

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 20th January 2022

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – People

PORTFOLIO: Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Capital Programme – 2022/23

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides a summary of the capital funding received by the Council from central government to support capital works and programmes within schools for the 2022/23 financial year.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) The position regarding capital funding from the Department for Education for 2022/23 is noted;
- ii) The proposals to be funded from School Condition Capital Allocation are approved;
- iii) The capital allocations are put forward for inclusion in the Budget report to full Council;
- iv) The proposal to create additional teaching space at Cavendish School is approved;
- v) The proposal to remodel two junior classrooms to create more suitable teaching spaces at Fairfield Primary School is approved.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Department for Education has not yet announced the Capital Grant Allocation for 2022/23, but given the timescales for some of the proposed capital projects, there is a requirement to present this report. The allocation stated in this report is based on the 2021/22 allocation which was £903,847. We are currently unsure if the Department for Education will adopt the same methodology as previous years, therefore for the purpose of planning the 2022/23 capital programme, the 2021/22 allocation figure has been used. In the event that the 2022/23 allocation is reduced, or in the event that a school converts to academy status which impacts on funding received by the Council, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly.

- 3.2 Detailed in the table below is the indicative funding available to support capital projects across the school estate:

| GOVERNMENT FUNDING | |
|--|----------|
| School Condition Allocation – Local Authority maintained schools i.e. community and voluntary controlled schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE BASED ON 2021/22) | £903,847 |
| Allocated to fund condition and suitability projects at Local Authority maintained schools. | |
| High Needs Provision Capital | £500,000 |
| Allocated to support the provision of new places or improve existing provision for pupils and students with high needs. | |
| Basic Need Capital Grant - balance as at November 2021 | £578,008 |
| Allocated to support the provision of sufficient pupil places within the Local Authority. | |

4.0 SCHOOL CONDITION ALLOCATION

- 4.1 The table below details how the School Condition Allocation will be utilised.

| Description | Estimated costs | Description |
|--|-----------------|---|
| Asset Management - Computer Aided Design (CAD) Plans | £10,000 | CAD plans of school buildings are updated where improvement works/changes to accommodation have been carried out. |
| Asbestos Management | £12,000 | Annual update of asbestos surveys and undertaking of resulting remedial works. |
| Accessibility projects | £50,000 | Funding that schools can apply for to resolve accessibility issues within school buildings. |
| Contingency | £91,847 | Used for emergency and health and safety works that arise during the year. |
| Capital Repairs | £740,000 | A rolling programme of capital works undertaken at community and voluntary controlled schools, determined by the Local Authority, based upon a priority of need in discussion with schools and colleagues in Property Services. |
| Total | £903,847 | |

For any works undertaken within the Capital Repairs Programme, schools are normally required to make a contribution from their own Devolved Formula Capital allocation.

5.0 HIGH NEEDS PROVISION CAPITAL

- 5.1 On the 9th April 2021 the Department for Education announced that Halton would receive £500,000 High Needs Provision Capital. This funding is to support the provision of new places or improve existing provision for pupils and students with high needs.
- 5.2 To ease existing capacity issues at Cavendish School, and support ongoing demand for an increase in places, the school requires a two classroom extension. This will provide a more suitable learning environment and will accommodate the growing numbers of pupils requiring the type of education that Cavendish School offers, rather than attending an out of borough school, which puts additional pressure on the high needs budget.
- 5.3 The works will be funded from within the High Needs Provision Capital allocation. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken to establish the most appropriate position for the classrooms as space on-site is limited.
- 5.4 If the Executive Board agrees to the proposed works at Cavendish School, once the feasibility study is complete planning permission will then be sought.

6.0 BASIC NEED CAPITAL FUNDING

- 6.1 The Local Authority receives Basic Need funding from the Department for Education to assist in pupil place planning and ensure that there are sufficient pupil places. As there remains an overall surplus capacity, within agreed tolerance levels, in both the primary and secondary sector in Halton in terms of school places, the Council only receives minimal Basic Need Funding. For 2022/23 the Council will receive £260,584. Therefore, the total funding available for 2022/23 is £578,008 (£317,424 carry forward from previous years plus £260,584 2022/23 allocation). Following a recent analysis of forecast and school capacity data, there is not an immediate pupil place Basic Need issue to address, and it is proposed to use some of the Basic Need capital funding at Fairfield Primary School.
- 6.2 Fairfield Primary School require two classrooms to be remodelled to create more suitable teaching spaces for the number of pupils the school now has on roll, following the increase in the school's Planned Admission Number from 80 to 90 in September 2017 and impact upon space that has had.
- 6.3 A feasibility study is currently being undertaken to ascertain the best way to create the teaching space, taking into account the outside space, timescales and logistics, and the project would be funded from within Basic Need.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The programme of works will allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the school environment in mainstream provision through capital projects, and to ensure that the Council can continue to offer in-borough special educational needs provision wherever possible, helping to reduce expensive out-borough placement and transport costs.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 In April 2021 the Department for Education announced that the 2021/22 School Condition Allocation for Halton was £903,847 which was the same as 2020/21. The 2022/23 allocation has not yet been announced. For the purpose of planning the capital programme for 2022/23, the 2021/22 allocation figure has been used. In the event that the allocation is reduced, or should further schools convert to academy status which will also reduce the amount of funding the Local Authority receives, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly.
- 8.2 The cost of the building works at Cavendish School will be funded through the High Needs Provision Capital.
- 8.3 The cost of the remodelling works at Fairfield Primary School will be funded through the Basic Need Capital Grant.

9.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Capital Repairs Programme will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by helping to produce more energy efficient buildings.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

10.1 Children and Young People in Halton.

The Capital Programme will address condition and suitability issues within school buildings and will continue to help improve the learning environment for children and young people, and support continuing demand for in-borough special educational needs provision, allowing Halton resident pupils to remain in-borough where possible.

10.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

As above.

10.3 A Healthy Halton

None identified.

10.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

10.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

11.0 RISK ANALYSIS

11.1 Capital Repairs

It is current practice for schools to contribute towards the cost of the Capital Repairs Programme. Consultation with schools on their contribution to any proposed works will take place following full Council's consideration of the budget report in March 2022. If schools cannot or are not willing to contribute, any proposed projects will not be carried out in 2022/23, and will be deferred for future years.

12.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 12.1 The Accessibility funding provides capital funding to improve the accessibility of mainstream and special schools for pupils with disabilities and the wider community. Consideration to access issues is given in all building projects.
- 12.2 The Cavendish School project will allow pupils with cognition and learning difficulties and/or communication and interaction difficulties, to be educated within their own local community rather than attending an out of borough provision.

13.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

- 13.1 To deliver and implement the capital programmes.

14.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 14.1 None

15.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

- 15.1 Capital Programmes for 2022/23 to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2022.
- 15.2 Cavendish School two classroom extension to be available from September 2022.
- 15.3 Fairfield Primary School remodelling to be available for September 2022

16.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

| Document | Place of Inspection | Contact Officer |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Schools Capital Funding Allocations 2021/22 Department for Education 28/04/21 | People Directorate | Catriona Gallimore |
| High Needs Provision Allocation 2021/22 Department for Education 09/04/21 | People Directorate | Catriona Gallimore |
| Basic Need Capital Allocation announcement for school places in 2022/23. Department for Education 25/02/21 | People Directorate | Catriona Gallimore |