

**Minutes of the Capital Work Group meeting held on  
Monday, 6 March 2017 2016 in the Lecture Room, Sans Souci**

**Present:**

Andrew Wilkins (Chair)	Governor, Hazel Oak
Julie McCarthy	Coppice Juniors
David Lewis	TU Representative
Lorna Bosley	Governor, Blossomfield Infants
Antoinette Fisher	Governor, Dorridge Primary
Deb Wilson	Yorkswold Primary
Lynda Mackay	Governor, Knowle CofE Primary
Peter French	Diocese of Birmingham
Rachel Prince	John Henry Newman
Jacque Nicholls	Dickens Heath
Anthony Watson	Capital Development
Steve Fenton	Business & Performance
Liz Greenwood	Capital Development
Ann Pearson	School Place Planning
Stuart McHale	Finance Manager
Alison McWilliam, Senior Forum Administrator	

Item		Action
1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received from Toni Guest, Jane Loughran, David Miller, Janet Marsh and Lindsey Thorne.</p>	
2	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising (21.11.16)</b> The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. <u>Reynolds Cross Working Group</u> – The group has now been stood down.</p>	
3	<p><b>Update on School's Asset Management Plan – Anthony Watson</b> <i>Reference 'Solihull Schools' Asset Management Plan 2016/17'.</i> <u>Capital Programme</u> We continue to maintain a 3 year programme (2016-2019) of capital activity, presented biannually to Cabinet Member, with the last update on 12 December 2016. Capital is generally on a downward spiral. However, £34m will still be allocated for the 3 years to March 2019. For the current year, out-turn spend by 31 March 2017 is expected to be £9m. The new Capital programme extending to 31 March 2020 will be presented to the Cabinet Member in June 2017 at the earliest. <u>Maintenance Programme for Maintained Schools</u> We are approaching the end of the second year of a 3-year allocation. The academisation programme continues to reduce the sums available (from around £1.7m in Year 1 to potentially around £1.25m by Year 3). Funding available after Year 3 for 2018/19 is currently unknown. The DfE plans to change the way maintenance is funded from the current per-capita allocations to allocations based on the condition of maintained school premises, based on the outcome of the recent Property Data Survey. This survey of 19,000 schools declared Solihull's school estate to be in relatively good condition. However, a follow-up Property Condition Survey has now been launched which will re-survey all schools. In the interim, it is possible that there will be another per capita allocation for 2018/19. <u>Basic Need</u> Significant expansions are already scheduled for Greswold Primary and Blossomfield Infants and discussions are taking place for expansions at Tidbury Green Primary, Sharman's Cross, Shirley Heath and Chapel Fields Junior Schools and Daylesford Infants. Members made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst capital funds are restricted, it is outrageous that money is being spent on re-surveying schools.</li> </ul>	

- The group must be pro-active and continue to help shape the capital programme.
- An earlier plan to give maintenance funding directly to CofE and RC schools (rather than through the LA) has changed, possibly due to the expected total academisation of schools in due course, but what happens when all schools are academies?
- The capital maintenance programme is essential, but the funding is currently as baseline as it can be; we are not investing in the core of our premises and have no long-term improvement programme. In north Solihull we rationalised premises, reducing from 15 to 10 schools as part of the north Solihull programme. This provided a revenue opportunity which led to longer term improvements. We could look at something similar in south Solihull, but in a few years time, when all schools are academies, the LA will no longer be the responsible body.
- The Capital Programme will increasingly secure basic need investment for expansions and extensions through planned housing developments and this is the focus now. The Local Development Plan currently under preparation will create investment opportunities around the future of premises, irrespective of their governance.
- Solihull's RC primary schools are considering academising as a MAT, will those schools coming out of the maintained system have a significant or minor impact on the central pot? The impact could be a reduction of around £700k.
- A MAT of a certain size attracts a formulaic allocation of capital over and above what exists for individual schools.
- Other than the schools involved in the north Solihull programme and the increasing number of schools subject to expansions to meet basic need, at present no other Solihull schools are benefiting from long-term improvement funding.

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#### **Schools' Kitchen White Goods – Anthony Watson**

New EFA regulations no longer allow the retention of centralised funds for services/items other than those that have an on-going contractual or staffing commitment. The £50k previously held centrally to fund ad hoc catering equipment will therefore no longer be allowed (from 1 April 2017).

Where schools are benefiting from significant capital investment, the cost of kitchen fit-out can be included, but for most schools white goods cannot be viewed as capital items and schools will therefore have to cover the costs themselves. This message will need to be conveyed to schools. In the meantime, the Catering team is undertaking an exercise to see what this might mean. It is possible that costs can be managed for 2017/18, with schools paying from 1 April 2018.

AWa

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#### **Update on Schools' Organisation Plan – Ann Pearson**

*Reference 'Update on the School Organisation Plan'*

- The School Organisation Plan is now structured around 3 main areas – School Place Planning, High Needs and Early Years and provides connections between commissioning and delivery.
- In response to 600 new houses in the Rural South, Tidbury Green has consulted on increasing its capacity to 420 pupils and Cabinet Member is expected to approve this shortly.
- Additional places are proposed at Sharmans Cross and Shirley Heath Junior Schools to meet the increased demand from Blossomfield Infant School.
- Additional places are proposed at Cheswick Green and Tudor Grange to manage the Blythe Valley (750), Cheswick Green (300) and Tidbury Green (600) developments.
- Feasibility work is taking place around additional places at St Peters.
- This is the first wave of expansion in Solihull. The LDP will deliver the second wave of an additional 6,000 houses, although there could be changes to the sites currently identified in the draft Plan and it could be 18 months before sites are finally confirmed.
- Attempts are being made to join-up thinking around the provision of additional SEND places, although managing the funding will be tricky.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the LA identifies a need (under basic need) for an additional school, it will have to be a Free School. The LA would be responsible for providing a site and building and it would then go out to competition to find a provider, with the LA playing a part in the decision-making process.</li> <li>• For EY an EY and Childcare Sufficiency Plan is being drawn up for 0-14 year-olds.</li> <li>• The extended offer of 15 free hours for 3 and 4 year-olds will commence from September 2017 and the team is working very hard - without final guidance – to establish what this might look like in terms of delivery and implementation.</li> <li>• 100 providers have already signed up to attend an engagement evening in March to look at how the offer might be delivered in the short and longer term, without additional capital funds.</li> </ul>	
6	<p><b>Update on Strategy for Solihull's Specialist Provision – Ann Pearson</b>  <i>Reference 'Update on SEND Provision Planning' report.</i>  A formal commissioning process has been instigated this year for the first time, bringing efficiencies to the admissions process and resulting in additional places at Forest Oak and Northern House from September 2017.  The timing of the admissions process for HN has been quite late and will to be brought earlier next year to align with the budget cycle.</p> <p><u>ARC Developments</u>  Windy Arbor is due to open in April 2018. Problems with having appropriate accommodation in place at Dickens Heath and Alderbrook have led to delays and these ARCs are now expected to open during 2017/18 academic year, although it is likely that Alderbrook will take a small number of children from Year 7 in September this year.  The SEMH ARC at Yew Tree is open and accepting children through its Admissions Panel.</p> <p><u>ASD Free School</u>  Solihull has submitted a strong bid for an age 4-18 ASD school, the outcome of which is expected later this month. If successful, the opening date would likely be September 2019. There has been a high level of bids submitted regionally, but Solihull already has a site in mind and has committed to collaborating with Birmingham for places, both of which increase the strength of the bid.  In addition to this, the Solihull AP Academy for secondary age pupils and based at Cranmore, is due to open in January 2018.</p> <p><u>Strategic Planning</u>  As part of the HN funding process, the Government has announced that LAs must undertake a strategic review of HN places funded with a £90k grant. Solihull has employed 1st Planner to review its special school and PRU provision and develop a forecasting and sufficiency model that would deliver an end-to-end needs based service. The model will be built on Solihull's own data and encompass mobility, housing etc. and will influence how we move forward. Further information will be available to stakeholder groups at the end of summer term.</p>	Fwd Plan
7	<p><b>Any Other Business</b>  The NFF Consultation is out, with a closing date for submissions of 22 March. DL urged all schools, individuals and parents to respond. Forum is preparing its own response and this will be circulated to all Heads and Chairs later this week so that schools can, if they wish, use it to inform their own responses.</p>	
8	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b> - 9.30am Tuesday, 2 May 2017 in the Room 102 (Lecture Room), Sans Souci</p>	