

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 7TH JUNE 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SCHOOLS CAPITAL FUNDING 2007/08

Executive Summary

- 1.0 This report provides a summary of the capital funding available under a number of local and national initiatives and programmes and sets out a draft programme of works in 2007/08 for consideration by Cabinet. The report also provides an update on the progress of the two major, successful Targeted Capital Bid schemes at West Kirby Grammar School for Girls and Wirral Grammar School for Boys and provides a summary of the current position in relation to the new school One School Pathfinder project at Woodchurch High and other main school capital projects.

Background

- 2.0 In 2000, the DfES introduced requirements for all LEAs to produce an Asset Management Plan (AMP) and a Statement of Priorities in respect of school premises works. These plans were subject to appraisal and approval by DfES. Approval in 2002–2003 of Wirral's documents meant that only an updated Statement of Priorities was required to be submitted in December 2003, this being a requirement on all LEAs and no further submissions have been required since 2004. Wirral's AMP Policy Statement, having previously been graded by the DfES as "compliant plus elements of good practice" has not required further submission. The DfES now no longer require annual submissions of Asset Management Plans but the intention is to continue to use the previously council and DfES approved Statement of Priorities and updated Condition and Suitability data on school premises as a guidance document for future capital programmes, including 07/08.
- 2.1 The LEA has again received DfES allocations of funding for schools capital work, allocated under four main headings for 2007/08.
- 2.2 A Modernisation allocation of £4,223,138 has been allocated for 2007/08 which comprises £1,624,560 for projects in secondary schools, £1,613,616 for projects in primary schools and £984,962 under the heading "new places", which is not ring fenced to a specific sector. All LEAs now receive a formulaic allocation for new places, replacing the previous annual DfES bidding process, this change results in all LEAs receiving some funding whether or not additional places are required.
- 2.3 A School Access Initiative allocation of £560,166 has been made for 2007/08. This will allow the continuation of a programme of works, which ranges from small scale adaptations for specific pupils through to large scale lift provision or contributions to major capital projects.
- 2.4 The above DfES allocations are part grant and part supported borrowing. In addition a further DfES grant of £1,161,299 has been made to the Voluntary Aided LCVAP

programme to fund works in Aided schools agreed with the two Diocesan Bodies. This funding also covers the cost of School Access works in Aided schools.

- 2.5 In addition to the DfES allocations outlined above, the LEA was successful in two DfES Targeted Capital bids funded from 2006 to 2009. These are £3,154,877 for mobile replacement and other curriculum works at Wirral Grammar School for Boys and £2,930,233 for mobile replacement and other curriculum works at West Kirby Grammar School for Girls. This funding is in the form of grant and is intended to meet 80% of the individual project costs with the balance coming from other formulaic allocations outlined in 2.2 above and some contribution from each school's Devolved Formula Capital funding allocations. In addition to removing twenty teaching spaces currently in poor quality mobile accommodation, this investment will also improve provision in a number of curriculum areas including Maths, English, History, Science, DT, Art, Dance and Drama. Security and pupil welfare will also be improved. These are the last two schools with large quantities of mobile accommodation. Both schemes are due for completion in Autumn 2008.
- 2.6 Due to a slower national spend profile on the major Building Schools for the Future programme, the DfES offered all LEAs an additional 07/08 Capital allowance, to be deducted from future years allocations. In the case of Wirral this additional draw down figure is £1,619,088. Almost all LEAs took up this DfES draw down option. In the case of the Wirral 07/08 programme, this is helpful in that 07/08 is the year of the main contribution to the Targeted Capital bids outlined in 2.5 above, which in 07/08 require £760,638 of match funding. This reduces to £380,000 in 08/09, the final year.
- 2.7 The figures set out above represent those grants provided directly to the LEA. In addition, in 2007/08 £4,949,104 will be provided for delegation to Community and Foundation schools as Devolved Formula Capital. This funding is allocated to each school on the basis of a lump sum of £18,500 and additional allocations of £63.00 per primary pupil (£189.00 for a statemented pupil) and £94.50 per secondary pupil (£189.00 for a statemented pupil). Special schools receive the relevant statemented pupil rates. Similar sums are also allocated to Aided Schools.
- 2.8 Further capital investment is being made via other initiatives – particularly
Children's Centre programme
Extended School Programme
City Learning Centre ongoing capital

Additional resources from the council's PPM programme will support the schools capital programme in respect of basic Health and Safety works, boiler renewal works, work to Poolwood and Willowtree Children's Homes and surplus place removal in the primary sector. In addition, as set out later in this report, schools outdoor facilities will benefit from investment from "ring fenced" funds from a proportion of the capital receipts resulting from the sale of surplus 'PFI' sites.

2.9 Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

Secondary

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a national key strategic programme initiated by the DfES to "create a new approach to capital investment for transforming secondary schools". A national body to deliver the programme, Partnerships for Schools, has been set up. The aim is to deliver a programme of investment in high

standard facilities for every secondary pupil within 10-15 years from 2005/6. The programme is based on local plans to “transform educational performance”.

Partnership for Schools will implement and deliver the main programme working with Local Education Partnerships (LEP) which will be “local delivery vehicles” to implement work in the LEA secondary schools. The LEP model has as its core a public private partnership (PPP) between the local authority responsible for a BSF area programme, a private sector partner selected in open competition under EC rules and the national body, Partnerships for Schools. The Local Education Partnership would have a 10 year agreement with the local authority, giving the LEP first right to deliver the projects identified in the strategic plan, subject to conditions. The emphasis is on the LEP working with the local authority in project development and delivery. It is envisaged that “based upon existing evidence on the value for money achieved through PFI schemes” that most large build schemes will continue to be undertaken through PFI with conventionally funded schemes for smaller scale works. There is strong emphasis on whole school ICT provision.

- 2.10 In Autumn 2003, LEAs were asked to indicate to the DfES whether they wished to be involved in Wave 1 of BSF (14 authorities were named as Wave 1 in February 2004) or to “register an interest” for future waves of BSF. Wirral, like most LEAs, registered an interest, having considered the DfES criteria and set these into the context of our PFI scheme, which is largely secondary focused. The register of interest to the DfES from the LEA listed all the non PFI secondary schools, including special and set out in simple % terms a broad indication of new build, major refurbishment and minor work required to bring each school up to full Suitability and Condition requirements. The DfES also required GCSE attainments and Free School Meals figures for each school, which the DfES spreadsheet then averaged. Given that the Wirral non PFI secondary schools list includes all types of schools, including grammar schools, any average of this group inevitably lowered any national prioritisation based on attainment and Free School Meals. A two page summary of contextual information was also submitted to the DfES (the maximum allowed).
- 2.11 In many ways the Wirral grouped schools PFI scheme was an unwitting forerunner of Building Schools for the Future, given the PFI element, the partnership element and the over riding focus on shortfalls and poor quality secondary accommodation. When the Capital Challenge investment at Mosslands and Oldershaw, the Targeted Capital investment currently on site at Wirral Grammar for Boys and West Kirby Grammar School for Girls and the recent and current major investments in the Catholic Voluntary Aided schools are added to the PFI and other investment through NOF, the City Learning Centres and the core local and national capital funding, Wirral has less of a high priority in the secondary Building Schools for the Future capital programme than other LEAs who do not have PFI schemes currently in place.
- 2.12 In December 2004, each LEA was given an indication of its position in the national Building Schools for the Future priority ranking. The DfES have set out LEAs in five parts, with waves in each i.e.

BSF, Part A	= waves 1 to 3 – already announced
Part B	= waves 4 to 6
Part C	= waves 7 to 9
Part D	= waves 10 to 12
Part E	= waves 13 to 15

Wirral has been prioritised in Part D i.e. waves 10 to 12. For this group the DfES current position is an “ambition that the LEA will re-build at least one secondary school by 2011 and join the full BSF programme by 2016”.

2.13 As previously reported to Executive Board on 12th July 2006 and Cabinet on 15th November 2006, Authorities like Wirral, in the later stages of BSF were invited to take part in a One School Pathfinder scheme to fully re-build one secondary school. The Cabinet approved the recommendation to re-build Woodchurch High School at its meeting on 15th November 2006. Design and programme development are underway, architects and relevant Technical Services staff have been appointed to the scheme and a successful Design Development day has been held at the school, involving pupils, staff, governors and other members of the school community. It is envisaged that the full Business Case will be submitted to the DfES in August/September 2007, followed by a tender and contractor selection process through to May 2008, with a start on site in June 2008. Completion is anticipated in August 2009, with subsequent demolition of the existing buildings and ground works.

2.14 Primary Building Schools for the Future

The DfES announced last year the intention to develop a Primary BSF programme, with the main programme starting in 2009/10 and running for around fifteen years. The aims are broadly similar to those of the secondary BSF programme, raising the quality of school provision and “rebuilding, remodelling or refurbishing at least half of all primary schools”. The intention is to fund all authorities on a formulaic basis, with the intention that this funding will be joined up with other local and national funding streams to fund capital investment works. No allocations have been made for the main programme, starting in 2009, but the consultation document indicated funding in the order of £2 – 3.5 million in 2009 and 2010. However the consultation document stresses that these illustrative figures should not be taken as allocations. Once the authority receives indicative allocations this programme will be the subject of a further report.

2.15 Falling Rolls

Planning for Secondary BSF, Primary BSF and the other capital works which are the subject of this report require consideration to be given to the falling roll both in primary and secondary age groups. The situation in the primary sector has been the subject of several reports to Cabinet and a programme of area reviews – currently in year three – is underway to review primary provision and bring forward proposals to achieve a better match between pupil numbers and capacity. Overall numbers in primary are projected as:

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
26030	25416	24844	24268	24011	23859	23827	23768	23682

Actuals are as at January Census. Figures exclude Foundation 1 (nursery) pupils.

Secondary numbers are projected as:

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
24605	24280	24008	23588	22992	22491	21974	21578	21151

Actuals are as at January Census. Figures do not include over 16's in schools without a sixth form, under 11's, or sixth form pupils aged 19 and above.

Alongside the well established primary review, a similar review process of the issues facing the secondary sector has begun, supported by a seconded Wirral Secondary Headteacher and this will be the subject of further reports. As part of the draft programme which forms the basis of this report for 07/08, it is proposed to remove some poor quality accommodation from two high school sites, with modest associated re-modelling of areas of main building. These works will remove capacity, related to future predicted numbers.

The removal of temporary and other lower quality accommodation has a number of other benefits in that it saves revenue running costs, removes future capital needs, enhances site security and improves the appearance of sites for users and neighbours.

2.16 School Capital 2007/08 Programme

The summary Schools Capital Programme was approved by Cabinet on 14.12.06. The proposed schemes are attached as Appendix 1. The diagram shows the elements which make up the schemes. A brief summary of each is also given in Appendix 1. Priorities are drawn from the Condition, Suitability and Sufficiency data held by the LEA as part of the Asset Management Plan process and which has been updated to DfES requirements and timescales. This information is set into the local knowledge and context of each school to "join up" funding streams where possible and to link work programmes with other initiatives and decisions where possible. It also takes account of the position in respect of pupil numbers outlined in 2.15 above.

2.17 Site disposal and re-use

As a result of Phase 1 of the Primary review the former Vyner Primary site is currently being converted for use by the Solar/Special School who will re-locate there later this year. This in turn will allow the Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit to re-locate to the Solar Building at the Solar Campus from the current, temporary location at Bebington Town Hall. The Key Stage 4 PRU is now also using a large, leased workshop unit in Bromborough which has been modified to meet the requirements of the PRU pupils and which replaced the former workshop units used by the PRU in Rock Ferry which have been demolished as part of area renewal. Also, as a result of Phase 1 of the Primary review, the site of the former Dell Primary School has been sold at auction for £2.6 million, having been declared surplus by this department.

As a result of Phase 2 of the Primary Review, Riverside Housing Association have been notified of the request from the council to vacate the Bromborough Pool Primary School site, with effect from August 31st 2007, which the council currently leases.

At the time of writing this report the proposals in respect of Phase 3 of the Primary Review are still under development.

The sale of sites related to the PFI scheme are now completed, a total of £7,053,100 having been realised. The council's Asset Manager has been notified of two further sites for which the department has no future planned use. These are i) the area in Ashville Road, bordering Birkenhead Park, previously used by Park High School. This is no longer used as the school has new indoor facilities as a result of the PFI scheme, has easy access to improved facilities in Birkenhead Park and has joint use of the new all weather pitch located at the Joseph Paxton Campus (former Park High Lower School) and ii) the area previously occupied by the now demolished Infant building of Lingham Primary School, bordering Town Meadow Road and Edgehill Road. The governors of Devonshire Park Primary School have also informed the LEA that they do not intend using the area of departmental land at Woodchurch Lane in the future.

No 7 Salisbury Road has also been vacated by the department and recently realised £310,000 at Auction.

Financial and Staffing Implications

- 3.0 There are no further financial implications arising directly from this report. Initial allocations to schemes are estimates subject to detailed design development. The allocations have been reflected in the council's main Capital Programme. Spend has been phased where appropriate over 2007-08 and 2008-09.
- 3.1 The lower value repair schemes will be carried out by staff in the Children and Young People's Department, with all other non PFI works being developed and managed by the Director of Technical Services. The volume of works and the overall value are likely to result in demands which exceed the staff resources currently available within the council.

Equal Opportunities Implications

- 4.0 All the projects listed in this report will, where appropriate to the scheme, take full account of the needs of all pupils and other building users and enhance facilities where possible as part of the works.

Human Rights Implications

- 5.0 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Local Agenda 21 Statement

- 6.0 A number of the projects listed will allow better use of existing premises, reduced energy costs and in some cases remove old, inefficient premises from use. All materials used will comply with the council's Agenda 21 principles.

Community Safety Implications

- 7.0 A number of the projects listed will enhance the safety of school premises for example with improved window and door closing mechanisms, enhanced lighting, removal of detached buildings and will make schools more welcoming to the communities they serve.

- 7.1 The proposed 'local' Seed Challenge scheme with a focus on school security will make a direct contribution to Community Safety.

Planning Implications

- 8.0 All necessary planning approvals will be obtained by the Director of Technical Services. Any proposed development will be assessed against national, regional and local planning policies including the Regional Spatial Strategy, Wirral Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Interim Policy for New Housing Development.
- 8.1 The Solar Campus contains Listed Buildings and any works (including those requiring Listed Building consent) at the site will have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Pensby School for Girls is designated as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt in Proposal GB9 of the adopted UDP, subject to Policy GB8, which places controls over new buildings to minimise their impact in the Green Belt.
- 8.2 The planning implications of the Building Schools for the future scheme at Woodchurch High School were addressed in reports to Cabinet on 15th November 2006 (Minute 151 refers) and 28th March 2007 (Minute 318 refers). Due to the scale of the proposals, there will be a need to consider whether they fall within Schedule 2 of the 1999 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA). Any development falling within Schedule 2 has to be screened by the Local Planning Authority to determine whether or not EIA is required.

Local Member Support Implications

- 9.0 The DfES and other funding set out in this report is applicable to all Community, Foundation and Aided schools.

Background Papers

- 10.0 DfES allocation letters to the LEA
- DfES guidance on Condition and Modernisation funding and Targeted Capital allocations.
 - LEA Asset Management Plan, LEA Statement of Priorities.
 - Working files held by the LEA including Condition surveys of premises and school Suitability assessments, Targeted Capital bids and land disposals.

Recommendations

That

- (1) the individual schemes in the 07/08 departmental Capital Programme be approved;
- (2) the various grant and local capital funding sources be noted, including the additional DfES Modernisation "draw down" in 07/08; and
- (3) individual schemes be the subject of further scheme and estimate reports where applicable.