

SCHOOL CAPITAL PROGRAMME - UPDATE

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Susan O'Brien Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Families, Education & Wellbeing Cabinet Member for Property and Infrastructure
Officer Contact(s)	Bobby Finch, Infrastructure, Transport & Building Services
Papers with report	None

HEADLINES

Summary	This report provides an update on the primary and secondary school expansions, the school condition works programme and other school capital works.
Putting our Residents First	<i>Putting our Residents First, Our Built Environment; Our People; Financial Management</i> Investment in schools to adequately address the impact of the population increase within the London Borough of Hillingdon on existing school places. This project also forms part of the Hillingdon Improvement Programme.
Financial Cost	The revised budget and forecast expenditure on the existing Schools expansions capital programme from 2021-2026 is £16,847k. Including expenditure of £38,546k incurred in prior years, total investment on the existing programme amounts to £55,393k.
Relevant Select Committees	Corporate, Finance & Property Families, Health and Wellbeing
Relevant Ward(s)	All Wards

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

- 1. Note the progress made with primary and secondary school expansions, the school condition programme and other school capital projects.**
- 2. Delegates full authority to the appropriate Cabinet Members, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Infrastructure, Transport & Building Services, to make all necessary procurement and financial decisions, including the appointment of consultancies and the placing of building contracts for School Condition Programme.**

Reasons for recommendation

School expansions will meet the changing need for school places in the Borough. Progressing the School Condition Programme will allow the necessary repair or replacement works to be progressed in the schools to avoid the potential impact on their daily operations due to parts of the building fabric being beyond repair, or equipment which is at the end of its life. Ensuring these works are undertaken will minimise the risk of health and safety related issues or the possibility of a school closure occurring.

Select Committee Comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. PRIMARY SCHOOLS

School places forecast

The demand for primary places in Hillingdon rose for over ten years up to 2018, then stabilised and has fell slightly in 2020-21. In May 2021 census total primary rolls are 2% lower than in October 2019. This is after two years of volatility, seen across greater London as the economic impacts of Brexit and Covid have led families to leave London, and it is not yet clear if this is a new continuing trend or will stabilise or reverse. In some areas house sales have stalled and more households have no school age children.

Birth rates are now stable or falling, but there is still some migration of pupils into the Borough and new housing developments under construction. A few schools have experienced larger decreases, a few have had rising rolls and nearly half of all primary schools are full in every year group. Ideally there would be a few places in each school to enable parental choice and cope with new families moving in.

Officers are working closely with schools to meet residents demands and present options to reduce operational capacity in some instances to respond to changing demand from residents, whilst continuing to monitor the changing demand including movements across the Borough boundary.

2. SECONDARY SCHOOLS

School places forecast

The forecast for secondary school places shows a longer-term sustained demand for additional places. The secondary school's total capacity is far lower than the current primary total capacity and as of May 2021 each primary school year group capacity is higher than the available Year 7 capacity. By 2026 primary school reception intake is projected to have declined, but this will not reach Year 7 until 2032.

However, parents choose secondary places for reasons other than distance, including faith, single sex and perceived other qualities, and there is far more movement around, out and into the Borough. In addition, Ofsted rated Outstanding and Good schools attract families. This puts pressure on schools to stay and become popular, as the LA has no powers to force parents to accept an offer at a school. Officers regularly review and update the forecast for additional secondary school places, and for the past three years have agreed 4 extra classes of temporary places to meet parent demand across the Borough.

On National Offer Day for September 2021, as for the previous two years 15 of the 18 schools were immediately full:

- a) Offers to Hillingdon residents: 3,607 (including 505 to schools in other LAs). Hillingdon remains the top west London Borough with 94% of pupils gaining one of their preferred secondary school places, 67% gaining their first choice.
- b) Places offered in Hillingdon Schools: 3,647 (including 409 from other LAs).

Since 2018 there has been a net 'export' of pupils as more Hillingdon residents have chosen schools outside of this Borough (14% in 2021 with 12% of places filled by those coming into the Borough). Neighbouring local authorities have reported that they now have larger numbers moving up from primary and so distance criteria may mean fewer Hillingdon pupils will secure places in 2022 onwards. This could add a need for an extra 3 or 4 forms of entry for secondary schools in Hillingdon, meaning available places will be under pressure for a few years until planned new builds are complete. Parental preferences are still low for a few schools, adding pressure on places on some schools and potentially limiting parent choice in some areas of the Borough.

The year group moving up from primary to secondary schools in September 2022 will potentially be the largest yet (116 more than for September 2021). Information from neighbouring Local Authorities is being obtained on their capacity changes to help assess future capacity requirements. From September 2021, discussions will commence with our secondary schools to identify where potential temporary extra places could be added to meet likely high demand in 2022 and 2023.

Currently there are two projects to add permanent secondary places to meet demand for secondary school places. Both projects are being funded and managed by Department for Education (DfE):

- Expanding Harlington by 1.5 forms of entry (45 places) from 2023. This is part of the complete rebuilding of the school and library.
- A proposed new free school in the north of the Borough - a 6 form of entry Free School (180 places in each year group). This is subject to a thorough review of the need for the school, which will be reviewed by the DfE as part of their commissioning process. In terms of admissions there will be no faith admissions criteria with distance being the main criteria, though it is to be part of a Church of England Trust.

Both of these schools will also have new units for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) who would have some integration into mainstream and also specialist teaching and support.

Ruislip High School expansion

This was a Council led, 1 form of entry (30 places in each year group) expansion of Ruislip High School. The main construction works for the school expansion consisting of the new classroom block and adaptations to the existing school building expand Ruislip High School were completed in November 2020. The final account is under way with the contractor. The conditions works at the school were completed over the 2021 school summer holidays.

3. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

Hedgewood Works – installing new modular classroom units and adaptation works

To meet unexpected demand this spring for more reception year special education need places, approval was sought to carry out works at Hedgewood to increase the overall school capacity by 34 places as well as adaptation works to provide additional personal care spaces.

The works commenced on 2 August 2021 and the personal care spaces will be completed by the start of the new school term in September 2021. The installation of the new modular classroom units which will be used to accommodate the additional pupils is scheduled to be completed by end of October 2021.

Development of proposals for Department for Education (DfE) SEND Provision Fund

There is an ongoing review of how and where to most effectively secure additional capacity to meet the needs of children and young people with specialist education needs. This activity is being aligned to utilise the DfE grants for SEND capital funding. Hillingdon was originally allocated £3,594k for the Special Provision Capital Fund and this includes £678k top up funding which was confirmed in May 2018. Then Hillingdon received a share of an additional top up, a further £1,356k bringing the overall total allocation to £4,950k.

The SEND Provision Capital Plan for the use of this was published on 31 May 2019. In April 2021 DfE issued a new grant, the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation out of which Hillingdon have been allocated £2,872k. This grant can be used provide more places, meet needs and reduce use of expensive independent provision to support a reduction of deficits (which Hillingdon along with most Local Authorities have due to increasing demands without related increased funding) on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The completed works to date which utilised the grant funding are as follows:

- Expansion of Hedgewood Special School - 25 additional places (a further 34 as outlined in the section above);
- Expansion of Moorcroft Special School - 10 additional places;
- Creation of a low arousal/sensory breakout space at Uxbridge College - 30 Additional Places for post-16 students with ASD.

Further options are being investigated to find the most cost-effective use of the remaining grants to add places quickly to meet demand for special school places. This will include

providing extra places in existing schools, potentially creating spaces by moving some pupils onto a second site for one of them, repurposing vacant education spaces.

4. SCHOOLS CONDITION PROGRAMME

The current status of agreed projects in the School Condition Programme can be found in the table 1 below:

Table 1: School Condition Works Programme

School	Works	Status
Yeading Infant	Roof replacement works	Construction works on site
Field End Infant & Junior	Roof replacement works	Construction works on site
Whiteheath Junior	Roof replacement works	Construction works on site
Harmondsworth Primary	Fire Safety works and emergency lighting	Construction works on site
Coteford Infant	Structural remedial works	Construction works on site
Yeading Infant	Refurbishment of canteen building	Pre-construction stage
Grange Park Infants	Basement water ingress works	Pre-construction stage
Grange Park Junior	Toilet refurbishment & external lighting	Pre-construction stage
Frithwood Primary	Roof replacement works	Pre-construction stage

Future works

Officers have assessed requests received from schools for assistance with condition works required on their premises. Proposals are being presented to Members for consideration on potential projects that could be taken forward which will form future phases of the School Condition Programme.

Recommendation 2 seeks approval from Cabinet for delegated authority to approve projects to be included in School Condition Programme any future procurement and financial decisions on these projects. This will enable efficient decision-making for the programme.

5. OTHER SCHOOL PROJECTS

The DfE is directly managing and funding 6 projects under Priority School Building Programme Phase 2 (PSBP2) and a further 6 projects under the Free Schools Programme. These projects total a significant DfE investment and help ensure the Council as an education authority meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient places, and to promote high standards of education and fair access to education. These projects will add 240 new places, across primary, secondary and special; from the PSBP2 projects and 2,318 new places from Free Schools projects. Officers will continue to be involved in ongoing discussions with the DfE and schools around various aspects of the projects. Details of the projects are outlined below:

Priority Schools Building Programme Phase 2 (PSBP2)

Harlington Secondary School

The entire school, public library and adult education provision are to be rebuilt on the existing site with works due to be completed in 2023. The Council has agreed to contribute towards a 1.5FE expansion of the school and a new 15 place SRP for pupils with complex needs and autism. Planning permission has been approved and the details are being finalised for a start on site.

Meadow Special Secondary School

The existing two main buildings are being rebuilt and remodelled with improved facilities, but no extra classrooms. One building will be complete in September 2022 and the other for 2023.

Queensmead Secondary School

One block is being rebuilt to improve science, technical and engineering provision and remove reliance on inadequate temporary spaces. Planning consent was granted August 2020.

Douay Martyrs Secondary School

One block is being rebuilt to improve and reconfigure the provision and remove inadequate temporary spaces. The Music Service Store will be relocated within the new building. Work has begun on site.

Minet Infants and Junior Schools

Both of these schools will be completely remodelled to incorporate the accommodation currently being provided by several temporary modular classroom units. The roof, windows and mechanical systems will be replaced and the playground is to be reconfigured. Planning consent has been given for temporary buildings on the playing field to house each school whilst they are rebuilt one at a time. The planning application for the rebuild is scheduled to be submitted in October 2021.

Free Schools

Nanaksar Primary - Guru Nanak Sikh Academy Trust

A new 4FE primary school building with 840 places is being built on the Guru Nanak campus and will open to pupils in January 2022. Nanaksar school originally opened in modular temporary classroom units in 2013 at 4FE but only for two intakes as proposals for the new buildings were delayed. Reception reopened in 2020 and pupils are currently accommodated on the adjoining Guru Nanak school site.

New Special Primary School - Grand Union Village - Eden Academy Trust

This will be a new extra provision with 80 places to serve pupils with the most complex and severe needs in the south of the Borough. Planning consent was granted in August 2020.

New Secondary School - Bishop Arden in West Ruislip - Veritas Academy Trust (Bishop Ramsey)

The DfE approved one new 6FE school for north of the A40 and following failure over several years to find a suitable site north or south of the A40, in November 2020, Cabinet agreed to lease a site on the Ruislip golf course, currently closed as part of it is occupied by HS2, who will remodel and reinstate a nine-hole golf-course when they leave. The school will have open admissions criteria, based on distance, with no faith places. Subject to a review of need, planning permission and other approvals, the proposed opening date for the school is 2023 or 2024.

New Special School to replace Grangewood - Eden Academy Trust

DfE plan to demolish Grangewood School and build a new larger school, Pinn River School on the site. This will be an all through age 4-19+ school for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and complex needs and visual and other sensory Impairments. The planning application is due to be submitted in the next few months.

Young People's Academy Special Secondary School - Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

The Young People's Academy is being completely rebuilt and expanded with 52 extra places and will serve a broader spectrum of need including pupils with social emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) and linked autistic conditions. Planning approval in July 2020 and the contractor will be starting on site shortly.

The Skills Hub Alternative Provision Secondary Orchard Hill College Academy Trust

This is the only alternative provision in the Borough and current accommodation is unsuitable. It will be expanded to offer wider services to support pupils and schools and is being completely rebuilt adjacent to the new Young People's Academy. Work is underway and will be completed in early 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The current School Expansions Capital Programme revised budget is £55,393k for the period up to 2025/26 including prior years, comprising £16,400k for new primary school expansions and £27,131k for secondary school expansions. Additionally, £3,800k has been included within the programme for the provision of temporary classrooms as and when required. Further to this, £7,822k SEND grant budget (including prior years) has also been earmarked to support meeting the increasing demand for placements for pupils with special needs and £240k towards the provision for a larger dining hall at Meadow School.

As at month 3 the overall School Expansions Capital Programme is forecasting to break even over the medium term. Previously identified additional requirements for Secondary School places are expected to be delivered through a combination of installing bulge classes and the planned expansion of Harlington in the south and the new free school in the north to be delivered by the DfE. Within the secondary schools expansion programme, there is approved budget provision of £6,055k as the Council's contribution to the works at Harlington school.

In recent years the DfE has made £4,950k available to support improved SEND provision and expand places, from which £1,879k has been spent in prior years on several projects. In 2021/22, a new High Needs Provision Capacity Grant of £2,872k was awarded. Recently, an amount of £2,504k has been allocated from the total SEND budget towards the installation of modular classroom units at Hedgewood School for delivery this year.

The 2021/22 revised budget for the Schools Condition Building Programme is £3,322k. The funding will be utilised to deliver various schemes with some works continuing into next financial year.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

Completion of the school expansion projects will result in the provision of additional school places needed for local children, which the Council has a statutory duty to provide. In addition, the completion of the other school capital projects will result in the provision of quality, fit for purpose school facilities.

Progressing the School Condition Programme allows the necessary repair or replacement works to be progressed in the school's, avoiding the potential impact on their daily operations due to parts of the building fabric being beyond economic repair, or equipment which is at the end of its life. Ensuring these works are undertaken will minimise the risk of health and safety related issues or the possibility of a school closure occurring.

Consultation carried out or required

A statutory process is required for expansion of local authority maintained school premises if this will increase the capacity of the school by more than 30 pupils and by 25% or 200, whichever is the lesser. The statutory process includes publication of proposals and a statutory consultation period.

Under the School Admissions Code, the local authority as admissions authority for community schools must consult at least the school governing body on the admission number. Foundation schools and academies are their own admissions authority and set their own admission number, subject to them carrying out their own consultation.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and associated financial implications, noting that budgeted investment in this programme is to be financed through a combination of Department for Education Grant and local resources. With the majority of local investment expected to be met from Prudential Borrowing and therefore ultimately chargeable to the local Council Taxpayer.

Specific investment in additional SEND capacity through expanding the Borough's SRP capacity will contribute towards the Council's broader efforts to manage the significant, unfunded pressure in High Needs expenditure within the Dedicated Schools Grant arising from the introduction of the 2014 Children's and Families Act. This forms part of the Deficit Recovery Plan jointly agreed by the Council and Schools Forum.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Legal advice is provided whenever necessary, in particular cases, to ensure that the Council's Interests are protected.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

Asset Management authored this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previous Cabinet report updates on the School Capital Programme