

Name of meeting: Cabinet
Date: 23 January 2018
Title of report: Update on the Priority School Building Programme
 Rebuild of Mount Pleasant Primary and the implications for the Council

Purpose of report

To update Members on the current position with regards to the new build school for Mount Pleasant Primary, outline the need for further works and to consider the financial implications for the Council.

Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Is it in the Council's Forward Plan ?	No
Is it eligible for "call in" by Scrutiny ?	Yes
Date signed off by Strategic Director and name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance, IT & Transactional Services? Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Legal, Governance & Commissioning?	Naz Parkar - 15.01.2018 Debbie Hogg - 15.01.2018 Julie Muscroft - 11.01.2018
Cabinet member portfolio	Corporate - Cllr Masood Ahmed Cllr Graham Turner

Electoral [wards](#) affected: Newsome/Crosland Moor and Netherton
Ward councillors consulted: Yes

Public or private: Public

1. Summary

- 1.1 Mount Pleasant Primary School is currently being re-built as part of the Government's Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP). Much of the old school has been demolished and a new build school was handed over to the Council on 27th October 2017. The project is now entering its final stages with the demolition of the remaining defunct accommodation and the completion of external works by July 2018.

- 1.2 This report provides an update on the project and seeks approval from Members to allocate an additional £125K of Council funding from its Basic Need capital grant to provide enhancements to the external areas not covered by the PSBP.

2. Information required to take a decision.

(a) Background

- 2.1 Due to the rising backlog of condition works at Mount Pleasant Primary School, in 2011 Kirklees Council submitted a successful bid to the Government's PSBP for the replacement of Mount Pleasant Primary with a new build school.
- 2.2 During 2012-14 the Council and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) worked together to develop an agreed project and in June 2014, following Cabinet approval in March 2014, a Section 151 letter was agreed between the Council and the ESFA which committed the ESFA to the clearance of the existing site and its replacement with a new build school at an estimated investment value of £8-10M.
- 2.3 In March 2015 an update report to Cabinet authorised the project to continue and provided officers with delegated authority to progress the demolition of the former Lockwood Community Centre and associated Clock Tower in its entirety, provided that interested parties were first given the opportunity to submit funded proposals for the retention and future use of the Clock Tower structure. This opportunity was given and no proposals were either received by the submission closure date in autumn 2015 or subsequent to this.
- 2.4 On 8th March 2016 Cabinet approved a capital injection of up to £425K by the Council into the ESFA project to address concerns raised by officers and the school's Senior Management Team regarding pupil movements around the building, arrangements for disabled access and sick pupils and pupil/parent access to the site and building. Cabinet delegated authority to officers to agree improvements to the existing design of the building such as the widening of corridors and the creation of a larger and more noticeable main entrance, plus improvements to access to the site. This was to be funded from Section 106 contributions (£238K) and Basic Need capital grant (£187K).
- 2.5 In summer 2016 temporary accommodation was installed on the school site by the ESFA's contractor, Kier Construction, to decant around half the school thereby enabling the demolition of the former Junior School buildings so that a new build 630 place primary school could be constructed. The new build school began construction in September 2016 and was completed in October 2017. The school has now moved in its entirety into its new building.

(b) *Current Situation*

Site clearance

- 2.6 The PSBP project is now moving into its final stages, which involves clearing the remaining redundant buildings from site and undertaking landscaping works to enable the school to occupy the full site again from summer 2018. Whilst this work is occurring, the school's play facilities are limited to the lower part of an already constrained site, which is placing significant pressures on the operation of the school.
- 2.7 Kier Construction and its demolition subcontractor are currently preparing for the clearance of the site in order to facilitate the subsequent landscaping works. This will remove all remaining redundant buildings, with the exception of the Clock Tower as this is the responsibility of the Council.
- 2.8 In order to facilitate the removal of the Clock Tower building alongside the clearance of the rest of the former Lockwood Community Building, Officers have issued a Prior Notification of Demolition application for the Clock Tower to the Kirklees Planning Department, as authorised by Cabinet in March 2015. If granted, the demolition will be negotiated with ESFA in order to provide best value for the Council. This will be funded from existing condition budgets using officer delegated powers.

External Works

- 2.9 The Mount Pleasant site is small when compared against the Department for Education's 'standard' for a school of its size and has always struggled with limited and constrained external play and PE provision. As the focus of the Government's PSBP is almost exclusively on dealing with the replacement of life expired school buildings with new build, the current ESFA project will not deal with this issue.
- 2.10 The landscaping works being proposed by the ESFA are limited and the layout of the new hard play areas has been designed by the contractor to minimise costs rather than rationalise and maximise the areas available. Whilst the school will not have less hard space than it had previously, the proposed layout will leave extensive areas of grass between tarmacked areas which will create supervision issues, generate mud and will be a maintenance burden. The proposed design represents a missed opportunity to improve the external layout of the site so that it better reflects the needs of the school.
- 2.11 In order to address these concerns, Officers have worked extensively with the School and the ESFA to identify a number of enhancements that would improve the quality of the external provision. These are as follows:
- Additional hard play - a 'squaring off' of a proposed grassed area adjacent to a hard play area will create around 385m² of additional meaningful and useable play space. This would be constructed using a free draining material in order to avoid the requirement for additional drainage;

- Existing grassed area on the lower part of the site - this grassed area is often unavailable depending on weather conditions. This area would be made more usable through the provision of around 400m² of permeable 'eco- mulch' with various items of play equipment and/or a trim-trail provided for use by Key Stage 1 pupils, with the remaining area retained as grass. Land drains would be provided over the whole area which would discharge into the existing dry pond. This would facilitate the re-establishment of a nature walk adjacent to the grassed area leading to the re-instated pond;
- Provision of canopies outside Key Stage 1 classrooms to encourage outdoor access to the curriculum all year round. These are provided as standard on Council funded new build primary school projects such as Royds Hall, Beaumont Academy Primary and Brambles Academy Primary but are not provided by the ESFA on PSBP projects;
- Improvements to the proposed arrangements for the nursery and Key Stage 1 hard play plus some works to the existing orchard area;
- New access steps from Victoria Road to replace the existing steps which are in a poor condition and do not meet current standards regarding disability access.

2.12 As previously mentioned in paragraph 2.4, Cabinet delegated to Officers in March 2016 a budget of £425K to negotiate and agree additional capital works at Mount Pleasant. The current estimated cost for the additional works previously approved plus the new works proposed in paragraph 2.11 is around £550K (including all fees, preliminaries and contingencies).

2.13 It is therefore proposed that the Council's capital injection into the PSBP project be increased by £125K. This would be funded from Basic Need capital grant currently available within the baseline section of the Learning and Early Support Schools Capital Plan. This investment would ensure that the external facilities available to the school match the excellent internal facilities being provided by the new school building.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP)

None

3.2 Economic Resilience (ER)

This will provide opportunities for the local supply market to be involved in the additional works proposed.

3.3 Improving Outcomes for Children

Mount Pleasant Primary School draws the majority of its intake from Huddersfield South West and serves an area of significant economic disadvantage. A large majority of its pupils are from a Pakistani heritage, with the remaining coming from a wide range of different ethnic groups. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and the percentage of pupils with a disability and/or Special Educational Needs is above average. The proportion of pupils entitled to pupil premium funding is greater than in most schools.

The PSBP project has removed life expired, unsuitable accommodation and replaced it with a brand new school building that facilitates the delivery of the national curriculum in a modern and excellent learning environment. The proposals in this report will ensure that the external facilities available to all pupils will match the excellence of the internal facilities available for learning and development.

3.4 Reducing demand of services

None

3.5 Legal, Financial or Human Resources

The increase in capital funding of £125K requested in this report will be funded solely from the 2017/18 Learning & Early Support Basic Need capital grant baseline and will therefore not incur revenue borrowing costs.

4. Consultees and Their Opinions

4.1 The Ward Members for Newsome and Crosland Moor & Netherton were informed of the proposals for the improved external works and demolition on 21st December 2017. One query was received regarding the content of the external works, which Officers dealt with.

4.2 The Portfolio Holders for Resources and Place were briefed on the contents of this report on 8th January 2018 and were supportive of the proposals contained within it.

5. Officer Recommendation and Reasons

Members are requested to:

- note that Officers have submitted a Prior Notification of Demolition application for the demolition of the Clock Tower at Mount Pleasant Primary School;

- approve the allocation of an additional £125K Basic Need capital grant funding to the new Mount Pleasant Primary School scheme and authorise a revised Section 151 letter to be issued if required by the ESFA.

6. Cabinet Portfolio Holders Recommendation.

Portfolio Holders welcome the proposed increase in the size and quality of the external play space at this school, which brings it into line with the Council's own new Primary School building programme.

7. Next Steps.

- 7.1 Once approval of the Prior Notification of Demolition has been received, discussions will occur with the ESFA and Kier Construction to add the demolition of the Clock Tower to the existing contract for the removal of the remaining buildings on site.
- 7.2 Subject to approval of the additional funding, Officers will either negotiate with the ESFA and Kier Construction for completion of some or all of the additional works as part of the ESFA project or will arrange procurement and implementation separately depending on timescales and Value for Money considerations.

8. Contact Officer and Relevant Papers.

David Martin – Head of Capital Delivery & Facilities Management –
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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Private Cabinet Report - 11th March 2014;

Public Cabinet Report 17th June 2014- Education Funding Agency proposals for the Mount Pleasant Primary School site;

Public Cabinet Report 30th June 2015- Revenue Financial Outturn & Rollover Report 2014-15;

Public Cabinet Report 28th July 2015- Implications arising from the Education Funding Agency proposals for the Mount Pleasant Primary School site;

Public Cabinet Report 8th March 2016- Implications arising from the Education Funding Agency proposals for the Mount Pleasant Primary School site.

10. Service Director Responsible.

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