

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET CAPITAL ASSETS COMMITTEE

19 April 2011

Subject: Proposed Revisions to Capital Programme

Cabinet Member: Councillor Fleur de Rhe-Philipe, Finance, Performance and Risks

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary

The report provides details of the Department for Education schools capital allocations to Wiltshire, the implications for the Council's Capital Programme and the intended use of the funds.

Proposals

- (a) that Members note the impact and intended purposes of 2011/12 DfE schools capital allocations
- (b) that a further report on future years is brought to Cabinet Capital Assets Committee once the outcome of the national capital review is known.

Reason for Proposal

Cabinet recently approved 2011/12 capital allocations for schools and this paper further informs Members about these allocations.

Stephanie Denovan
Service Director, Schools and Learning

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Key Decision: No

1. Current Position

1.1 The Capital Programme for 2010/11 included the following allocations:

Additional Accommodation	4,029,000	Supported borrowing
Access and Inclusion	855,000	Supported borrowing
Primary Capital Programme	6,343,000	Grant
New Deal for Schools	4,446,000	Grant
	462,000	Supported Borrowing
Targeted Capital 14-19/SEN	6,000,000	Grant

2. DfE Announcement of Allocations to Wiltshire

2.1 In late December 2010 DfE announced the following allocations to Wiltshire for 2011/12:

Additional Accommodation	8,472,070	Grant
New Deal for Schools (NDS)	7,992,771	Grant
Primary Capital Programme	0	
Access and Inclusion	0	
Targeted Capital	0	

and indicated that these allocations are for:

- Additional Accommodation – basic need funding to provide school places where needed in all categories of taxpayer funded schools. All taxpayer funded schools include voluntary aided schools, open academies, and new Free Schools where they address basic need pressures.
- New Deal for Schools – for the capital maintenance of buildings and equipment in community, voluntary controlled and foundation schools, and children’s centres.

2.2 DfE also announced that allocations for 2012 until 2015 will be informed by the outcome of the national capital review, which will be published in early 2011.

3. Implications of DfE Allocations

3.1 The financial implications of the DfE confirmed allocations are beneficial to the Council as both categories are grant and so there will be no need to bear the costs of supported borrowing. Cabinet was advised of this at their meeting of 8th February and confirmed the Additional Accommodation and NDS allocations in the current capital programme.

3.2 The DfE allocations are based on data supplied to them by the Council in recent years and reflect the following:

Additional Accommodation – future pupil number forecasts which, in turn, are informed by current pupil numbers, health data on 0-4 year olds, and future housing forecasts. There will be significant increases in pupil numbers in many areas in the coming years, and some areas are already coming under pressure for pupil places.

New Deal for Schools – condition and suitability data drawn from school surveys which reflect that:

- there is a Buildings Maintenance backlog in Wiltshire schools of over £60 million, and
- there are over 300 ‘temporary’ classrooms in Wiltshire schools that will cost over £50 million to replace with permanent buildings. Some of these buildings are over 40 years old.

The DfE allocations are, therefore, the DfE’s estimates of how much the Council should be spending to address these issues.

Access and Inclusion – 1.1 above identified that the DfE have discontinued a separate funding stream for this category. Previous allocations had been used to improve access to schools for disabled pupils through a twin track approach:

- (i) strategic - the development of at least one fully accessible primary school in each community area, and one fully accessible secondary

- school in each former district area to minimise the distance that pupils have to travel
- (ii) pupil specific - the provision of adaptations/equipment for individual pupils at their preferred schools

Investments in recent years will meet the strategic intention but there will be an ongoing need for provision for individual pupils and a contingency of £100,000 has been identified from existing budgets for such purposes. Further consideration to this issue will be given once the national capital review has been completed.

3.4 DfE have made no allocation for the Primary Capital Programme. This had been initiated as a 15 – 20 year programme for rebuilding/refurbishing existing primary schools and grant has been received and committed for the last two years. Our ability to maintain elements of this programme will be reviewed once the national capital review has been completed and future years DfE allocations confirmed. A further report on this will be brought to CCAC in due course.

3.5 The implications of not confirming these DfE allocations for their intended purpose in the Capital Programme would have been:

- Additional Accommodation – that the Council would, over the coming years, not have enough school places in some areas and be in breach of its statutory duty. Such a position would also be very damaging to community cohesion as an essential element of community infrastructure, i.e. local school places, would be missing.

There are immediate pupil number pressures in Malmesbury, East Trowbridge, the Corsham area, Downton and Shrewton. The DfE allocation and appropriate S106 funds will enable us to address these immediately.

Other priorities will be closely linked to future housing completions. The timings of these are not yet certain and so future priorities cannot currently be confirmed. Schemes such as Hampton Park (Salisbury) and Ridgeway Farm (W Swindon) are likely to need considerable investment from the Council. It is essential to have these funds available for immediate access once housing schemes start.

The issue of Free Schools is an emerging one nationally and whilst there are no known current plans for Free Schools in the County proposals may emerge at any time. Contingency provision therefore needs to be made from the current allocation.

- New Deal for Schools – the current context detailed in 3.2 above shows that there is an urgent need to invest in improving our school buildings so that pupils, staff and communities have improved facilities. Schools would view any reduction in expenditure as detrimental, especially as

Devolved Formula Capital to schools, which funds their own maintenance works, has been reduced by 60%-80%. The principles for prioritising investment of NDS have been agreed with headteacher representatives and the intended use is:

- £4.6 million will be spent on school maintenance issues. Priorities have been identified by DOR property maintenance team and schemes included are shown at Annex A
- £3.3 million will be spent on rebuilding “temporary” buildings. Reviews have prioritised the replacement of temporary buildings at Warminster Sambourne Church of England (VC) Primary School and St Johns C of E Primary, Warminster, and feasibility studies have been commissioned for these projects. Other projects are currently being identified.

4. Environmental Impact of the Proposal

4.1 All Additional Accommodation investment will be for new buildings that meet the Council’s sustainability agenda. NDS investment to improve (e.g. new boiler, new roof) or replace (old temporary buildings) will also improve the sustainability of schools buildings and have a positive environmental impact.

5. Equality and Diversity Impact of the Proposal

5.1 Currently many pupils are being educated in poor quality buildings and there is a clear link between the quality of school buildings, pupils and staff well being and performance. Improvements to the current building stock will therefore improve equality of provision.

The provision of additional school places will increase choice and diversity for Wiltshire parents.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 These have been detailed in the report in relation to the Council’s statutory obligation.

7. Risk Assessment

7.1 Ongoing review of future pupil numbers minimises the risk of not having enough school places. Condition related data is monitored to prioritise maintenance investment in schools with the greatest need.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 These have been examined and detailed above.

9. Proposals

(a) that Members note the impact and intended purposes of 2011/12 DfE schools capital allocations

(b) that a further report on future years is brought to Cabinet Capital Assets Committee once the outcome of the national capital review is known.

10. Reason for Proposal

Cabinet recently approved 2011/12 capital allocations for schools and this paper further informs Members about these allocations

Stephanie Denovan
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5 April 2011

Background Papers

None

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices

Appendix I: 2011 -12 Planned Maintenance Works to be Funded by New Deal for Schools