

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board  
**DATE:** 18 January 2024  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director – Children’s Services  
**PORTFOLIO:** Children and Young People  
**SUBJECT:** Schools Capital Programme – 2024/25  
**WARD(S):** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report provides a summary of the capital funding received by the Council from central government to support capital works and programmes within schools for the 2024/25 financial year.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- 1) The position regarding capital funding from the Department for Education for 2024/25 is noted;**
- 2) The proposals to be funded from School Condition Capital Allocation are approved; and**
- 3) The capital allocations are put forward for inclusion in the Budget report to full Council.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The Department for Education has not yet announced the School Condition Allocation (SCA) Capital Grant for 2024/25, but given the timescales for some of the proposed capital projects, there is a requirement to present this report. The allocation stated in this report is based on the 2023/24 allocation which was £748,583. We are currently unsure if the Department for Education will adopt the same methodology as last year, therefore for the purpose of planning the 2024/25 capital programme, the 2023/24 allocation figure has been used. In the event of the 2024/25 allocation being reduced, or in the event that a school converts to academy status which impacts on funding received by the Council, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly.

3.2 Detailed in the table below is the indicative funding available to support capital projects across the school estate:

<b>GOVERNMENT FUNDING</b>	
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<b>GOVERNMENT FUNDING</b>	
<b>School Condition Allocation – Local Authority maintained schools i.e. community and voluntary controlled schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE BASED ON 2022/23)</b>  Allocated to fund condition and suitability projects at Local Authority maintained schools.	£748,583
<b>Basic Need Capital Grant - balance as at December 2023</b>  <b>(The DfE has confirmed there will be no allocation for 2023/24, 2024/25 or 2025/26)</b>  Allocated to support the provision of sufficient mainstream pupil places within the Local Authority.	£278,184

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The programme of works will allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the school environment in mainstream and special school provision through capital projects.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In March 2023 the Department for Education announced that the 2023/24 School Condition Allocation for Halton was £748,583. The 2024/25 allocation has not yet been announced. For the purpose of planning the capital programme for 2024/25, the 2023/24 allocation figure has been used. In the event that the allocation is reduced or should further schools convert to academy status, which will also reduce the amount of funding the Local Authority receives, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly.

- 5.2 The table below details how the School Condition Allocation will be utilised.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated costs</b>	<b>Description</b>
Asset Management - Computer Aided Design (CAD) Plans and Condition surveys	£30,000	CAD plans of school buildings are updated where improvement works/changes to accommodation have been carried out.  The condition surveys are carried out on a 5 yearly cycle as a rolling programme and are essential for identifying condition issues and planning for future capital repair programmes.
Asbestos Management	£10,000	Annual update of asbestos surveys and undertaking of resulting remedial works.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated costs</b>	<b>Description</b>
Accessibility projects	£30,000	Funding that schools can apply for to resolve accessibility issues within school buildings.
Contingency	£86,583	Used for emergency and health and safety works that arise during the year.
Capital Repairs	£592,000	A rolling programme of capital works undertaken at community and voluntary controlled schools, determined by the Local Authority, based upon a priority of need in discussion with schools and colleagues in Property Services.
<b>Total</b>	<b>£748,583</b>	

For any works undertaken within the Capital Repairs Programme, schools are normally required to make a contribution from their own Devolved Formula Capital allocation.

- 5.3 The Local Authority receives Basic Need funding from the Department for Education to assist in pupil place planning and ensure that there are sufficient pupil places. As there remains an overall surplus capacity, within agreed tolerance levels, in both the primary and secondary sector in Halton in terms of school places, the Council received no Basic Need Funding for 2023/24, 2024/25 or 2025/26.
- 5.4 The 2022/23 Basic Need Allocation of £278,185 is currently unallocated. However, as the Local Authority will not receive any Basic Need funding for the next two years, this will be carried forward to support any works required during the next two-year period. Following a recent analysis of forecast and school capacity data, there is not an immediate pupil place Basic Need issue to address, but this position continues to be regularly monitored. The grant conditions attached to Basic Need do allow for alternative use of the funding if there is not a Basic Need for mainstream places, and officers are in discussion with Special Educational Needs colleagues in the LA and in schools to explore the possible further expansion of SEND provision in-borough with a view to utilising Basic Need funding.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

The Capital Programme will address condition and suitability issues within school buildings and will continue to help improve the learning environment for children and young people.

### **6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

As above.

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

N/A

#### 6.4 **A Safer Halton**

N/A

#### 6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

N/A

### 7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

#### 7.1 **Capital Repairs**

It is current practice for schools to contribute towards the cost of the Capital Repairs Programme. Consultation with schools on their contribution to any proposed works will take place following full Council's consideration of the budget report in March 2024. If schools cannot or are not willing to contribute, any proposed projects will not be carried out in 2024/25 and will be deferred for future years.

### 8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Accessibility funding from the School Condition Allocation provides capital funding to improve the accessibility of mainstream and special schools for pupils with disabilities and the wider community. Consideration to access issues is given in all building projects.

### 9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

9.1 The Capital Repairs Programme will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by helping to produce more energy efficient buildings.

### 10. **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

10.1 The decision is required to agree funding for capital works across Halton's educational establishments.

### 11.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

11.1 None

### 12.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

12.1 Any works to be undertaken from the funding detailed in this report will commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

### 13.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Schools Capital Funding Allocations 2023/24 Department for Education 28/03/23	Children's Services Directorate	Catriona Gallimore

Basic Need Capital Allocation announcement for school places in 2025-26. Department for Education 28/03/23	Children's Services Directorate	Catriona Gallimore
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