

CAPITAL WORK GROUP REPORT TO FORUM FOR PRESENTATION AT FORUM ON Monday, 4 December 2017



Date of Work Group meeting: 20 November 2017

Items discussed (brief summary of key items):

Property Condition Survey (Anthony Watson) – The ESFA's Property Condition Survey of maintained schools is underway, with the second set of schools due to be surveyed from January 2018. The ESFA is dealing directly with Voluntary Aided schools and academies. Maintenance funding will continue to be based on the current formulaic approach for 2018/19, but the outcome of the survey is expected to inform financial settlements from 2019/20.

Update on the Schools' Asset Management Plan (Anthony Watson) – Around £10m has been allocated each year for the 3-year rolling programme (total £30m), with approval received for the 2017/18 programme and an indicative programme in place for 2018/19 and 2019/20. Basic Need has been expanded to 2019/20 and an allocation is in the pipeline for next year. The five sub-programmes of the Children's Services Capital Programme include:

- The North Solihull Primary Programme - activity this year has included remodelling of Windy Arbor, including the ASD ARC; expansion of Kingshurst Primary, plans for work at St Anthony's and St John the Baptist Primaries and approval for work to commence in the Spring at Yorkwood Primary.
- The School Improvement Programme - which aligns school provision with the priorities of the School Organisation Plan and includes works at Greswold Primary and Blossomfield Infants to increase each by 1FE; the expansion of Tidbury Green Primary by 1FE and planning approval for the expansion of Sharmans Cross and Shirley Heath Primaries, each by 0.5FE, amongst other plans.
- The Schools' Maintenance Programme - is focusing on the maintained primary sector, including re-roofing, mechanical and electrical works at a number of schools and LCVAP funding has supported maintenance priorities at a number of CofE and RC schools.
- The Schools' General Programme - is focusing on bespoke access schemes in line with the Disability Discrimination Act and a review of maintained school kitchens requiring upgrades.
- The Schools' Managed Programme - relates to schemes of work undertaken directly by maintained schools.

Council's Landlord Role for the Schools' Estate (Anthony Watson) - There is a requirement for the Authority to formalise a Landlord Approval Process for schools undertaking work and in order to ensure compliance with statutory processes, the LA will shortly be reviewing its Asset Register.

School Organisation Plan and Strategy for Solihull's Specialist Provision (Ann Pearson) – The new School Place Planning structure now addresses the needs of the Borough's pupils across mainstream, Early Years and SEND provision, with the School Organisation Plan as its key document.

- Mainstream - The current SOP is based on known new housing developments and birth data and does not include sites identified under the new Local Plan. All Primary children have been accommodated in school places this year, leaving only a small number of vacancies with which to manage in-year applications. At Secondary there are currently 8% vacancies and 35% of pupils are from outside the Borough, providing considerable scope within existing resources. Expansions at St Peters, Alderbrook and Tudor Grange are linked to confirmed and on-going housing developments.
- SEND - Phase 1 of the First Planner work has provided a full range of forecasts and data, which have been shared with stakeholder groups. Key findings include confirmation that the rate at which EHCPs are being generated is growing faster than the rate of general demographic growth (this is a national issue). Reliance on out-of-borough independent placements and the cost of providing them is growing. The cost to implement provision to manage Solihull's range of needs is far in excess of the Borough's special needs grant. Expanding the Borough's provision will need to be funded from the existing funding package.
- Early Years - The 30 hours of free childcare commenced in September 2017 for which there is a small capital funding allocation. A further bidding round was announced last week and the team will submit a bid before the 14 December closing date. Solihull has seen a high rate of 30 hour place take-up, with a significant proportion from out-of-borough families; this will impact on the team's ability to deliver places during summer term for our largest cohort of children.

Any Other Business (David Lewis) – DL and AF are meeting with Julian Knight MP on 24 November and will raise the pressures around specialist education provision as part of the discussion.