

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF: Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education

LEAD OFFICERS: Strategic Director of Children's & Education (DCS)

DATE: Thursday, 10 March 2022

PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED: Children, Young People and Education

WARD/S AFFECTED: (All Wards);

KEY DECISION: Y

SUBJECT:

Variation to the 2021/22 schools capital programme

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To present for consideration and approval:

- variations to the 2021/22 schools capital programme
- a request to enter into an extended premises lease arrangement with an Academy Trust.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board approves:

- 1: The establishment of a project for a refurbishment at the former Stansfeld Centre for the purpose of creating additional alternative school provision capacity for pupils requiring a vocational based curriculum.
- 2: A budget increase of £250,000 for the previously approved SEND project at Shadsworth Infant School.
- 3: A realignment of the previously approved budget allocated for works associated to The Sunnyhurst Centre and the relocation of Crosshill School
- 4: A budget increase of £165,000 for the previously approved relocation of Longshaw Nursery School.
- 5: Approval from the Director of Children's Services and the Director for Growth and Development, in consultation with the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education, to agree for officers to progress works to extend the lease with The Champion Trust for the Sunnyhurst Centre from 30 years to 125 years in line with typical academy lease arrangements.

3. BACKGROUND

The borough is seeing increased demand for alternative provision for those pupils for which a traditional mainstream education is not proving conducive to effective learning and positive outcomes. St Thomas Centre are seeking to expand provision to provide for an increased number of pupils for whom a vocational curriculum would support those pupils to gain key employability and life skills. The former Stansfeld Centre provides for a good central location and provides

plentiful indoor and outdoor space that can be refurbished to provide for an appropriate teaching and learning environment.

For projects that require a capital variation, these projects have been agreed previously at Executive Board:

- Shadsworth Infant School – EBD September 2020
- Sunnyhurst/Relocation of Crosshill – EBD January 2021
- Longshaw Nursery School – EBD January 2021

Lease arrangements between the Council and The Champion Trust for the premises formerly known as The Sunnyhurst Centre have been secured based on the terms and conditions agreed at Executive Board in January 2021. This allowed for the relocation of Crosshill School and the release of additional specialist and mainstream education places. As part of the discussions with the Department of Education (DfE) to secure this lease, the DfE requested that the Council committed to reviewing the terms of the lease to model a typical academies lease.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Stansfeld Centre

An alternative provision vocational teaching resource will further enhance existing borough provision and will specifically support some of our most vulnerable pupils with a particular focus on those pupils that require a more personalised and tailored education to support their social, emotional and mental health needs.

Initial funding of £500,000 awarded to the LA in the 2021/22 financial year (additional SEND funding) will support the project to be established. It is anticipated that further funding from the Schools Basic Need funding stream will be required to ensure that the project is able to progress. More detailed information will be submitted to the Executive Board for approval following full feasibility and concept design process.

Shadsworth Infant School – SEND project

This project was established on the Schools capital programme in 2020/21 with a budget allocation of £260k following a report to Executive Board in September 2020. At tender stage all tender returns were higher than the established budget. The key reason for the tenders being significantly above the established budget is due to a requirement for a specialist anti vandal roofing system alongside increased costs of materials and construction costs. An uplift in the budget of £250,000 from the Schools Basic Need Block is required to enable this project to be awarded.

Sunnyhurst Centre – Relocation of Crosshill School

A total budget of £380,000 for the refurbishment of the Sunnyhurst scheme is currently established on the schools capital programme. This budget was split based on £180,000 for LA directly managed works and £200,000 to be devolved to The Champion Trust for them to undertake their planned refurbishment works.

The relocation of Crosshill School has allowed for increased special school capacity and has also released accommodation for 100 additional mainstream secondary education places at Blackburn Central High School. The LA directly managed works is complete and has resulted in a budget underspend of circa £50k. The works led and managed by the school exposed some additional asbestos works at a cost of £46k that had not initially been budgeted for and needed to be completed as part of the work led and managed by The Champion Trust.

It is proposed that the existing budget allocation of £380k, is realigned so that the LA budget is reduced by £46k to £134k, and that this £46k is devolved to The Champion Trust to fund the additional asbestos works, increasing their budget allocation to £246k.

Longshaw Nursery School

A plan to relocate Longshaw Nursery School to the same site as Longshaw Infant School was established on the 2021/22 schools capital programme with an estimated budget of £660k based on initial studies.

The full scope of requirements and concept designs have been established, and have been tendered accordingly, increases in various requirements alongside increases in construction and material costs have resulted in a budget uplift of £165k being required to ensure the scheme is to progress. The Council has a Capital budget allocation of £214k that can be used on projects that are increasing the capacity of early education places for 2 year olds. It is intended to increase the capacity of places at Longshaw Nursery School as part of this relocation by an additional 8 places.

The Sunnyhurst Centre/Crosshill School lease

Work to extend the lease arrangements between the Council and The Champion Trust for the Sunnyhurst Centre premises will necessitate further applications for land consents to deal with the 30 year lease surrender and to enter into the new 125 year lease.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

National Policy Context – The council has responsibility to ensure that all allocated funding for maintained sector schools is used in accordance with the associated grant terms and conditions.

Performance Indicators – The Capital programme, will be closely monitored against agreed performance indicators representing measures of quality, cost and timescales.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed variations to the existing capital programme for the Schools and Education portfolio are attached at Appendix 1.

The proposed changes to the scheme at the Sunnyhurst Centre, amounting to £46k, are a realignment of the existing budget and do not require any additional funding.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The report has been compiled with regard to the Council's Constitution, in particular the Financial Procedural Rules and the Contract Procedure Rules. All procurement and contract activity in connection with this programme must be carried out in accordance with the relevant parts of the constitution and legislation.

All contracts prepared in relation to the programme must be in conjunction with Legal Services/CAPS team.

The proposed extension to the lease to The Champion Trust will be in accordance with the constitution, council policies and procedures and in conjunction Legal Services and Property Management.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource requirements for managing and coordinating the capital programme will be met from within the current Building Consultancy structure and the Schools and Education team. Support will be required from Legal Services.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

10. CONSULTATIONS

Were there have been changes to a scope of works, officers have discussed these changes and any impact of them with the relevant schools.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

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DATE:	14 February 2022
BACKGROUND PAPER:	Appendix A – Education Capital Programme 2021/22 Variation Report