

**REPORT FOR: EDUCATION
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

Date of Meeting:	10 November 2010
Subject:	Schools Capital Strategy 2011/2014
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Heather Clements Director Schools, Quality Assurance and Commissioning
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Brian Gate Portfolio Holder Schools and Colleges
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Enclosures:	Annexe A – Draft Schools Capital Strategy 2011 - 2014

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the proposals to agree a Schools Capital Strategy 2011 - 2014.

Recommendations:

The Education Consultative Forum is asked to consider this report and to comment on the proposed Schools Capital Strategy 2011 - 2014.

Reason: (For recommendation)

For the Education Consultative Forum to contribute at an early stage to the consideration of a Schools Capital Strategy 2011 - 2014.

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

1. Harrow Council is developing a Schools Capital Strategy to inform the decision making for investment in school buildings. This Strategy is being prepared without the final details of the Coalition Government's Comprehensive Spending Review. As the details emerge the strategy will be reviewed accordingly. It is expected that there will be considerably less capital available.

Options considered

2. It is essential that capital expenditure is directed at the highest priority needs and that there is clarity and transparency about the decisions that are made concerning how the available budget is spent. This is the case regardless of the level of funding, as it is best practice.
3. Rather than considering investment needs solely on a school-by-school or school sector basis, it is proposed to adopt a strategic approach that identifies the over-arching priorities that will be used to inform investment decisions. The strategy recognises that central government may set some different priorities that we need to adhere to over the 3 year time scale, and these would be taken into account as and when they are introduced.

Consultation

4. It is proposed that the draft Schools Capital Strategy 2011 – 2014 (Annexe A) is discussed widely among the key school stakeholders to achieve as much agreement and ownership of the strategy as possible. Schools will be invited to comment individually or collectively. A final draft will be circulated following the 3 year spending review and in advance of the strategy being reported to Cabinet for approval in January 2011.
5. Consultation activity will include:
 - discussion at the Education Consultative Forum on 10 November 2010;
 - comments from schools, including discussion at the Directors and Heads Meeting on 18 November 2010;
 - consultation, including with diocesan bodies;
 - discussion with corporate officers for inclusion in the corporate Asset Management Plan;
 - report to Cabinet in January 2011.

Financial Implications

6. The level of funding will largely determine the amount of funding available for schools provided by the Government. The CSR announcement confirmed that there would be funding of £15.8bn for the refurbishment or rebuilding of 600 schools. When there are further details of capital funding streams for schools, a capital programme will be developed in accordance with the principles and within available funding streams. When setting the programme consideration will need to be given to new projects as well as those that have been postponed pending Government announcements.

7. The strategy is intended to ensure that maximum benefit is achieved from the available capital funding streams. The expectation is that all available funding streams would be joined, including school devolved formula capital allocations.
8. Harrow Council is reviewing the systems and processes within the council to ensure that they are not overly bureaucratic, that there are clear lines of responsibility and communication with schools, and to ensure that schools are appropriately supported if managing their own project relating to expenditure of their devolved formula capital.

Risk Management Implications

9. The combination of a strategic approach to investment decisions and a review of systems and processes will support risk management in the schools capital programme.

Equalities Implications

10. The approach being adopted of discussion and consultation with key school stakeholders will ensure full consideration of equalities implications and opportunities. Among the priorities included in the draft strategy are improvements to access on school sites that ensure Disability Discrimination Acts and Equality Act 2010 compliance and other improvements to access.

Corporate Priorities

11. The Schools Capital Strategy 2011 – 2014 will contribute to corporate priorities to improve support for vulnerable people and build stronger communities by ensuring a strategic approach to meeting agreed priorities for investment in Harrow's schools.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name:	Jennifer Hydari	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:	26 October 2010		
Name:	Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:	20 October 2010		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Johanna Morgan, Head of School Organisation, 020 8736 6841

Background Papers: None