completed in 2014 could be used and supplemented with Healthy Pupils Capital Fund (HPCF) grant of £13,581. HPCF is a one-off grant generated from the Government's Soft Drinks Industry Levy. £13,581 is the total grant award made to the LA.
17. The grant guidance requests that proposals fit wherever possible with local priorities and needs for pupil health and wellbeing. The proposal is supported by DBC Public Health.

### **School Condition Allocation 19/20 Programme of Works**

18. The Local Authority has been allocated School Condition Allocation grant of £141,894 in 2019/20 to address capital maintenance needs across the borough's maintained schools. There is an underspend of £97,000 from last Summer's programme which will be rolled forward to provide an overall total of £238,894. The Education Services and Inclusion Service within Children and Adult Services is responsible for ensuring all funding is targeted to meet strategic priorities and the highest priority needs across maintained schools and nurseries.
19. Once a school has converted to an Academy it is no longer eligible to be considered for capital maintenance funding allocated to the LA but can apply direct to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for funding as required. No remaining maintained schools (for which the LA has building condition responsibility) are currently progressing to conversion.

### **Prioritisation Process**

20. To guide local priorities for investment, officers work with Head Teachers of maintained schools within the Borough to develop a Local Asset Management Plan Agreement (LAMPA) for their school. These plans are agreed in partnership with each school and concentrate on ensuring that investment is targeted to the highest need. The schools maintained by the LA are: Harrowgate Hill Primary (PFI - no condition liability for LA) Red Hall Primary, Whinfield Primary, Rise Carr College, Borough Road Nursery and George Dent Nursery. St Teresa's is still maintained but is also voluntary aided and the LA does not have responsibility for the condition of the school building.
21. **Appendix A** provides information about each recommended project. In addition, the following section of the report provides some additional background information about key priorities.

### **Asset Management Costs**

22. £25,500 to support central costs for undertaking annual surveys on school premises to support Asset Management Planning arrangements. In addition, a proportion of the personnel costs for the School Place Planning and Capital Assets Team are top sliced from the available funding to support co-ordination of asset management arrangements.

## **Urgent Works/Contingency**

23. Each proposed project identified in **Appendix A** contains a 7.5% contingency within the estimated value of the works. A further £20,000 has been kept in reserve to cover any emergency works that may be required through the year. This will be monitored as the projects progress and, if possible, funding released for other schemes. Members are asked to delegate responsibility for approving the allocation of this funding to the Director of Children and Adult Services.