

Report Title:	Schools Condition Allocation 2020-21
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	NO - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor Stuart Carroll, Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 19 December 2019
Responsible Officer(s):	Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children's Services
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. This report seeks provisional approval of Children's Services' bids to the 2020/21 capital programme, to be funded by the School Condition Allocation (SCA). Approval is sought ahead of the wider capital programme budget setting in February 2020. This will allow planning and tendering of SCA schemes in time for delivery over the summer in 2020, before schools restart in September.
2. The Local Authority receives the SCA grant from the Department of Education (DfE) to help maintain and improve the condition of school buildings and grounds. This funding is for community and voluntary controlled schools only. Voluntary aided and academy schools (including free schools) receive funding for this via a different route.
3. In recent years the level of grant has been announced in spring, at the start of the financial year to which it applies. At the time of reporting, therefore, the level of SCA is subject to confirmation.
4. This reports sets out the schemes in schools to be funded through the Schools Condition Allocation grant for 2020/21, see Appendix A.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) **approves the Children's Services 2020/21 capital bids for schemes to be funded by the School Condition Allocation, and includes them in the overall 2020/21 capital programme. This is subject to any changes that may be required to the list of schemes set out in Appendix A following confirmation of the level of grant and consideration of the overall capital programme by Council.**
- ii) **approves the listed schemes being put out to tender.**
- iii) **delegates any variation of the list of schemes set out at Appendix A to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health and Director of Children's Services.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Background

- 2.1 The Department for Education (DfE) allocates funding to help maintain and improve the condition of school buildings and grounds. This funding consists of:
- **Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)**, which goes to individual schools of all types, including academy, community, free, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools. The DFC is intended to allow schools to cover the cost of day to day maintenance and small capital works.
 - **School Condition Allocations (SCA)**, given to eligible bodies responsible for maintaining an estate of school buildings. Eligible bodies include local authorities and large Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs). The SCA is intended to allow eligible bodies to fund larger schemes, which individual schools could not generally fund through their DFC.
 - **Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)**, held by the Education, Skills and Funding Agency, and to which single academies and smaller multi-academy trusts can bid (as they do not have access to funding via the SCA).
- 2.2 This report is focused on the SCA allocation to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the 2020/21 financial year.
- Early consideration of the School Condition Allocation schemes
- 2.3 Many school improvement projects happen over the six week summer holiday, in order to minimise disruption to teaching and learning.
- 2.4 The Royal Borough's capital programme for 2020/21, which includes the SCA schemes, will be considered by Council in February 2020 (which is the normal timetable). This leaves a relatively short period in which to procure schemes for delivery next summer.
- 2.5 This report seeks, therefore, provisional approval of the prioritised list of SCA schemes (attached at Appendix A). This will enable officers to proceed with the planning and design of projects in time to allow delivery in summer 2020.
- 2.6 It will also make it easier to achieve better prices from contractors. As many schools, MATs and local authorities will be carrying out maintenance and improvement works over the summer, late tendering can lead to higher contract prices. Contractors can also reach capacity very quickly once decisions about the summer programme start to get made. Getting provisional approval of the programme now means that the procurement process can start in good time, maximising the likelihood of tenders attracting more competitive bids from good contractors.
- Late confirmation of School Condition Allocation
- 2.7 The level of grant allocated to the Royal Borough via the SCA is not usually announced until after the start of the financial year to which it applies – the 2019/20 SCA announcement was in April 2019. This means that the level of SCA funding for 2020/21 won't be known until after Council has considered the 2020/21 capital programme.

- 2.8 With this level of uncertainty, no contracts will be signed until the level of grant is confirmed. Provisional approval of the schemes will nevertheless ensure that procurement has advanced as far as possible by this point.

Using the School Condition Allocation

- 2.9 The SCA for the Royal Borough is intended to cover any works at community and voluntary controlled schools related to repairs to and maintenance of the fabric of the buildings and grounds. This may include replacements and upgrades to parts of the building. Schemes may, therefore, include works to:

- boilers, radiators and pipework
- doors and windows
- external areas such as playgrounds, paths and roads
- floors
- internal and external walls
- kitchens
- roofs, gutters and soffits
- utilities

- 2.10 The SCA is not intended for use on new school places, as this is covered by the Basic Need grant, as set out to Cabinet on 28th November 2019 in the *Demand for school places* report.

Provisional schemes for the 2020/21 School Condition Allocation

- 2.11 The Royal Borough's SCA for the 2019/20 financial year was £765,392.20. The level of grant is based on the number of pupils attending the borough's community and voluntary controlled schools, with different weightings according to the age of those pupils. As no more schools have become academies, it is expected that the 2020/21 SCA will remain roughly the same.

- 2.12 Appendix A provides the list of schemes for 2020/21. It includes a number of school specific schemes where, if provisional approval is given, the planning and design works will begin immediately. These schemes have been identified through school requests, use of the DfE school condition surveys and site visits by Shared Building Services.

- 2.13 The list also includes some more generic lines, which will fund improvement projects as the need arises or in response to the outcome of specific investigations. These are:

- kitchen safety works (implementation of recommendations following investigations).
- roof works (projects funded as need arises).
- urgent school safety works (projects funded as need arises).
- window and door replacements (projects funded as need arises).
- feasibility works (to fund various investigative and feasibility works).

- 2.14 Finally, the list includes a line for fire safety compliance works. This is a borough programme ensuring that the council's estate, including school buildings at community and voluntary controlled schools, is compliant with regulations. The level of funding for this line is currently notional, as schemes are assessed in line with the conditions of the SCA.

Managing the 2020/21 School Condition Allocation

- 2.15 The total cost of the schemes included in Appendix A is £1.087m which is significantly above the £765k SCA expected. This is not unusual – the initial bid for the 2019/20 programme sought £934k, well over the then expected £720k grant. This approach is possible, without overspending, because (i) not all of the funding allocated to the generic lines necessarily gets spent (e.g. if there are no roofing issues, there won't be any spend under that line); and (ii) it is not always possible to deliver planned schemes within the financial year (e.g. due to lack of capacity with contractors and/or project managers. This is a particular risk with schemes that would disrupt teaching and learning, and so have to be completed over the summer holiday). This gives officers the opportunity to manage the programme to ensure that it stays within the overall SCA.
- 2.16 As a result of these factors, it is currently expected that there will be some savings in the 2019/20 programme, although some urgent works are more likely to materialise during the winter months (e.g. failing boilers, leaking roofs, issues with gutters and so on). These savings will then be added to the available grant to help fund the 2020/21 programme.
- 2.17 If the SCA is less than the £765k expected, then the schemes will need to be tailored according to overall affordability and priority. It is likely that schemes slipping below the affordable budget line will then be included in the 2021/22 programme.

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Approves the Children's Services 2020/21 capital bids for schemes to be funded by the School Condition Allocation, and includes them in the overall 2020/21 capital programme. This is subject to any changes that may be required to the list of schemes set out in Appendix A following confirmation of the level of grant and consideration of the overall capital programme by Council. Recommended option	Will allow the borough to begin the planning and design of schemes early, making it more likely that they can be delivered next Summer. This should also help keep costs down. If this is not approved, design and tendering will be delayed until after February 2020, making delivery over the summer much less likely, and increasing costs.
Approves the listed schemes being put out to tender. Recommended option	This will allow officers to put the schemes listed in Appendix A out to tender without having to return subsequently to Cabinet for approval.
Delegated any variation of the list of schemes set out at Appendix A to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health and the Director of Children's Services. Recommended option	This will allow for changes to be made to the schemes listed in Appendix A, particularly in response to any changes in the level of SCA (due to be announced in April 2020).

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Agreed schemes delivered by	01/4/2021	31/8/2020	01/5/2020 to 31/8/2020	30/4/2020	31/3/2021
Programme budget (under) / overspend	>+0.5%	+0.5% to -2%	-2% to -6%	< -6%	31/3/2021

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The 2020/21 School Condition Allocation (DfE grant) is estimated to be approximately £765k. This is expected to be confirmed in April 2020.
- 4.2 There are likely to be some savings from the 2019/20 SCA, although this will not be known until the end of the financial year (emergency works may still be required over this winter, for example).
- 4.3 Although the cost of the schemes listed in Appendix A is, at £1.087m, above the £765k + any expected carry forward, the programme will be managed so that the 2020/21 spend does not exceed the available grant.

Table 3: Financial Impact of report's recommendations

REVENUE COSTS	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Reduction	£0	£0	£0
Net Impact	£0	£0	£0

CAPITAL COSTS	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22
Additional total	£0	est. £765,000	£0
Reduction	£0	£0	£0
Net Impact	£0	est. £765,000	£0

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council is required to produce a balanced budget that provides Service Directors with sufficient resource to meet their own statutory requirements.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 None.

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 None

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 None.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 It is proposed that the design, planning and procurement works on the schemes listed at Appendix A begin immediately. Projects will then be delivered over the 2020/21 financial year.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix A – Provisional schemes for School Condition Allocation spending in 2020/21.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY) REPORT HISTORY

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Commented & returned
Cllr S Carroll	Lead Member/ Principal Member/Deputy Lead Member		
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director		
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	21/11/2019	
Russell O'Keefe	Strategic Director		
Andy Jeffs	Strategic Director		
Terry Neaves	Section 151 Officer		
Nikki Craig	Head of HR and Corporate Projects		
Louisa Dean	Communications		
	Other e.g. external		

Decision type: Key decision; entered into Forward Plan 30/08/2019	Urgency item? No	To Follow item?

Children's Capital Programme 2020/21

Scheme Name	Directorate	Description	Scheme Cost £'000k	S106 £'000	Grant £'000	Other £'000	NET £'000
Alexander School Kitchen Refurbishment	C&YP	Kitchen Feasibility and commencement of works. The floor in the kitchen is uneven and is a trip hazard. Some of the equipment is inadequate. The kitchen needs to be remodelled to improve operations and refurbished and some of the equipment replaced.	100	-	100	-	-
School kitchen safety works	C&YP	The school kitchens need upgrading to meet current safety standards: Filters, CO2 detection systems and access for cleaning ducting. Programme of investigation and implementation of recommendations from the reports.	50	-	50	-	-
School Boiler upgrade works: Boyne Hill school	C&YP	Old boiler is in need of replacement and conversion of heating system from oil to gas.	100	-	100	-	-
School water pipework: Oakfield school and The Lawns Nursery	C&YP	School has rotten pipework, with underground leaks and high costs. The project will replace pipework.	40	-	40	-	-
School boiler upgrade: Wraysbury	C&YP	The boilers are at the end of their useful life and need replacing. The boilers will be replaced with an up-to-date system that is more efficient, economical and sustainable.	87	-	87	-	-
School boiler upgrade: Maidenhead Nursery	C&YP	The boilers are at the end of their useful life and need replacing. The boilers will be replaced with an up-to-date system that is more efficient, economical and sustainable.	30	-	30	-	-
Roof Works in schools 2020-21:	C&YP	School roof repairs and replacements	110	-	110	-	-
Internal upgrade: Wessex Nursery	C&YP	The nursery lighting, ceiling and general ambiance of this building is now very out-dated and unsuitable for teaching young nursery children. It needs considerable improvement. This project would investigate options to upgrade the building and begin works to improve the learning environment.	60	-	60	-	-
Urgent school safety works	C&YP	To respond to emergency works required and not yet identified.	50	-	50	-	-
School window and door replacements	C&YP	Continuing programme of window replacements	90	-	90	-	-
School Feasibility / Survey works	C&YP	Preparatory and investigative works for schemes and projects in the capital programme.	180	-	180	-	-
Structural Works / building fabric: Homer school		The screed under the hall flooring has perished and the floor needs replacing / repairing.	40	-	40	-	-
Fire Safety Compliance/Health and Safety works	C&YP	Works relating to fire safety compliance, and health/safety works at community and voluntary controlled schools.	150	-	150	-	-
Total			1,087	-	1,087	-	-