

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Executive Director of Growth and Sustainability

TITLE: Report on the Schools Condition Capital Programme 2024-25

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	17th April 2024
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Growth and Sustainability
Key Decision	Yes
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

To seek approval to the 2024-25 Schools Condition Capital programme.

Council Plan priority

Learning Barnsley – Children and young people achieve the best outcomes through improved educational achievement and attainment.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:-

1. Cabinet approves acceptance of the School Condition Allocation (SCA) capital grant.
2. The list of schemes, detailed in Appendix B be approved and financed from the 2024-25 Department for Education (DfE) School Condition Allocation;
3. The Executive Director – Growth and Sustainability, in consultation with the Cabinet Spokesperson, be authorised to vary the programme of works, and to approve additional schemes, to meet emerging priorities;
4. The financial implications arising from the report be included in the capital programme and released in accordance with the Financial Regulations Code of Practice C5.2(a).

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Department for Education (DfE) provide Local Authorities an annual [School Condition Allocation \(SCA\) capital grant](#) to address urgent building condition defects, including health and safety and safeguarding measures across the maintained school estate, early years settings, and family centres.
- 1.2. The DfE announced, on 26th March 2024, its provisional Local Authority SCA funding allocations for the 2024-25 financial year. Barnsley is expected to receive £0.637M.
- 1.3. The formula used to calculate the SCA is based on a combination of pupil numbers attending a Local Authority maintained school and the physical condition of schools, as determined by the data from the DfE's Centralised Condition Data (CCD) surveys, which compares the condition of Barnsley schools to schools across the country. (More can be found about how SCA is calculated in the DfE document [Condition funding: methodology for the financial year 2023–2024](#).) The current number of maintained primary schools the Council is responsible for under the SCA is 20. With continued Academisation, the allocations to Local Authorities will continue to be reduced, as the funding transfers to the various Multi Academy Trusts to manage. [DfE guidance](#) states that LAs are expected to honour any commitments of capital funding that they have made, in respect of capital projects at those schools, and at a minimum, to hand over schools in a safe condition, with no urgent health and safety needs.
- 1.4. In setting priorities for the 2024-25 school condition programme, the Council has used the available data from its own school condition surveys, centralised DfE surveys, school visits and, where appropriate, consultations with other council services, including BMBC Health and Safety and the Council's in-house Property Services surveyors. Priority condition issues tend to relate to roof/ceiling repairs, mechanical & engineering equipment, dampness and drainage problems, and hazardous playground surfaces.
- 1.5. The backlog of maintenance on the maintained schools is shown in the table below:

High Priority Works (to be completed within 18 months)	£2.783m
Medium Priority (to be completed within 3 years)	£3.352m
Low Priority (to be completed within 5 years)	£1.006m
Total Maintenance Requirement	£7.141m

- 1.6. As the table highlights, the available funding will be insufficient to deal with the high priority items. It is therefore highly unlikely that any medium priority items will be addressed within this period. Increasing costs for materials and labour mean that, although SCA funds are used to address high priority issues, the total value of the condition backlog does not necessarily decrease year on year. Given that we have insufficient funds to tackle medium and low priority concerns, the condition of these will continue to deteriorate and they will become high and medium priorities in their own right.
- 1.7. Discussions have been held nationally with the DfE regarding the state of England's maintained school estate. While Barnsley has a significant backlog,

its estate is in generally better condition than some other areas of the country ([DfE Condition of School Buildings Survey: Key findings, May 2021](#)) and so will attract less funding.

- 1.8. To meet the 2024-25 school summer holiday period, it has been necessary to commence initial surveys and investigation works on several schemes included in the programme.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Appendix B of this report provides further details of the proposed schemes within the schools condition programme. These are necessary to address urgent condition works, Health and Safety remedial works and safeguarding concerns on maintained schools.
- 2.2 Officers will ensure that the proposed schemes will comply with the terms and conditions attached to the SCA grant set out by the Department for Education.
- 2.3 The proposed schemes include replacement of some boilers, installation of LED lighting, and some roofing/insulation works which will support Council's declared climate emergency and Zero 40 strategy.

3.0 IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

Financial Implications

- 3.1.1 Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Director of Finance (S151 Officer).

Capital Expenditure

- 3.1.2 The 2024-25 schools condition capital programme is estimated to total £0.651M and is summarised in the table below with further detail at Appendix B.

Scheme	Existing External Schemes 2023/24	2024/25 New Schemes	2024/25 Proposed Budget
	£M	£M	£M
Roofing Works	-	0.092	0.092
Mechanical & Electrical Works	-	0.200	0.200
External Condition Works	0.014	0.100	0.114
Internal Condition Works	-	0.030	0.030
Health & Safety Works	-	0.215	0.215
Total	0.014	0.637	0.651

Capital Funding / Resources

- 3.1.3 The DfE have announced the provisional 2024-25 SCA grant for Barnsley as £0.637m and the scheme programme has been based on this allocation.
- 3.1.4 The £0.014m from 2023-24 external schemes is carry over from phase one of drainage works at Greenfield Primary in Hoyland.
- 3.1.5 A full summary of the schools condition programme can be found in Appendix B.
- 3.1.6 The health and safety allocation noted above is currently used to support schools with in-year emergency condition issues such as roof repairs, emergency boiler replacements, drainage works, collapsed floors, and dangerous lighting columns.
It has also historically been used to fund initial survey works on future schemes to create cost estimates; enabling asbestos surveys and removal in support of identified schemes; and to offer a contribution to schools to address safeguarding concerns and works required following legionella and fire risk assessments.

Revenue Implications

- 3.1.7 It is expected that there may be some savings to the revenue running costs of some schools included within the programme following the installation new boilers, low energy LED lighting and additional insulation in the roofing project.

Governance

- 3.1.8 The proposal contained within this report has been approved to proceed by the Capital Oversight Board.
- 3.1.9 The financial implications of this report are summarised in the attached Appendix A.

Risk

- 3.1.10 The current costs identified within the report are based on estimated prices. Until actual tendered prices have been received, there is a risk that scheme costs could change. This risk can be partially mitigated through use of the health and safety allocation or through suspension of some schemes into future years where safe to do so.
- 3.1.11 As far as reasonably practical site surveys and investigations will be carried out on the buildings and sites to identify potential risks to projects. Where identified these will be included with the tendered works.
- 3.1.12 As with any building work, there is always a risk of unknowns that only surface once the works have commenced, or demolitions have started. The project costs will be closely monitored as part of the Directorate's regular capital monitoring and risk management.

3.2 Legal

- 3.2.1 The proposed schemes are required to comply with the terms and conditions attached to the SCA grant set out by the Department for Education.
- 3.2.2 As the Council is receiving a grant this will consider and comply with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Officers will consult Legal Services in this regard.
- 3.2.3 The procurement of works funded under the Capital Works Programme will aim to comply with the Councils CPRs and the Public Procurement Regulations where applicable.

3.3 Equality

- 3.3.1 The programme includes 2 schemes where full Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken. The findings are summarised below.
- 3.3.2 Brierley CofE school roofing works - This scheme should have an overall positive impact by improving the learning environment for pupils.
- 3.3.3 Jump Primary play court - The scheme should have an overall positive impact on pupils through improved access to separate play spaces for different age groups which will encourage better health and reduce risks associated with mixed-use play spaces.

3.4 Sustainability

- 3.4.1 Decision-making wheel completed:



- 3.4.2 The schemes identified within the 2024-25 school condition programme have been identified to address urgent condition defects and enhance provisions at a number of schools in Barnsley. Installing low energy lighting, replacing inefficient boilers, improving insulation, creation of accessible play spaces and use of local supply chains will all have positive impacts for Barnsley.

3.5 Employee

There are no employee implications arising from this report.

3.6 Communications

Proactive communications will be shared with elected members and the public on the progress of school condition improvements. Schools will also communicate directly with families affected by any works.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Executive Director, Place, and representatives of the Director of Finance (the S151 Officer).

- 4.2 The programme has been prepared to address urgent condition and property related operational issues. Schemes are identified in a transparent way using condition data determined from surveys undertaken by the Council and DfE.

- 4.3 Where appropriate, discussions with school stakeholders have taken place to inform the programme and further consultations will take place during scheme development and delivery.

5.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The summer holiday period of six weeks is normally when most of the school condition works can be completed. To minimise the pressure of delivering the whole school condition programme over this period, where possible, and in discussions with schools, some schemes may be carried out over alternative holiday periods or during term time, only where it is safe and practical to do so.

6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Undertaking the schemes identified within the 2024-25 School Condition Programme will address urgent condition defects and improve or enhance facilities on the school estate.

7.0 GLOSSARY

DfE	Department for Education
SCA	School Condition Allocation

8.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

- 1.1 Appendix A – Financial Statement

1.2 Appendix B – Proposed School Condition Programme

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Working papers regarding this matter are held on files within the Assets Team and contain exempt information.

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

10.0 REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	Senior Financial Services officer consulted and date: Steve Loach, Head Of Corp Finance & Business Partnering. 28.2.2024 <i>Appendix A, outlining the financial implications has been provided.</i>
Legal consultation & sign off	Legal Services officer consulted and date: Hussona Begum 29.02.2024

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Date: 26th March 2024