

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

22 MAY 2008

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION/KEY DECISION

Children and Young People - Lead Cabinet Member - Councillor Cunningham

STRATEGY FOR CHANGE, PRIMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1. Summary

In December 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) issued guidance for Local Authorities on developing, agreeing and implementing a strategic approach to capital investment for primary schools. Part of that guidance was a requirement for Local Authorities to prepare a Strategy for Change document that would be considered by DCSF in June, 2008.

Subject to agreement the Council would receive capital allocations for the next 14 years to support the delivery of the Children's Plan by creating primary schools equipped for 21st century learning at the heart of the community with a range of children's services in reach of every family. The objective for primary schools in Stockton on Tees would be to rebuild, remodel or refurbish at least half of all schools. The attached draft Strategy is the product of work undertaken within the Council and with partners such as Dioceses to identify the principles by which priorities would be established and those schools that should receive investment in the first five years of the Programme.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. . Cabinet approve the Strategy for Change for the Primary Capital Programme and agree that it be submitted to the Department for Children, Schools and Families in June, 2008 in anticipation that funding for the Programme will start in April, 2009.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

The Strategy for Change is an essential component in securing funding for the Primary Capital Programme.

4. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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DETAIL

1. In October 2007 the Department for Schools, Children and Families (DCSF) allocated capital funding for all Local Authorities to support the development of a long term Programme for rebuilding or remodelling Primary Schools. For Stockton on Tees the allocations would be £3,066,466 in 2009/10, £5,444,406 in 2010/11 and a predicted £2.5 million for each year thereafter until 2023. Receipt of the funding was reliant on the approval of the DCSF to a Strategy for Change document showing how the Council would select investment priorities and how the Programme would work alongside other Programmes and service delivery changes.

2. In December 2007 the DCSF issued guidance for the preparation for the Strategy for change and outlined the factors that Authorities were expected to consider. In June 2008 the DCSF will assess all the Strategies and hopefully approve them in September 2008 in readiness for the April 2009 start.
3. The initial part of the Strategy, attached in draft form to this report outlines how it fits into other initiatives ongoing within Children's Services and what is presently available. The main element is the Vision outlined in Section 4 on page 8 where factors for assessing schools for investment are examined (listed in paragraph 4.3). Further to this are the main aims of the paragraph 4.5 on page 9.
4. The draft was circulated in April for consultation with partners such as Dioceses, Headteachers, Governors and Parents/Carers. Any outcomes of that consultation have been introduced into the draft. The principles outlined in the Strategy have been supported.
5. Each Local Authority has also been asked to show where the early priorities lay. In the draft Initial Investment Priorities 2008-2013 the proposals for each financial year are identified though it has not yet been possible to show accurate estimates of cost. Work in the current year is concentrating on the briefs for proposed developments and associated costs and further work on condition surveys is being completed. The Programme will be managed alongside other education grants (in particular Modernisation and Basic Need grants) and will be submitted to Cabinet for approval each year within the Capital Programme for the Council.
6. It is expected that the Strategy will be reviewed at regular intervals within a DCSF timetable but reviews will also take place in line with the preparation of other Children's Plans.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial

7. The allocation of Primary Capital Funds is reliant on the approval of the Strategy for Change by DCSF.

Legal

8. Any work is subject to the Council's overall duties.

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. The programme is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

9. The programme forms a part of overall plans to facilitate the objectives of the Children and Young People's Plan.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

10. There has been consultation with all stakeholders including Dioceses, Schools, Health Organisations and other Partners.

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Background Papers

DCSF Guidance 6 December, 2007

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

All Wards

Property Implications

When complete the Programme will have had an impact on half the Primary Schools in Stockton on Tees