

Annexe A - Education Consultative Forum meeting on 10 November 2010

Draft Schools Capital Strategy 2011 – 2014

In preparation for the Coalition Government's announcements in the Comprehensive Spending Review, and the 3 year spending plans, the Council is reviewing its priorities for capital investment in schools. The Strategy will include priorities to ensure that our decision making is transparent and objective. This process mirrors that adopted by the Council in developing the previous Government's capital investment initiatives Primary Capital Programme and Building Schools for the Future. We intend to consult with all schools and present a paper to Cabinet in January 2011 outlining these priorities to ensure that our decision making is transparent and objective.

With a much reduced capital investment we will need to prioritise provision that is essential to the effective running of schools.

We have identified the following priorities that would be applied in numerical order:

1. Replacement of unsafe teaching accommodation;
2. Essential maintenance related to Health and Safety including school security;
3. Improvements to access that ensure Disability Discrimination Acts and Equality Act 2010 compliance;
4. Expansion to meet growth and demand;
5. Replacement of temporary accommodation where this has reached the end of its life;
6. School reorganisation including amalgamations and addressing surplus space for increased community use or decommissioning;
7. Replacement of other temporary accommodation;
8. Other improvements to access;
9. Specialist accommodation for SEN and ASD in mainstream schools;
10. Access to outside play for early years.

Other priorities may emerge from the 3 year spending review which may stipulate key projects we have to undertake.

Once we have agreed the priorities we will then review the Asset Management Plan to ensure that projects are identified against these. All schools identified to be in the programme will have School Strategic Masterplans. The expectation is that projects would be compatible with these plans and that all available funding streams would be joined, including school devolved formula capital allocations.

In carrying out this scoping we need to be clear that:

- This does not guarantee that a project will necessarily proceed since cost and deliverability may mean that it is not feasible;
- New projects may gain priority if for example a building becomes unstable and work needs to be carried out urgently;

- Central government may reduce the funding available within the 3 year plan;
- Central government may set different priorities that we need to adhere to over the 3 year time scale;
- If there is more than one project meeting the same criteria, priority will be given to the largest demand pressure in relation to the criteria.

Delivery of projects in the schools capital programme

We are reviewing our systems and processes within the council to ensure that they are not overly bureaucratic and that there are clear lines of responsibility and communication with schools. We are working with corporate colleagues to develop guidance for schools on procurement methods to ensure that regulations are adhered to and that there is clarity about options for project delivery.

Consultation plan

There will be an opportunity to discuss these proposals and agree the priorities in the autumn term and schools are free to comment individually or collectively. A final draft will be circulated following the 3 year spending review and in advance of a submission to Cabinet.

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;
- formal consultation, including with diocesan bodies;
- report to Cabinet in January 2011;
- discussion with corporate officers for inclusion in the corporate Asset Management Plan.