

CABINET

DATE	17th February 2021
REPORT OF	Councillor Ian Lindley Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Skills
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Joanne Hewson Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for People, Health and Care acting as the Director of Children's Services
SUBJECT	Schools Capital Programme
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	GENERAL EXCEPTION Not included on the Forward Plan and to be considered under the General Exception rules of the Constitution

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Council has a statutory duty under the Education Act to ensure the provision of sufficient and suitable pupil places for its children. Also to ensure that any asset management priorities are identified and work planned towards ensuring that no maintained school site suffers a catastrophic building failure.

Pupil predictions have identified future shortfalls of pupil places to meet the needs of the immediate community and any new housing provision as identified within the Local Plan, which is prevalent to that immediate area of the town.

The identified rolling programmes of Schools' Capital Condition works and Basic Need (provision of new pupil places) will also contribute directly towards the Council's strategic priority of supporting the development of 'Stronger Communities' by providing a fit for purpose service model aligned to the use of physical property which continues to support communities across the Borough.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks authority to implement the recommendations of approving the rolling programme of capital works for the local authority's Schools Condition and Basic Need Government Grant allocations within the Council's school estate. There is also a Decarbonisation Salix Grant bidding opportunity captured within this report which if successful will further support an identified basic need scheme within the programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves and delegates to the Director for Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Skills to:

- a. Implement the rolling programme of identified highest priority works within the Schools Capital Maintenance Programme.
 - b. Implement the programme of new pupil places schemes to ensure that the local authority local authority has sufficient and suitable school places to meet its statutory responsibility in accordance with the Education Act.
 - c. Subject to governance, to further explore local authority the Decarbonisation Salix Grant bidding opportunity (which if successful will enhance and further support an identified Basic Need scheme at Beacon Academy to create an additional 100 secondary places within the Cleethorpes area in the first instance) to submit a bid and if successful settle any award documentation.
2. Authorises the Assistant Director Law, Governance and Assets to execute any documentation arising from the above recommendations.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The local authority has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient and suitable provision of school pupil places for its residents. The national increase in the birth rate has resulted in a significant increase in pupil numbers which are now starting to impact upon secondary provision. There are also still some remaining pressures within specific primary planning areas which continue to require new pupil places to meet the demand.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

The rising number of the pupil population and the Borough's future housing requirements and aspirations, as detailed within the Local Plan, have resulted in a need to ensure sufficiency of pupil place provision for current and future residents.

The local authority has a rolling five-year programme of identified priority condition schemes which is reviewed annually to ensure that the grant allocation is targeted against the highest priority schemes as identified in Asset Management plan (condition surveys).

Having addressed increases to primary provision in recent years the numbers are now beginning to impact upon the LA's secondary provision. In the first instance, the Cleethorpes area of the borough requires additional pupil places. Beacon Academy is identified as a potential site for growth, and the local authority is looking to increase the provision by a further 100 secondary pupil places in the first instance which is required to meet projected capacity over the next five years.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

By reacting proactively to the identified priorities captured within the School Asset Management Plans, the local authority is ensuring that no maintained site suffers a building failure resulting in unexpected site closure and disruption to the school term.

The local authority could find itself in a position of having insufficient and unsuitable pupil places, thus not meeting its statutory duty in accordance with the Education Act.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Other schools in the area of required growth have been consulted. However the immediate need is in the Cleethorpes area of the borough and all providers within this area of the town which in the first instance makes Beacon Academy the priority for expansion.

Ensuring sufficient pupil places across all of its school estate is a statute duty of local authorities, and Central Government provides all local authorities with an allocation based upon the annual School Capacity Return (SCAP) specifically for the purpose of supporting this need.

The good practice of robust asset management for school buildings ensures that buildings do not fail and have to close unexpectedly, and Central Government provides all local authorities with an allocation based upon its maintained schools pupil count specifically for this purpose.

An option to do nothing would result in a lack of pupil places and an inability to fulfil the statute duty and a risk of school closure if priority condition matters are not addressed.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

The positive benefit to the Council's reputation will be the continued availability of sufficient and suitable pupil places for the children of the borough within their own locality.

Through the local authority's proactive approach with regard to its rolling programme of schools' asset management works, none of its school sites has had to close due to a building failure.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The local authority currently receives two annual Government grant allocations, a Schools Condition allocation and a Basic Need allocation.

The Condition allocation for 2020/21 of £552k is based upon pupil numbers within the local authority's maintained school sites.

The Basic Need allocation for 2020/21 of £4,390,000 is derived from the annual

Schools Capacity return, which captures current pupil numbers across all of the local authority's school estate (except nursery schools, special schools and pupil referral units). The return also captures future predictions and new online housing developments.

There is currently no call on Council resources for the programmes identified within this report. However, should the Government grant allocation be of a sum which is insufficient to address the required infrastructure growth there will be a need to request additional sums to ensure provision of places.

The creation of additional new pupil places will result in additional teaching and education related positions within the borough. Whilst education condition and building schemes are in progress the local authority is contributing directly to the wider contractor workforce supporting jobs.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

All of the local authority's condition and basic need schemes incorporate wherever possible, energy efficient saving measures which are already captured within the Schools Asset Management Plans. Any new advancements in technology and materials are also considered, explored and implemented wherever possible.

Should the council be successful in its Salix bid all of the works captured within the bid are energy efficient saving.

7. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

The School Organisation Plan was presented to Scrutiny January 2019 and captured within the plan is the need to grow education sites in line with demand for new pupil places.

Condition priorities are determined in line with Schools Asset Management Plans with the priorities updated annually to form a five-year rolling programme.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

An amount of £875k in respect of Backlog Maintenance and £8.061m for Basic Need is built into the Council's capital programme for 2021-22. In respect of the Basic Need allocation of £8.061m this is a combination of previous years expect slippage of approximately £4m and an assumed allocation for 2021-22 of £4m. The 2021-22 allocation is still to be confirmed and should the amount be different the value of the scheme will be adjusted to reflect the actual allocation. The allocation of this funding to schemes will be based on prioritised need. In the event of essential work being required later in the year and insufficient funding being available then in the first instance a brought forward from the 2022-23 financial year allocation would be considered. In the event of corporate resources being required then a business case would need to be prepared and considered by the Business Development Group in line with the corporate process.

In the event of additional places being provided and filled then assuming this results in additional children on the school census this will result in an increased

Dedicated Schools Grant Schools Block allocation. This will not impact on the amount or call on Council core budgets.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The above report refers to a range of legal obligations on the local authority. Local authorities have a duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure that sufficient schools are available for their area to provide primary and secondary education.

The delegations sought underpin those obligations and are appropriate.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications contained within this report

11. WARD IMPLICATIONS

All wards are potentially affected as the school estate serves the entire borough.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

13. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Christine Scott, Advanced Assets Practitioner – Schools 01472 323152

COUNCILLOR IAN LINDLEY
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS