

Meeting of the Council – 10th October, 2011

Report of the Cabinet

Capital Programme Monitoring

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the recommendations of the Cabinet on proposed amendments to the Capital Programme.

Background

2. At its meeting on 14th September, 2011, the Cabinet considered a report on Capital Programme Monitoring and made a series of recommendations to the Council which are contained in this report in paragraph 12. Other recommendations contained in the report to the Cabinet meeting were determined under delegated powers. A copy of the Cabinet report is available from the Democratic Services Section (telephone 01384 815236) or by e-mail to richard.sanders@dudley.gov.uk; or on the Council's website (follow the links to Meetings and Decisions).

Adult, Community and Housing

Oak Lane

3. The old utility blocks at Oak Lane were demolished and rebuilt in 2010/11 and formed the first phase of a 3 phase programme. Phase 2 is due to start shortly when the old sewage treatment plant will be replaced with a new mains drainage system as the treatment plant fails to maintain permissible discharge standards. Phase 3 will start in early 2012 and will provide 3 additional plots on the site.

Estimated total costs have increased due to a number of external factors including the extreme weather conditions on site last winter which delayed the programme and caused damage to the onsite utilities infrastructure. Extra costs were also incurred for the clearance of contaminated land prior to works commencing. In addition to this, further works are required to decommission the existing sewage treatment plant following installation of the new pumped mains drainage system.

As a result, it is proposed to increase the project budget by £103,000 which can be funded from existing directorate resources, and that the Capital Programme be amended accordingly.

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Programme 2012/13

4. Taking into account the anticipated level of Government DFG support and the availability of other housing capital resources, £2.6m will be available for DFGs in 2012/13, funding around 260 grants depending on the nature and cost of the works involved. It is proposed that a budget for this amount be approved and included in the Capital Programme.

Urban Environment

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

5. The Government has created a Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) for transport related schemes that will support economic growth, by re-establishing local economies and tackling climate change. The fund consists of £560 million to be spent over a four year period (2011-2015). Bids to the fund can range from small packages of under £5 million to larger packages of up to £50 million.

The Council submitted the Brierley Hill Active Travel Partnership (BHATP) project as a small project bid in April 2011 and has been successful in securing £362,000 towards the overall £512,000 cost. The remaining funding has been identified from Section 106 transport planning obligation funds and 2012/13 Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 Integrated Transport Block funding.

The BHATP project seeks to promote and improve active travel accessibility to and within the new centre of Brierley Hill and its surrounding hinterland to support the economic growth aspirations of the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan. The project will deliver a wide range of “smarter choice” initiatives delivered through the formation of community, school and business based partnerships. The development of new and improved active travel corridors for walking and cycling linking the surrounding communities with the centre’s retail and employment sectors will provide the enhanced sustainable connectivity vital to allow Brierley Hill to realise its economic potential.

It is proposed that the LSTF allocation be noted and the capital element of the project be included in the Capital Programme.

Urgent Amendments to the Capital Programme

Paragon Private Finance Initiative (PFI) - Summerhill School and Colley Lane Primary School

6. A decision (ref. DCS/18/2011) was made by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Treasurer on 27th June 2011 to approve works at Summerhill School and Colley Lane Primary School as part of the Paragon PFI Project, and their inclusion in the Capital Programme.

The detailed decision which was considered in private, is available to Members on request to Richard Sanders, Democratic Services, Directorate of Corporate Resources on (01384) 815236 or email richard.sanders@dudley.gov.uk.

Installation of a new cooking kitchen at Foxyards Primary School

7. The former Quarry Bank Primary school Building is shortly to be demolished; the existing kitchen equipment is in good order and has been removed prior to commencement of demolition for re-use elsewhere. Foxyards Primary School has been identified as one of the few schools in the Borough without cooking or heating facilities for school lunches. The school has been requesting a kitchen for many years but funding has been unavailable. There is suitable space and sufficient services available in the existing building to facilitate the new equipment quickly without the need for major building alteration works.

The estimated cost of £45,000 can be met from:

£20,000 Targeted Capital Fund (TCF) Kitchens and Dining Room Grant
£5,000 Capital Maintenance Grant
£20,000 Revenue Funding, Client and Catering

In order to comply with funding deadlines and to minimise disruption to the school, a decision (ref. DCS/22/2011) was made by the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, in consultation with the Treasurer and the Acting Director of Children's Services, on 27th July 2011 to include the project in the Capital Programme.

Finance

8. This report is financial in nature and information about the individual proposals is contained within the body of the report.

Law

9. The Council's budgeting process is governed by the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the Local Government Act 2003.

Equality Impact

10. These proposals comply with the Council's policy on Equality and Diversity.
11. With regard to Children and Young People:
 - The Capital Programme for Children's Services will be spent wholly on improving services for children and young people. Other elements of the Capital Programme will also have a significant impact on this group.
 - Consultation is undertaken with children and young people, if appropriate, when developing individual capital projects within the Programme.
 - There has been no direct involvement of children and young people in developing the proposals in this report.

Recommendations

12. That the Council be recommended:
 - That the budget for improvements to the Oak Lane site be increased by £103,000 and the Capital Programme amended accordingly, as set out in paragraph 3.
 - That the Disabled Facilities Grant budget for 2012/13 of £2.6m be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 4.

- That the Local Sustainable Transport Fund allocation be noted and the capital element of the project be included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 5.
- That the urgent amendments to the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraphs 6 and 7, be noted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Smith' or similar, with a horizontal line underneath.

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Leader of the Council