

Title of meeting: Children, Families and Education portfolio meeting

Date of meeting: 16 March 2022

Subject: Update on the Education Capital Programme

Report from: Sarah Daly, Director of Children, Families and Education

Report by: Alison Critchley, Head of Sufficiency & Resources

Wards affected: All

Key decision: ~~Yes~~/No

Full Council decision: ~~Yes~~/No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update the Cabinet Member on the implementation of the education capital programme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress on the 'Accommodation for Special Educational Needs' (additional specialist school places) projects
- 2.2 To note that the council has received a SEND Capital grant of £1.18m in 2021/21
- 2.3 To note the Special Educational Needs schemes agreed with the Lead Member since the last report
- 2.4 To note progress on the secondary sufficiency schemes
- 2.5 To note progress on the urgent school condition projects for LA Maintained schools.
- 2.6 To note that the DfE has announced a further round of the school rebuilding programme for which the council will be submitting a bid
- 2.7 To note progress with the placement of the education case management system project.

3. Background

3.1 SEND Accommodation Strategy

- 3.1.1 As part of the 2021-22 capital programme the council agreed on 9 February 2021 to add £3.5m to the funding for "Accommodation for Special Educational Needs" (additional specialist school places) to create additional places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in special schools and inclusion centres attached to mainstream schools.
- 3.1.2 In March 2021 the decision was taken to allocate the funding as set out below (for full details see attached [report](#))
- An Inclusion Centre on a mainstream primary school site (Penhale Infant School).
 - Expansion of Flying Bull Inclusion Centre (Alternative Provision)
 - Capital inclusion grants of £100,000 per year to support inclusion in mainstream schools.
 - Expansion of Cliffdale Primary Academy
 - Changes at Redwood Park Academy to accommodate Year 6 pupils.
- 3.1.3 In recent months we have seen the initial quotes for building work coming back at significantly higher rates, which reflect a range of factors relating to the pandemic, Brexit, and more recently to the increase in energy prices. In more positive news, we have received a SEND capital grant of £1.18m in 2021/22 which will be used to support the SEND capital projects. In addition, we have undertaken work to review and in some cases scale back the original plans to ensure that the work is completed within the budget available.
- 3.1.4 Phase 1 of the **Inclusion Centre at Penhale Infant School** has been completed. The Rainbow Fish Inclusion Centre opened with an initial 8 places in September 2021, a further 8 places will be provided from September 2022.
- 3.1.5 The council is currently working with the Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) to modify the original proposals for Phase 2 and enable the overall project, including the creation of inclusion provision for pupils in Years 5 - 11 to be established at The Portsmouth Academy, to be delivered within budget.
- 3.1.6 Funding has been allocated to expand the existing **Inclusion Centre at Flying Bull Academy** (Alternative Provision). The expanded Inclusion Centre will provide an additional 8 places in the 2022/23 school year and further 8 more places from September 2023, taking the total capacity on the centre to 32 places in total.
- 3.1.7 Funding has also been allocated to **capital inclusion grants** from the 2020 to 2021 capital programme. The grants of up to £10,000 have been allocated

to 11 Portsmouth Schools to enable these schools to make adaptations to support children with SEND in mainstream schools. These adaptations include developments such as building nurture spaces and sensory rooms.

- 3.1.8 We are planning to spend up to £50,000 to support additional capital inclusion projects for up to five Portsmouth mainstream schools from the 2021 to 2022 programme.
- 3.1.9 Work is also proceeding at **Cliffdale Primary Academy** to enable the school to accommodate an additional 5-8 pupils from September 2022.
- 3.1.10 The council had originally planned for further extensive works at Cliffdale and Redwood Park Academies across 2023/24 and 2024/25 school years. However, the increased costs for the later phases of the schemes are no longer affordable within the available funding. We will therefore be working with Solent Academies Trust to review the priorities for investment to both increase capacities and to address condition issues. Once this work is completed we will consider potential funding options (considering both DfE funding and future council capital rounds).
- 3.1.11 Work is also progressing on plans for **Inclusion Centre at Arundel Court**. The Centre will eventually take 24 children, with the first 8 pupils starting September 2023.

3.2 Secondary Sufficiency Schemes

- 3.2.1 The current capital programme includes a budget for future secondary expansion schemes ("scheme 18") and for future primary and secondary expansion schemes ("scheme 30"). Current forecasts are that the number of primary age children will decrease over the next 4-5 years and therefore we do not anticipate that we will need funding for schemes to create additional primary places.
- 3.2.2 At this time we estimate that we will only just have enough places for all of the year 7 pupils we are expecting to start in secondary school in September 2022. The surplus capacity that we do have is largely concentrated in the north of the city at Castle View Academy.
- 3.2.3 To support secondary placement capacity we are proceeding with a scheme at Miltoncross Academy to improve external areas and provide additional outdoor spaces which will enable the school admit up to an additional 10 pupils per year in September 2023 and 20 pupils per year from September 2024.
- 3.2.4 We have also commissioned a feasibility study at Priory School to explore the possibility of converting changing room facilities into to a multi-purpose teaching space to accommodate 25 pupils that would be used to create an NHS independent learning area that would help inform and prepare pupils for

a range of careers with the NHS. Should the project go ahead it would enable Priory School to increase their Published Admissions Number (PAN) and admit up to an additional 15 pupils per year.

3.3 Progress on urgent condition works

- 3.3.1 A budget of £1,583,400 over a 2 year period is available to address school urgent condition needs. As with the other building projects, the tenders for work are coming back at much higher costs than originally expected. The work is therefore being prioritised to ensure that we remain within our overall budget.
- 3.3.2 The first two projects, the replacement of the oil-based heating system at Portsdown Primary School (estimated cost £475,000) and Cumberland Infant School phase 2 heating improvements (estimated cost £100,000) are in progress.
- 3.3.3 A decision on the timing of the boiler replacement project at Medina Primary School (estimated cost £475, 000) and whether it will be carried out in one for two phases will be made once we have cost certainty on the Portsdown and Medina Primary School projects.
- 3.3.4 Further condition survey work is on hold until we are clearer about affordability.

3.4 Bids to the DfE school rebuilding programme

- 3.4.1 The DfE have announced a further round of their School Rebuilding Programme through which the responsible body (local authorities for maintained schools and Academy Trusts for Academies) can nominate school buildings or blocks of at least 1200m² to be considered. There is also scope for responsible bodies to identify "exceptional cases" where the building is at risk of imminent closure. Portsmouth City Council will be submitting a bid by 3rd March 2022.

3.5 Replacement of the Education Case Management System

- 3.5.1 The 2021 capital programme included £1.25m to support the introduction of a replacement education case management system (currently Capita ONE). Following a procurement exercise we expect to be able to identify a preferred bidder in March 2022 and enter into a contract in April 2022.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The projects outlined above will help ensure that we are able to continue to provide sufficient high quality places for children with SEND in a cost effective way.
- 4.2 The secondary sufficiency work will ensure that there are enough local places for all secondary places as the bulge in pupil numbers fully affects secondary schools.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1 The implementation of these projects will not have a negative impact on any of the areas of equality of diversity, community safety, regeneration and culture or environment and public space.
- 5.2 The implementation of the SEND accommodation strategy in particular will improve access to schools for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The development of inclusion centres will increase the opportunities for these children to interact with their peers in mainstream provision where appropriate bringing benefits to children in inclusion units and mainstream.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The recommendations identified within this report will assist the council in ensuring compliance with its statutory powers and duties, which includes the following:
 - Statutory duties for children and young people with specialist educational needs and disabilities set out in the Children and Families Act 2014, including the duty to ensure children with SEND have their needs met and keeping under review the educational, training and social care provision for children and young people who have SEND as well as considering the extent to which the provision is sufficient to meet need.
 - A statutory duty to secure that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population in its area under section 13 of the Education Act 1996 and to provide sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in its area in accordance with section 14 of the Education Act 1996. The schools must be sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education.
 - An obligation to ensure school premises maintained to a prescribed standard in accordance with section 542 of the Education Act 1996 and the School Premises (England) regulations 2021.

- 6.2 The recommendations contained in this report are within the Cabinet Members powers, as set out in Part of the Council's constitution.

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1 The finance monitoring of the capital programme is reported within the quarterly budget monitoring report. The quarter 3 monitoring report has been brought to this meeting and sets out the position of the capital programme as at the end of December 2021
- 7.2 It should be noted that the current economic climate is increasing the costs of capital works and recent tenders have indicated that costs are approximately 50% higher than the original estimate. The Education Department is working closely with the Design service, Architects, contractors, and schools to manage costs down and reviewing current and planned schemes to re-prioritise and identify funding to ensure that critical sufficiency works are completed. Cash limit revenue funding will need to be identified for feasibility costs for any schemes which are not progressed.
- 7.3 For condition projects schools are expected to use their Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) allocations to support these key priorities, in keeping with the government expectations of the use of this funding. The expected contributions from schools' will be based on the agreed contribution of methodology.
- 7.4 Any revenue implications will need to be factored into the Growth Fund (if applicable) or be met by the individual schools through their individual budgets which are funded from Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

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Signed by: **Sarah Daly, Director of Children, Families and Education**

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location



The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

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Signed by: