

**Select Committee on Children's Services - 23 January 2008**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Primary Capital Programme**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to: a) ensure the Select Committee is aware of this major opportunity to transform primary education in Dudley and b) provide the opportunity for the Select Committee to respond to the consultation on Dudley's proposals.

**Background**

2. The Prime Minister (then Chancellor) Gordon Brown, announced in the 2005 Budget Statement extra resources to fund a 15 year programme of capital investment to transform primary education. Dudley has been preparing to take advantage of this major opportunity since 2005. This includes developing an approach for prioritising projects to receive capital investment based on consultation in 2006 and 2007.
3. Guidance for local authorities was published in December 2007 setting out what must be done before the capital is released. Dudley must submit a Primary Strategy for Change to the DCSF for approval. Subject to approval, Dudley will receive £4.2 million in 2009/10 and £6.5 million in 2010/11. This level of funding is expected to continue until 2022/23 (fourteen years) subject to future public spending decisions.
4. The consultation document attached to this report provides further details.

**Finance**

5. The government allocations to Dudley will only be released following approval of the Primary Strategy for Change. This involves a series of rigorous assessments covering national policy areas, specific project proposals, efficient procurement methods, sustainability and value for money.

6. Dudley is required to identify how the Primary Capital Programme allocations will be committed and any additional funding from other sources.
7. The project governance and management arrangements including approvals, financial controls, monitoring and reporting will comply with legislation and Council requirements.
8. The development costs of the proposals have been met from existing budgets.

### **Law**

9. As the proposals develop there will be significant implications covering school organisation, land, employment and finance. The Council's statutory powers relating to the building of schools and the provision of education are contained in the relevant Education Acts.

### **Equality Impact**

10. The report takes into account the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. Children and young people, and in particular school pupils, as well as communities, will be fully engaged in the planning and design processes.

### **Recommendation**

11. It is recommended that:-
  - The Select Committee advise the Cabinet member on any issues that should be considered when developing the Primary Strategy for Change.
  - Respond to the consultation by 3 March 2008.



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