

London Borough of Sutton

Schools Forum – October 2020

CAPITAL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCHOOLS

Author: Kieran Holliday, Head of Pupil Based Commissioning
Chair of Schools Forum: Brenda Morley MBE

Summary
This report provides an update on capital funding and further updates on pupil place expansion requirements.
Recommendations:
I recommend the Forum to:
Note the additional allocation of capital grant funding for 2020-21 of £377,288 for school condition needs
Note the summary of developments in respect of the Secondary Expansion Programme
Note the summary of developments in respect of the Primary Expansion Programme.

1. Basic Need Capital Funding – Summary

1.1 The overall expansion programme costs (below) have increased slightly since last reported in June 2020.

Table with 3 columns: Category, Previous estimate (June '20) £m, Current estimate (Sept '20) £m. Rows include Primary expansions, Secondary expansions, and SEN expansions.

- 1.2 The slight increase in costs follows the agreement through Urgent decision notice to allocate a further £1.1m to Glenthorne High School to fund additional accommodation so that the school can admit up to 43 additional pupils in Sept 2021. This followed confirmation by the DfE that the Greenshaw Learning Trust (GLT) Free school would not open in temporary accommodation in 2021 and the need to provide additional places to meet projected demand for secondary places.
- 1.3 As was previously reported, Basic Need funding was confirmed for Sutton for the financial year 2021-22 of £16.17m. This grant will fund the above allocation to Glenthorne as well as a shortfall of £250K for the proposed bulge classes to be provided at five secondary schools for September 2020. The shortfall was previously earmarked to come from DSG, but will now be funded from the additional Basic Need grant.
- 1.4 The future delivery of the GLT Free School is still subject to a public inquiry postponed due to Covid:19 from the original date in March to a date that is yet to be confirmed. The funding could be required to secure additional secondary places in the future should the Free School not progress to completion. With delays to the free school, changes to the pattern of in-borough and out-borough applications in 2020 combined with the potential impacts of Covid:19, officers intend to review this position over the summer where the position on the free school will hopefully be better understood.
- 1.5 The balance of uncommitted capital now totals £16.5m, of which £1.65m is Special Provision Fund grant that has been set aside to support SEN needs.

2. Capital Maintenance Programme

- 2.1 The programme for 2020-21 has been progressed over the summer period, though due to Covid restrictions a few projects with a value of around £450K have had to be deferred until summer 2021.
- 2.2 Earlier in the summer the DfE announced a further capital grant allocation for 2020-21 to address school condition needs of £377,288. It is proposed that this is allocated through the existing annual school bidding process. Schools will be invited to bid for projects later this term, with the bids being evaluated by the AMP Steering group prior to presentation of the proposed programme of works for 2021-22 to a future Schools Forum meeting early in 2021.
- 2.3 There is a healthy unallocated contingency sum of £400K remaining to cover any emergency condition issues that may arise during the winter months.

3. New Secondary Provision

- 3.1 As previously reported, delivery of the proposed new Greenshaw Learning Trust

(GLT) 8FE secondary free school on the Rosehill site is still uncertain. The outcome of the planning inquiry on Sutton Free School 1 and 2 will not be known until February 2021 when the Secretary of State is expected to make a final decision.

- 3.2 Officers have updated Secondary heads on the latest position and will be working with schools to plan additional places for September 2021. Funding for a further 43 additional places at Glenthorne High School (in addition to the 43 places commissioned for September 2020) has been agreed by the Council already.

4. Primary school expansion programme update

- 4.1 Based on the Council's latest projections, officers are not expecting to require any further primary school places in the Borough in the shorter to medium term,

5. Special Provision Fund

- 5.1 As mentioned above, there is a sum of £1.65m set aside to support recommendations that emerge from the High Needs Review with regards to specialist provision and any capital needs to support this. This funding could also be used to support inclusion through funding improvements to school buildings to provide additional spaces or equipment. As with Basic Need grant, this funding is available to support both VA schools and Academies as well as maintained schools.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 This report provides an update on capital issues that have arisen since the last meeting of the Forum.

7. Influence on the Council's Corporate Core Values and Objectives

- 7.1 One of the core values is working with partners. Setting the capital budget, and considering related issues, is an important part of the budget process that fully involves schools as partners and particularly recognises the important role of the Schools Forum.