

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 05/06/2023

Subject: Schools Capital Programme 2023 - 2028

Report of: Councillor Alex Sanderson, Cabinet Member for Children and Education

Report author: Peter Haylock, Operational Director of Education and SEND

Responsible Director Jacqui McShannon – Strategic Director of Children’s Services

Summary

The council receives grant funding annually from the Department for Education for capital works in schools. These grant covers major programmes of work relating to the condition and maintenance of school building, material infrastructure upgrades and key reactive maintenance projects together with grant specifically for provision for High Needs learners.

Many of the schools in the borough are relatively old and therefore have significant condition issues. This report sets out a proposed programme of £17.941m over five years to significantly enhance the condition of school buildings, improve provision for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or in Alternative Provision and reduce carbon emissions.

Recommendations

1. To approve a schools capital budget of £17.941m over the five years 2023-2028 for the programme of works as set out in Appendix A.
2. To delegate the decision to commit expenditure within the schools’ capital programme to the Operational Director of Education and SEND, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Children’s Services, the Director of Finance and with the Cabinet Member for Children and Education.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	Creating safe, high performing learning environments for our children and young people.
Creating a compassionate council	Providing modern fit for purpose

	working environments.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Collaborative approach to programme working with headteachers and governing bodies (e.g. proposal for school led projects).
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Preventative maintenance to avoid reactive responses.
Taking pride in H&F	Learning spaces that facilitate the borough's children acquiring the skills necessary to compete successfully in the future knowledge economy.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Investment in measures to reduce carbon emissions. The programme will prioritise energy source and efficiency within project specifications, beginning to prepare the school stock for the net-zero by 2030 target.

Financial Implications

1. The sources of funding are the School Condition Allocation grant, carry forward balances from the former School Maintenance Grant, the Special Provision Capital Fund, and the High Needs Pupil Capital Allocation (HNCPA) totalling £17.941m.
2. The total confirmed capital funding is £17.941m, and the proposed grant allocations for each element of the capital programme are set out in Table 1.
3. The total budget is based on current available grant balances less projected spend in the 2022/23 financial year. The available balance includes a confirmed HNPCA grant balance of £3.024m to be paid to the Council in 2023/24
4. The split of funding to projects has been apportioned based on available balances of each grant and any conditions and purposes they have. Should additional funding be confirmed following successful bids for the programme, the funding will be noted in the quarterly Capital monitor for Cabinet approval to drawdown the additional funds to cover eligible spend.
5. It is planned to review and update this plan annually, forming a rolling five-year capital plan. The second to fifth years of the programme are therefore likely to be adjusted at these review points to reflect emerging school condition issues, strategic priorities and new capital grant allocations and will be updated in the annual capital programme reports to Cabinet.
6. Scheme budgets include allowance for project management and contingency.

Table 1: Proposed capital grant allocation to each element of the capital programme for each financial year 2023-28

Programme Area	Funding £	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Total £000
Suitability and Sufficiency	Planned Programme	600	618	637	656	675	3,186
	Urgent unplanned works/reactive maintenance	200	201	201	202	202	1,006
High Needs	SEND Sufficiency	87	0	0	0	0	87
High Needs	SEND Sufficiency	314	2,500	600	2,000	2,500	7,913
Climate and Ecological Emergency	Windows and decarbonisation	253	0	0	0	0	253
Climate and Ecological Emergency	Windows and decarbonisation	747	2,601	0	0	0	3,348
Project Management & Contingency	Project Management & Contingency	420	425	430	435	438	2,148
Total spend		2,621	6,345	1,868	3,293	3,814	17,941
Funded by:							17,941
School Condition Allocation Grant							6,097
School Maintenance Grant							3,348
Special Provision Capital Fund							87
High Needs Pupil Capital Allocation							8,409

Financial Implications by: Tony Burton, Head of Finance Children's Services and Education, 23rd March 2023

Reviewed by Sukvinder Kalsi, Director of Finance, 27 April 2023

Legal Implications

The Council has an obligation to ensure that the premises of schools which it maintains are maintained to prescribed standards in accordance with section 542 of the Education Act 1996 and regulations made under that section. The Schools Capital Programme contributes to the fulfilment by the Council of that obligation.

The works relating to this capital expenditure will be procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

Angela Hogan, Chief Solicitor (Contracts and Procurement) 24th January 2023

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

N/A

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals and Analysis of Options

Proposals

7. This report seeks approval for the proposed schools' maintenance and condition capital programme for 2023-2028. The programme proposes investment in the school estate of up to £17.941m over the five years of this plan.
8. The report proposes that Cabinet delegates the decision to commit expenditure within the schools' capital programme to the Operation Director of Education and SEND, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Children's Services, the Director of Finance and with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
9. The schools' capital plan includes a range of national and local priorities.
10. The 2022 Special Educational Needs (SEND) and AP [Green Paper](#) sets out national priorities for development of SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) including a proposal to invest £2.6 billion nationally, over three years in delivering new SEND and AP provision and improving existing facilities. This national focus is timely and complements a strong local focus on High Needs provision including the SEN Sufficiency Review.
11. The SEN Sufficiency Review is expected to recommend a significant enhancement in provision for SEN learners through:

- Expansion of places in resource units within mainstream settings, which evidence shows are both educationally effective and cost effective, including provision for Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties, which collectively make up around two thirds of all Education Health and Care Plans in H&F schools.
- Expansion of provision for learners with a primary need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, which has seen a rising trend in recent years as a proportion of all EHCPs.
- Investment in mainstream settings to enhance accessibility and the provision of flexible use spaces to support inclusion within mainstream settings
- Continued investment in Special Schools and AP settings to maintain and enhance the quality of provision.

12. A SEND and AP capital plan will be required to deliver the SEND sufficiency strategy. This plan therefore sets out both a resource envelope and approach to developing and delivering specific proposals and schemes within a SEND and AP capital plan as one of the main strands within the 2023-28 schools' capital plan (appendix 1.). The phasing of the costs between years is therefore an estimate and is likely to be revised in the annual review of this plan.

13. The Council's commitment to achieving net zero by 2030 is a key driver in this strategy. Achieving net zero across the school estate will require significant capital investment. The plan includes:

- Working closely as part of the corporate approach to developing the necessary infrastructure for both bid development and delivery, including establishing framework suppliers for delivery of works within funding timescale requirements.
- Investment in building fabric to improve insulation, both to directly reduce carbon emissions and also to enable alternative technologies such as air sourced heat pumps to operate effectively. The windows programme is a significant part of this programme of work
- Investment in replacing fossil fuel-based energy sources with renewable energy, including replacing gas boilers with air-sourced heat pumps and potentially other sources of energy where practical. This strategy includes support for bid development, in collaboration with colleagues corporately, to secure additional external funding to deliver decarbonisation.
- Working corporately and with schools on wider aspects of addressing the climate and ecological emergency including air quality and transport informed by air quality surveys, biodiversity on school sites and supporting schools to reduce their wider carbon footprint (e.g. consumables).

14. Continue co-production and joint planning with schools, including via new condition surveys of all LA maintained schools to inform the planned maintenance programme

15. Similarly, the recommendations of the SEN Sufficiency Review are being widely consulted on and will lead to work with schools to seek expressions of interest in accommodating new facilities and other improvements.
16. As outlined above, this plan will lead to an updated planned programme of works for each LA maintained school. This will prioritise works that support:
- Business continuity (issues that could impact on the school's ability to operate).
 - Suitability (the extent to which building condition impacts on the suitability of the buildings for education).
 - Sufficiency (the extent to which premises provide sufficient but not excessive capacity). This could include works to re-purpose space to assist financial viability of schools, for example as part of delivering the recommendations of the SEND Sufficiency Review.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals and Analysis of Options

Option 1 – Do nothing

6. This option is not recommended. Our school estate features several prefabricated buildings built after the second world war. These buildings are past their intended life span and make it harder for our schools to deliver an excellent education. Without the maintenance and capital programmes children will miss the opportunity to be educated in modern, fit-for-purpose schools. Schools will also experience greater financial pressures with money diverted from teaching resources into maintaining and repairing buildings.

Option 2 – Modify the capital plan

7. This option is not recommended. The planned maintenance programme is based on a detailed evaluation of local and national priorities. Significant increases in the programme would raise issues of deliverability and sustainability longer term, of what is already a challenging programme, whilst significant reductions would reduce the benefit to schools.

Option 3 – Progress with the proposed schools' capital plan

8. This option is recommended. There is a clear requirement to maintain our school estate to ensure our children are educated in safe, modern environments. The plan has a strong focus on delivering local and national priorities including improving provision for High Needs learners and addressing the climate and ecological emergency. Maintaining the estate will also help mitigate against unexpected expenditure across the portfolio whilst ensuring the buildings remain safe and compliant for our residents to be educated in.

Reasons for Decision

9. The plan enables the Council to renew and maintain school buildings and help improve children's educational outcomes by utilising the grant funding received from the Department for Education for the school condition and maintenance programme.
10. The decisions enable the programme of works to anchor future collaboration between the Council and the wider school community.
11. A prioritised investment programme is required to enable planning and delivery of a structured capital programme over the medium-term, including investment in high needs provision and in addressing the climate and ecological emergency. Future years' School Condition Allocation grants are yet to be confirmed.

Equality Implications

- 12 The programme of works will benefit all pupils and students in schools where works are undertaken, selection of which will be based on school condition issues. As a result, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Risk Management Implications

- 13 Investment is necessary to keep school buildings safe and in good working order by tackling:
 - Health and safety issues, reducing the potential of incidents that may lead to injury or health conditions and possible insurance claims that could result as a consequence of an incident occurring. This contributes to keeping costs low and to maintaining our duty of care at school premises.
 - Poor building condition, reducing potential interruption to classes and education through well maintained buildings and providing positive assurance to the council's insurers of well-maintained premises. Insurers have demonstrated that well maintained properties are less prone to vandalism and fire risks. A well-maintained premise adds value to the local area and presents an attractive and welcoming site for local residents and communities who may use the facilities. This also contributes to being Ruthlessly Financially Efficient through a programme that tackles issues early, preventing the possibility of additional costs of smaller scale fixes or repairs.
 - building compliance, ensuring that the premises remains in accordance with appropriate laws and regulations.
 - energy efficiency, contributing to keeping energy costs and consumption low benefitting the climate and responding to the ecological emergency.

Project officers and schools will need to liaise with the insurance service prior to commence of works to ensure adequate cover is put in place to insure the works in progress.

Implications verified by: Ray Chitty, Head of Insurance Service, 07739315565

Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications

14. The service is working as part of a corporate project with the climate unit to include selected schools in the GLA retrofit accelerator programme and bids for addition funding to accelerate decarbonisation in schools. The programme of works proposed includes refurbishment works to decant locations for schools in the Community Schools Programme, which includes a significant investment reducing the carbon footprint of the new school builds. The upgrading of windows at several schools will also contribute towards decarbonisation.

Implications verified by: Hinesh Mehta, Strategic Lead – Climate Emergency, tel 07960 470125

Consultation

- 15 School planned programmes are developed in consultation with individual schools. The recommendations of the SEN Sufficiency Review which informs the High Needs capital programme within this plan have been extensively consulted on. The Windows programme has a steering group including school representatives and a similar steering group is proposed for the High Needs programme in this plan.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A - Schools Capital Action Plan

Appendix A

Schools Capital Action Plan

Programme	Strand	Objective	By when	note	
Suitability and Sufficiency	Planned Programme	Agree updated planned works with LA maintained schools	October 2023	Link Surveyors liaise with headteachers and School Business Managers	
		Implement 2023-24 planned programme at all LA maintained schools	March 2024		
		Condition surveys of all LA maintained schools	August 2023	Utilise CDC2 surveys where appropriate	
		Review planned programme annually with schools for 2024-28	March 2024 and annually	Link Surveyors liaise with headteachers and School Business Managers	
		Implement 2024-28 planned programme at all LA maintained schools	March 2028	Subject to regular review.	
	Community Schools programme		Refurbishment of: Lena Gardens Mund St sites	July 2024	Subject to separate budget approval
			Support decant of Flora Gardens Avonmore	August 2024	ditto
High Need	SEND Capital Programme	Establish High Needs Capital Strategy Steering Group	April 2023		
		Develop specific proposals to address recommendations of SEN Sufficiency Review	May 2023		
		Seek expressions of interest from schools for hosting specific proposals	July 2023		
		Accessibility works included in school planned programmes	October 2023 review as part of planned programme		
		SEND Capital Phase 1	August 2025	Design and implement	

		SEND Capital Phase 2	March 2028	Design and implentt
Climate & Ecological Emergency	Windows programme	Implementation of specific proposals	Summer 2024 to summer 2027	Fulham Bilingual - 2023 - 24 Kenmont, Langford and Melcombe 2024-7 (subject to budget availability) William Morris in DfE SRB programme
	Decarbonisation projects	Seek opportunities for additional capital funding	ongoing	
		Implement successful bids as achieved	ongoing	