

Purpose of Report

1. To agree the Schools Capital Programme for 2025/26 – 2030/31. This paper addresses investment to improve the condition of maintained schools and expansion of mainstream schools. Investment in special school places and resource bases is not included in this paper.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places to meet the demand arising across Wiltshire, whether from demographic or population change, strategic housing development growth or military moves. The Council also has responsibilities for the effective management and maintenance of the Councils schools' estate (community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools only). Schools need to be fit for purpose and safe for all site users.

Background

3. The Council receives annual capital funding allocations from the Department for Education (DfE) for basic need (new places) and condition (school capital maintenance). Capital maintenance relates to urgent and essential structural works e.g. roofs, walling, windows, drainage etc in addition to plant (electrical and mechanical works (heating/lighting etc)). All other day to day maintenance works and low level cost works are the schools' responsibility funded from their delegated or devolved funds.
4. It should be noted that the council has not yet received confirmation of DfE maintenance funding for 2025/26 onwards. We are therefore assuming that funding for 2025/26 onwards will be consistent with this years' allocation.
5. The figures shown in Table 1 below, include the estimated DfE allocations and slippage from previous years on current schemes. Since 2020/21 the Council has been supplementing the DfE grant for school maintenance, with this increasing to £3m per annum for 2024/25 to 2027/28. This additional funding is essential to stem the decline of the school building stock and enable some of the historical backlog of works to be addressed.
6. Full Council in Feb 2020 also approved £0.100m a year over the next ten years to support the admission of pupils with disabilities to schools. This will fund ramps, handrails, accessible toilets and similar works to mainstream schools to support inclusion.

Table 1 – Capital Funding for Schools (£m)

Description	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m	2030/31 £m	Total £m
Access and Inclusion	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.500
Maintenance and Modernisation	8.105	10.255	8.460	5.050	2.000	2.000	35.870
Basic Need	10.604	8.350	6.350	0.550	0.400	0.000	26.254
TOTAL	18.809	18.705	14.910	5.700	2.500	2.000	62.624

7. The Council also secures wherever possible, S106 developer contributions and will seek Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) planning obligations for essential school infrastructure in areas of new housing development which are usually project or school specific. These are only included in the figures above where projects using Section 106 or CIL allocations are already approved and underway.

Main Considerations for the Council

Additional Pupil Places

8. Demand for school places is influenced by a number of factors including changes in the birth rate, migration (inward and outward), housing development, the economic situation, parental preference etc and in Wiltshire specifically, military moves have a significant impact.
9. Two projects to provide additional school places have completed during 2024/25 at Porton St Nicholas Primary School and St Peter's Primary CE Primary Academy in Salisbury. The significant expansion of Kingdown School is due to start on site early in 2025. The expansion of Abbeyfield School is awaiting planning consent and design work is commencing on the expansion of Sarum Academy. All of these projects have been approved by Cabinet in previous years. There are no new expansion projects requiring approval at this time.

Replacement of poor quality accommodation

10. The Strategic Assets and Facilities Management Service identified that the lower school block at Stonehenge school required complete replacement. The building was end of life, in very poor condition and beyond economical repair. Construction on the replacement block completed for September 2023. The old block has now been demolished and playing field created in its place.

11. The replacement of poor condition mobiles and prattens is included as an objective in the Council's Business Plan. Council capital funding to replace these old blocks was secured in 2022/23. Projects to replace old mobiles with new permanent accommodation have already been completed at Holbrook Primary School and Studley Green Primary School. A project is also in construction at Grove Primary School to replace 4 mobile classrooms. This project is being combined with the creation of a new Resource Base with that element funded by the High Needs Capital Grant.
12. Design work is also underway for the next project at Frogwell Primary School where internal remodelling and refurbishment will enable the demolition of old mobiles and prattens. A feasibility study has also been completed for the replacement of 3 mobile classrooms at Hullavington Primary School. Approval is sought to proceed with the projects at Frogwell and Hullavington as shown in Table 2 below.
13. The Council has also notified several other schools that they are likely to be included in the mobile replacement programme but will need to await funding in subsequent years. Should any of these blocks need to be replaced with more urgency, approval is also sought to allow feasibility and design work to be approved under the delegated authority of the Director of Children's Services where these further projects are identified as high priority.

Table 2 : New Mobile/Pratten replacement project/s requiring approval

School	Project	Current Status	Requiring allocation approval £m
Frogwell Primary School	Significant internal refurbishment and eventual demolition of old mobiles and prattens, with making good of those areas after demolition.	Feasibility completed	2.000
Hullavington	Replacement of 3 old mobiles with new classroom block.	Feasibility completed	1.600
Various	Commencement of design work only on other schemes identified as high priority.	Not started	0.250
TOTAL			3.850

Maintenance

14. In addition to basic need (growth related) capital projects, there is a significant backlog of priority capital repair and maintenance schemes in those schools for which the Council remains responsible.

15. In February 2024, a significant programme of planned maintenance projects were approved to proceed by Cabinet, these are now largely complete. In addition to these planned maintenance works, a contingency was held to address emergency reactive works required during the year to keep schools safe and open. Over 50 projects costing over £5k each have therefore also been completed since 1 April 2024.
16. The school condition backlog in 2024/25 stands at £21.8m, (down from £22.5m in the previous year). This reduction is partly as a result of increased investment but also as some maintained schools have converted to academy status. Condition surveys are updated on a 5-year rolling programme and each new survey identifies additional works as the school estate ages and the cost of works increases with inflation.
17. The new planned maintenance schemes recommended for inclusion in the 2025/26 programme of work total an estimated £3.4m. These priority schemes are shown in Table 3 below, approval is sought to proceed with these projects. A total of £1.6m will be held for emergency works and as contingency. However, a further list of provisional planned works will be brought forward to use any of this funding that remains.

Table 3 : New school maintenance projects requiring approval

(Costs include direct fees and charges associated with work planned, including any necessary asbestos removal).

Appendix 3

School	Type of Maintenance Works	Est Cost £
Amesbury Stonehenge	Drainage, hot and cold water distribution, fire alarm	184,600
Devizes Downlands	Roof	150,800
Bulford Kiwi	Lighting Upgrade	76,700
Horningsham	Roofs	154,800
Silverwood (Rowde)	Boilers	55,255
Silverwood (Trowbridge)	Roof	200,800
Staverton Primary	Roof	200,800
Sutton Veny Primary	Heating and roof	148,821
Minster Primary	Roof	17,696
Westbury Infants	Roofs	178,600
Matravers Secondary	Roof	150,000
Hilperton Primary	Roof	33,800
Broad Town Primary	Fire Alarm	30,800
Charter Primary	Lighting Upgrade, roof repairs	114,912
Frogwell Primary	Emergency lighting, rainwater goods	96,600
Kings Lodge Primary	Kitchen refurb	87,800
Monkton Park Primary	Glazing and toilet refurbs	73,612
St Paul's Primary	Flooring, drains and toilet refurbs	67,114
Coleme Primary	Cladding, windows	73,693
Cricklade St Sampson's Primary	Boiler, hot/cold water distribution	130,307
Crudwell Primary	Fire alarm	26,018
Kington St Michael Primary	Rainwater goods	15,992
Lacock Primary	Power wiring	8,300
Lyneham Primary	Roofs and ventilation	62,800
Minety Primary	Power wiring	13,500
Preshute Primary	Gas distribution	27,854
Ramsbury Primary	Roof	48,000
Sherston Primary	Heating, lighting, roof lights	226,600
Silverwood (Chippenham)	Boiler	85,800
Durrington CE VC Junior School	Windows and heating	196,913
Harnham Junior School	Flat roof	10,000
Mere Primary School	Roof and boiler	147,600
Salisbury Harnham Infants School	Rain water goods	38,613
Tidworth Clarendon Junior School	Oil tank	14,500
Various schools	Legionella, asbestos and statutory compliance works	250,000
Total Planned Works		3,400,000
Emergency works, contingency and project management		1,600,000
Total		5,000,000

18. If a decision is taken by a school to convert to Academy status, prior to commencement of any approved project, and before a contract is committed, then the work will be reviewed and where appropriate, removed from the list. When schools convert to Academy status, building maintenance responsibility for those academy's transfers to the academy itself and the Council's capital funding allocation correspondingly reduces. That funding is transferred to the ESFA who funds academies direct.

Conclusion

19. The Council has a statutory duty to provide and maintain sufficient high-quality school places to meet the demand arising across Wiltshire, whether from demographic or population change, housing developments or military movements. The Council also has responsibilities for the effective management and maintenance of the Councils schools' estate (community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools only). Schools need to be fit for purpose and safe for all site users. The funding allocation to projects requested in this paper will enable the priority works to be progressed.

Proposals

20. It is recommended that Cabinet approve:

- i. the funding allocations identified in Tables 2 and 3 to the named schemes subject to any necessary planning approvals.
- ii. To delegate to the Director of Education and Skills to invite and evaluate tenders for the projects described in this report, and, to award the contract for the project (subject to approval of any necessary statutory proposals) and to authorise, in consultation with the Head of Estates and Development, in accordance with the relevant scheme of sub-delegation (under Part 3 Section D1 of Wiltshire Council's constitution), the acquisition of all land (and the completion of any legal documentation) reasonably required in order to facilitate the completion of any of the listed projects.