

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 27 June 2013

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Children and Enterprise

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People and Families

**SUBJECT:** Basic Needs Capital Funding

**WARD(S):** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report outlines the methodology used to prioritise the schools for Basic Need funding for 2013/14 & 2014/15. It seeks approval of Executive Board to the prioritisation process for the allocation of Basic Need Capital for 2013/14 & 2014/15.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board**

- 1) **agree the prioritisation process outlined within the report;**
- 2) **agree that a capital project can be developed to address a Basic Need issue at Beechwood Primary School; and**
- 3) **agree that a further report be submitted to Executive Board detailing how the balance of the Basic Need funding for 2013/14 & 2014/15 will be allocated.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Basic Need funding is allocated to local authorities in recognition of the significant pressures local authorities are facing to provide additional school places. In March 2013 the Department for Education announced the two year Basic Need funding for Halton 2013/15 would be £1,203,445.

## **4.0 Identification of Basic Need Issues**

4.1 The model Halton used to allocate the 2011/12 and 2012/13 Basic Need funding, has been applied again for 2013/14 & 2014/15. This model has been developed in order to objectively prioritise schools identifying those with the strongest case for Basic Need support. The four key elements of this model are detailed below:

- The total net capacity for each school has been considered in relation to the current total pupil numbers for each school;
- The future capacity has been projected to identify the number of places likely to be required for each school; and

- Popular schools indicated by parental preference during the admissions process.
- Priority has been given to schools with temporary mobile classrooms – the highest score has been given to schools with long term use of temporary classrooms.

4.2 The list below shows the schools with the highest priority sorted into geographical area (See Appendix 1 for geographical areas).

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School	Widnes East
Ashley School	Widnes West
Beechwood Primary School	Runcorn East
St Clement's Catholic Primary School	Runcorn West
Castle View Primary School	Runcorn West

#### 4.3 **Widnes East**

In Widnes East, one school appears in the priority list, this school is:

- St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

##### 4.3.1 St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

This school is currently operating over capacity, and the lower 3 year groups are operating over the Planned Admission Number (PAN).

##### 4.3.2 Recommendation for Widnes East

The data indicates that there is not a Basic Need issue in Widnes East. St Bede's Infant and Junior schools have been expanded for 2013 as has Lunts Heath Primary School, it is envisaged that the Basic Need issue in this area of Halton will be alleviated from Sept 2013.

Although the voluntary aided schools are close to capacity there is still surplus capacity overall.

#### 4.4 **Widnes West**

In Widnes West, one school appears in the priority list, this school is:

- Ashley School

##### 4.4.1 Ashley School

From September 2013 Ashley school will be re-designated as a school for pupils with complex social communication needs and autism, with a intake for 11-16 year olds of 70, and new post 16 provision of 42. As the capacity of the building is 120 pupils there is no need to increase the size of the building other than to provide the specialist facilities for post sixteen. Currently building work to provide the post 16 facilities is at design stage with a start on site anticipated in the autumn. Monitoring of pupil numbers will continue as the re-designated school becomes established. £500,000 Basic Need capital funding has already been allocated to this project (as

approved by Executive Board 18 October 2012 and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2013) from the 12/13 allocation.

#### 4.4.2 Recommendations for Widnes West

That with the exception of Ashley School, which has a programme of works on going, the data indicates that there is not a Basic Need issue in Widnes West and therefore no further school require expansion.

#### 4.5 Runcorn East

In Runcorn East, one school appears in the priority list, this is:

- Beechwood Primary School

##### 4.5.1 Beechwood Primary School

The school is currently operating above capacity overall with four year groups oversubscribed.

The accommodation was rationalised in 2000 to reduce the admission number from 41 to 15, as the school was suffering from surplus capacity. A successful pre-school now accommodates part of the school which was declared surplus and a link club accommodates a double mobile classroom that was previously used. A single mobile classroom, previously declared surplus, was brought back into use for a temporary period whilst the school was over capacity to help address the shortage of classroom space. It is a priority for Halton to replace unsuitable temporary mobile classrooms so that pupils and staff are not disadvantaged by being separate from the main school and having inadequate learning environments which suffer from extreme weather conditions.

The school has expressed an interest in increasing their Planned Admission Number from 15 to 20 pupils and overall capacity from 105 pupils to 140 pupils due to the level of parental preference.

##### 4.5.2 Recommendation for Runcorn East

It is recommended that £100,000 is allocated for the expansion of Beechwood Primary School. A feasibility study will be required to investigate the building options available to accommodate an increased Planned Admission Number from 15 to 20.

#### 4.6 Runcorn West

In Runcorn West, two schools appeared in the priority list, they are:

- St Clement's Catholic Primary School
- Castleview School

##### 4.6.1 St. Clement's Catholic Primary School

This school is operating at capacity for 5 year groups, but is not above capacity overall. There are also available places in surrounding Catholic Schools.

#### 4.6.2 Castleview Primary School

This school is operating at capacity for 5 year groups, but is not above capacity overall.

#### 4.6.3 Recommendation for Runcorn West

Basic Need 11/12 capital funding is currently being used to expand Weston Primary School to address pupil place issues in this area, once complete the Basic Need pressure should be alleviated.

### 4.7 **Birth Data analysis**

4.7.1 Birth data for Runcorn and Widnes has also been analysed for 2014 and 2015 and compared against the Pupil Number Capacity. The table below shows that the forecast data indicates that there is sufficient capacity for pupils entering the schools in Runcorn and Widnes at Reception age.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Birth Data 2014</b>	<b>Birth Data 2015</b>
Runcorn	864	779	691
Widnes	761	706	625
<b>Total</b>	<b>1625</b>	<b>1485</b>	<b>1316</b>

4.8 This is further evidence that Halton will not have a Basic Need issue going forward for the next 2 years.

4.9 The school admissions team have been fully consulted during this process and agree with the findings.

4.10 Each Local Authority has the responsibility for ensuring sufficient school places in its area and is required to consider all sectors of schools in prioritising this funding with all taxpayer funded schools being eligible for consideration including voluntary aided schools, academies and Free Schools. All Responsible Bodies of these groups, members of the Local Education Investment Group, were consulted during May 2013 with respect to their agreement that, with the exception of Beechwood Primary, in Halton Borough Council there are no Basic Need issues to be addressed in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

4.11 The School Forum was also consulted with on the 18th June, to gain their approval to proceed with the works to expand Beechwood Primary and that no other Basic Need issues to be addressed in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

#### 4.12 **Balance of Basic Need Funding 2013-15**

It is proposed to use the balance of Basic Need funding to address modernisation and suitability issues. A further report will be submitted to Executive Board later in the year detailing proposed use of this funding.

### 5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The proposed project at Beechwood Primary School will allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the learning environment in schools and provide sufficient accommodation for pupil numbers.
- 5.2 The proposal to spend the balance of Basic Need funding to address suitability issues, will have a positive impact on the teaching and learning. It will enhance the environment for both pupils and staff and as a result should have a positive impact of attainment.

## **6.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The costs of any capital works to address basic need issues in the borough in 2013-15 cannot exceed the grant funding of £1,203,445 plus any school contribution. Although schools prioritised for capital development will be asked to make a contribution towards the project, the sum each school can contribute is likely to be very limited as their devolved capital allocation has been reduced by the DfE over recent years.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **7.1 Children and Young People in Halton.**

The proposed project at Beechwood Primary School will address pupil place and suitability issues within the school building and will improve the learning environment for children and young people.

### **7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The proposed project at Beechwood Primary School will improve the learning environment for children and young people.

### **7.3 A Healthy Halton**

N/A

### **7.4 A Safer Halton**

N/A

### **7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

The capital programme will ensure that there are sufficient pupil places across the authority.

## **8.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 8.1 There are no risks associated with the recommendations put forward by this paper.

## **9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 9.1 Consideration to access issues is given in all building projects. The capacity of schools to meet the needs of children with more complex needs and disabilities will be developed further through building works at schools.

## **10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

10.1 To deliver and implement the Basic Need Capital programme.

### **11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

11.1 Not applicable.

### **12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

12.1 Works at Beechwood Primary to commence as soon as possible, in order for the school to increase their planned admission number.

### **13.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Schools Capital Announcement – DfE 01/03/2013	Transforming Children’s Environments – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor – Rutland House, Runcorn	Phil Dove
Prioritisation Model based on January 13 Census and 2013/14 admission figures	Transforming Children’s Environments – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor – Rutland House, Runcorn	Catriona Gallimore