



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSION 30 JULY 2008

Report of the Corporate Director for Children and Young People

Primary Strategy for Change

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To note the final strategy document submitted to the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Children and Young People Commission considered the Primary Strategy for Change consultation document at its meeting on 7 May 2008. The Commission resolved:
 - to welcome the strategy
 - to receive further updates on the strategy at future meetings.
- 2.2 There were responses from 31 schools, of which 22 endorsed the general principles. School Councils were also asked to complete a questionnaire about what they thought of their buildings and outdoor space. Responses were received from 32 schools. The strategy was also endorsed by the Church of England and Catholic diocesan authorities, and Children and Young People's Executive. Comments from the consultation informed the final strategy submitted and are outlined in paragraphs 2.3 to 2.8 below. Council Cabinet agreed the strategy at its meeting on 3 June 2008 and also to delegate final changes of detail to the submission to the Corporate Director for Children and Young People in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. The strategy is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.3 A key issue coming back from consultation was that the suitability of buildings for a 21st century curriculum and provision of extended services should be considered. Suitability is more difficult to quantify than condition, but it was proposed that the strategy made greater reference to this, and that an additional scheme was added to the priority list for the first two years of the programme. This will be at Arboretum Primary School, and would involve remodelling of the school to improve internal circulation and improved access for children with mobility difficulties.

- 2.4 Another point well made was that, where a school is involved in a major rebuild or remodelling scheme, there should be funding built in to allow adequate project management at school level. This would enable the head or other member of the leadership team to be released for at least part of their time. As major projects should reflect the school's vision for transforming learning, this should be built in to the project costings.
- 2.5 Some schools commented that Children's Centre and extended services provision need to be delivered more locally. As far as Children's Centres are concerned, we are operating to a target number prescribed by the DCSF and only funded for that number. All schools will, however, have to ensure by 2010 that extended services are available. This provides the opportunity for an audit of local provision in each area, and funding streams will be linked up where appropriate.
- 2.6 There have also been comments on the scoring mechanism and its relationship with the initial schemes proposed. We do have to show in our strategy that we are addressing the worst condition buildings and removing surplus places and targeting low attainment and deprivation. The initial schemes proposed each deal with one or more of these factors, but not necessarily all. In some cases, we need to act quickly because of urgency in joining up with other funding streams such as that for children's centres or developers' contributions. This avoids two separate projects at the same school.
- 2.7 Some schools are concerned about the extent to which Learning Platforms will benefit families without internet access at home. This is something we need to consider, while looking forward to future technology which will increasingly be around mobile devices rather than traditional connectivity.
- 2.8 The most frequent comments made by School Councils were:
- Interactive Whiteboards are among the things they like most about their classrooms
 - Natural light and spaciousness are important features of classrooms
 - Temperature control is often not very effective
 - Windows often don't open properly
 - Displays are as important as the physical structure
 - More storage space is often needed
 - Cloakrooms and toilets often need to be improved
 - Dining areas can be overcrowded and in poor condition
 - Separate dining areas are good
 - Computer rooms and ICT suites are often too small
 - Outside, benches and shelters are important
 - Playground surfaces should be softer
 - Playgrounds and fields should be marked and zoned for different activities including quiet areas
 - There needs to be more play equipment in playgrounds

These points have been incorporated into the final strategy submitted except for that relating to ICT suites, which will soon become outdated as technological advances mean that ICT should be considered as a fundamental part of the design of each classroom.

- 2.9 The final schemes submitted for the 2009-13 period are shown below. They assume that funding for the Primary Capital Programme in 2011/12 and 2012/13 is at the same level as in 2009/10 and that this is joined with £2m uncommitted funding each year from existing DCSF modernisation and basic need grant. Meetings are taking place with schools to take the projects forward and it is intended to add the specific schemes to the capital programme in an update report to Cabinet on 29 July 2008.

Funding available 2009-13		Notes
	£m	
Primary Capital Programme	17.6	
Existing DCSF funding	8.0	Assumes £2m uncommitted each year Developers' contributions part-funding schemes at Markeaton Primary and Ravensdale
Section 106 Schools Access Initiative	1.0	Junior
	0.1	To fund lift at Markeaton Primary
Capital receipts	0.2	Assumes 25% of receipt from Ashgate Primary building
Total	26.9	

Proposed schemes

Ashgate Primary	7.3	New build or remodelling/extension – options appraisals continuing
Ravensdale Junior	1.3	Extension and condition work
Meadow Farm Primary	0.7	Additional community space linked to Children's Centre scheme
Markeaton Primary	1.8	New kitchen, additional hall space and lift
Learning Platforms	0.3	
Arboretum Primary	3.5	Remodelling of the school to improve internal circulation and improved access for children with mobility difficulties
Firs Estate Primary	1.0	Reduction of surplus places by using space for other community use
Total	15.9	

Balance for area reviews 11.0

- 2.10 The next stage of the process is that DCSF will inform us, by the end of September 2008, whether the strategy has been approved, approved with conditions or rejected.

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Background papers:	DCSF guidance to local authorities
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Primary Strategy for Change submitted to DCSF

IMPLICATIONS**Financial**

- 1.1 The total funding and scheme proposals are set out in paragraph 2.9.
- 1.2 It may be possible to increase the funding available from devolved capital contributions from schools, and from prudential borrowing within the Schools Budget if formula savings are subsequently achieved.

Legal

2. Any changes to school organisation following from the Area reviews will need to comply with the current legal framework on publication of statutory proposals and the need for a competition in most cases.

Personnel

3. Additional staffing resources will be needed to deliver the programme. Where possible, scheme management costs will be capitalised, but there will also be project management costs relating to the area reviews and any subsequent work relating to school organisational changes, should these be proposed.

Equalities impact

4. Raising attainment in areas of deprivation is a high priority and has been taken into account in the weightings used to score individual schools.

Corporate Priorities

5. The Primary Capital Programme will particularly support the corporate priority of “Supporting everyone in learning and achieving”. There is an impact, however, on all the other priorities because of the links to regeneration masterplanning, community participation, environmental sustainability, sporting facilities, ICT and procurement.