

13 October 2016		ITEM: 8
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
School Capital Programme 2017/18		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
Accountable Head of Service: Not applicable.		
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval for up to £7 Million funding to implement the next schools capital programme. This will include secondary school expansions and possible expansion of a further two primary schools, one in the Aveley/Ockendon area and the other in the North East to meet increased predicted demand for pupil places from September 2017.

The School Capital Expansion Programme has a current estimated provisional value of £7 Million, to be funded from the DfE capital basic needs Grant, underspends from the current capital programme, and S.106 education funding and would therefore requires Council approval. There will be no requirement for prudential borrowing.

1. Recommendations:

- 1.1 That a provisional School Capital Programme budget of £7 million as set out in this report be approved.**
- 1.2 That authority subject to the Council's procurement rules delegate to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Head of Legal, to commence, negotiate and award any contracts/agreements or documents incidental to the School Capital Programme within the budget as set out in this report.**

2. Introduction and Background:

- 2.1 The local authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that suitable and sufficient school places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one
- 2.2 The current school capital programme consists of three projects in Thurrock schools. All projects in this extensive programme are due to be completed

imminently or are in phase 2 with a completion date of February 2017. All projects are predicted to be completed on time and within budget.

- 2.3 Through detailed pupil place forecasting and analysis of current Year 6 numbers, there is a predicted need to provide additional secondary places from September 2017. We currently have 2,062 children in year 6 with in our primary schools and there are 1,947 secondary places available as per PAN. (This includes Hassenbrook having an intake of 150 in year 7). We also need to take into consideration the number of in-year admissions, which continues to increase year on year therefore, we also need to build in some additional capacity to meet this demand.
- 2.4 A stringent process has been followed in order to decide on which schools should be expanded. This commenced with a discussion held with each secondary head to establish the schools view on expanding by 1 form of entry (180 pupils). The schools that were in favour of expansion were noted and proceeded to the next stage.

The second stage was for officers from Admissions, Highways, Finance, School Improvement, Transport & Awards & Benefits to meet together which happened on 6th September where discussions took place and each member asked to provide narrative for their service area and provide a score from 1-5 (5 being the highest support) with regards support for or against expansion and from this the strongest schools would be identified.

The third stage is for recommendation to be presented to the Director and Portfolio holder for Education and for them to consider feedback from officers and agree those schools to be expanded. Officers would then notify the successful schools.

When identifying the number of places required this took into consideration Hassenbrook returning to its previous intake of 150 pupils whilst also building in capacity to cater for in-year admissions which continues to increase.

- 2.5 In order to provide these extra places, an expansion programme led by the council's school capital team is required to start imminently and is likely to focus on the expansion and adaptation to two or three secondary schools and two primary schools. Feasibility studies will be carried out where necessary.
- 2.6 As part of our ongoing strategic analysis of future demand It is envisaged that a further three new secondary schools are anticipated to be required in Thurrock within the next five years. Greater detail is provided in our School Place Plan 2016-20. It is likely that this need will be met through the Free School bidding process.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 If the local authority does not undertake the school expansions and builds, the local authority will not be able to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient places available in Thurrock for every child of school age.

3.2 The contract, due to its potential value over the threshold, is subject to Thurrock Council & EU procurement legislation.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 Funding to the value of £7 Million is requested in order to take forward the expansion programme for those identified schools and deliver required pupil places from September 2017 and meet the council's statutory duty.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1. This report is to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.2. The principle has been agreed with schools and any detailed build content will be agreed with the relevant schools. Consultation will continue with each school and key stakeholder, as each scheme and schedule of works evolves within the programme.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 Approval of this funding will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duty under the Education Act 2006.

7. Implications:

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**
Interim Finance Manager

Additional accommodation required to meet the statutory requirement to provide places for the increasing pupil numbers will be funded from a combination of the DfE capital basic needs grant, underspends from the current capital programme and Section 106 monies held for Education provision. Once in-depth feasibility studies have been undertaken, funding requirements will be quantified and confirmed. This will include any additional funds applied for and successfully obtained from the Education Funding Agency, under the Targeted Basic Need Programme, which supports specific place needs in Local Authorities with exceptional growth.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Assaf Chaudry**
Major Project Lawyer

The Council has a duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure the provision of “sufficient schools” for the provision of primary and secondary education in their area.

The report proposes to commence a procurement exercise for the schools capital programme, and contractors to take forward the proposed schemes within the current affordability envelope of £7 Million. Given its value it has to comply with the Council’s procurement rules including the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Other than that there are no other legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie warren**
Community Development Officer

There are currently no direct diversity and equality implications. However, the next Thurrock Schools’ Capital Programme will continue to commit to improving learning environments for young people, supporting improvements in standards and raising aspirations to give all children the best possible life chances. The provision of these projects will help to tackle inequality and social exclusion.

Equality legislation places a duty on public bodies to prevent discrimination in all aspects of service provision, including procurement. It provides a clear and positive legal duty to eliminate discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity.

The Council should note that where an external supplier carries out a function, the Council remains responsible for meeting the statutory duty set out in these Acts. A community and equality impact assessment will be completed to inform the tender process.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council’s website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

The procurement approach set out in this report will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duty under the Education Act 1996, to ensure that suitable and sufficient places are available in Thurrock for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one, whilst ensuring value for money and a seamless service provision.

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 - Pupil Place Planning Documents 2016-2020

Report Author:

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