

ITEM 8



COUNCIL CABINET
15 March 2005

Report of the Education Commission

Education Service Capital Programme 2005/06 -2007/08

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That Council Cabinet approve the Education Service Capital Programme 2005/6 to 2007/8.
- 1.2 That for future reports the format should be revised to make it more readily understandable and easier to interpret.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 2.1 At its special meeting on 8 March 2005, the Education Commission received a presentation from Simon Longley, the Assistant Director of Education, on the Education Service Capital Programme 2005/06 – 2007/08.
- 2.2 In his presentation the Assistant Director gave the background to the information contained in the report that was to be presented to Council Cabinet on 15 March 2005. He explained that most of the proposed school capital schemes are to address urgent condition and health and safety issues, with projects had being prioritised in accordance with the Asset Management Plan Local Policy Statement and Statement of Priorities.
- 2.3 The Assistant Director also provided the Commission with additional information, in the form of revised tabular data, on the cost and nature of the capital works that were proposed. The additional information was intended to make the report easier to understand. The Assistant Director commented on the difficulty of understanding and interpreting the report in the format that was being presented to Cabinet.

Issue(s)

- 2.4 Having considered the report, Commission members expressed concern that many of the proposals were for works to repair school buildings which were considered to be generally unsuitable for their purpose. Commission

members asked whether the Education Service was confident that this was the best way of utilising the capital funding, especially as it was known that there were surplus school places in the City. Commission members also queried the amount of slippage on the 2004/05 capital programme. The Commission agreed with the Assistant Director's comments on the format of the report to Council Cabinet.

- 2.5 In response to the Commission's comments the Assistant Director said that the capital projects programme was driven by necessity. If a school roof was leaking it had to be repaired, even though the building itself might be less than ideal. He also said that although pupil numbers had fallen and were still falling, the drop in numbers was scattered across the City and there were as yet no schools where numbers had fallen to a level that would justify closure. Referring to the slippage from the previous year the Assistant Director said that it was not possible to be confident that all the works proposed could be completed within one financial year. He said this was due to a number of factors, including the availability of suitable contractors. However he pointed out that the money was not lost or put at risk if slippage occurred.

Conclusions of the Commission

- 2.6 Having considered the report and the Assistant Director's comments, the Commission expressed support for the proposed capital works programme. Members did however consider that it would be possible to improve the presentation of the information contained in the Education Service Capital Programme report, and they supported the suggestion by the Assistant Director that this could be done by revising the format of some of the tabular data contained in the report.

Recommendations of the Commission

- 2.7 That Council Cabinet approve the Education Service Capital Programme 2005/6 to 2007/8.
- 2.8 That in future reports the format should be revised to make it more readily understandable and easier to interpret.

Reasons for Commission's Recommendations

- 2.9 For the reasons set out in the Director of Education's report to Council Cabinet on 15 March 2005.
- 2.10 In order to make future reports more understandable and easier to interpret.

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Background papers:	Background Papers - None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None arising from this report.

Legal

2. None arising from this report.

Personnel

3. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

4. For the reasons set out in the Director of Education's report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. As set out in the Director of Education's report.