



Northumberland County Council

Schools Forum

Date: 29 September 2021

School Capital Programme update

Report prepared by: Sue Aviston - Head of School Organisation and Resources.

Purpose of Report

To update the Schools Forum on the progress and delivery of the School Capital Investment Programme.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Schools Forum:

1. Note the content of the report and the benefits to Northumberland Maintained Schools.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2021, "We want you to achieve and realise your potential".

Key Issues

1. The condition of many of our school buildings remains an ongoing challenge with the backlog maintenance costs being in excess of £57m. There are a variety of ways in which the council addresses these ongoing issues, as detailed in Section 2 Schools Capital Investment Programme.
2. Growing capacity in our school estate to meet the demand for places is a key issue. Whilst we have 8,684 surplus places (Oct 2020) across the county, this surplus capacity is rarely in the right area of greatest demand for places. This can be as a result of an increase in birth rate or as a result of significant new build housing developments.

3. The other key issue is securing significant capital investment to support with the implementation of whole scale school/partnership reorganisations.
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Schools Capital Programme Update

The Council has invested or agreed to invest over £101.2m in delivering the schools capital programme since October 2018. There have been 69 projects delivered in 63 schools across the whole of Northumberland, with projects ranging in value from £19k to £43m. Further detail on the individual programmes that have been delivered, or are currently in progress, is set out below.

Schools Capital Investment Programme (SCIP)

SCIP is a programme of works that addresses the backlog maintenance in schools. This programme is funded from a capital allocation from central government through which the local authority has received an allocation on an annual basis since 2011.

Individual projects are selected to form the overall SCIP programme with priority given to works that meet legislative need; address health and safety concerns; or prevent an unplanned school closure. The individual project values are closely monitored throughout the programme to ensure that the overall capital allocation is not exceeded. In recent years, the allocation has been made on a year-by-year basis and it is not yet clear whether there will be a further allocation for the next financial year and beyond. NCC has delivered, or are currently working on, 48 projects, at a value of £3.812m within the past 21 months.

A list of the projects and their value is shown below.

Project Name	Project Output	Value	Projected Completion Date
Branton Primary School	Heating system upgrade and classroom works	£103,000	August 2019 (actual)
Shilbottle Primary School	Roof Works	£27,000	April 2019 (actual)
Cambois Primary School	Lead water supply pipe replacement	£30,000	April 2021 (projected)
Seghill First School	Boundary wall and fencing works	£37,000	March 2020 (actual)
Seahouses Primary School	Drainage works	£23,000	August 2019 (actual)

Northburn Primary School	Safeguarding fencing and access control	£36,000	August 2019 (actual)
Seaton Delaval First School	Underfloor heating works	£40,000	August 2019 (actual)
Ashdale School	Internal courtyard play surfacing	£36,000	August 2019 (actual)
Cragside Primary School	SEN toilet works	£19,000	August 2019 (actual)
The Dales School	Boiler replacement	£175,000	September 2020 (actual)
Hipsburn Primary School	Sewage and drainage works	£40,000	August 2021 (projected)
Ellington Primary School	Boiler replacement	£135,000	March 2020 (actual)
Grange View Primary School	Roof works	£150,000	September 2020 (actual)
Linton Primary School	Electrical upgrade works	£108,000	August 2020 (actual)
Lowick First School	Electrical upgrade works	£74,000	August 2020 (actual)
Scremerston First School	Electrical upgrade works	£56,000	October 2020 (actual)
Stakeford Primary School	Boiler replacement	£76,000	March 2020 (actual)
Tweedmouth West First School	Boiler replacement	£93,000	August 2020 (actual)
Broomhill First School	Roof works and window replacement	£158,000	October 2020 (actual)
Cambo First School	Roof works	£70,000	June 2021 (projected)

Hexham First School	Roof works	£225,000	September 2020 (actual)
New Hartley First School	Window replacement	£142,000	August 2020 (actual)
Pegswood Primary School	Roof works	£162,000	August 2020 (actual)
Prudhoe Castle First School	Roof works	£210,000	August 2020 (actual)
Haydon Bridge High School	Kitchen ventilation upgrade	£76,000	August 2020 (actual)
Mowbray Primary School	Window replacement	£45,000	August 2020 (actual)
Berwick Middle School	Safeguarding works	£48,000	November 2020 (actual)
Beaufront First School	Sewage system upgrade	£40,000	August 2021 (projected)
Holywell First School	Fire alarm and emergency lighting upgrade	£35,000	August 2020 (actual)
Spittal Primary School	Boiler replacement	£90,000	August 2021 (projected)
Spittal Primary School	Window replacement	£115,000	August 2021 (projected)
Eastlea Primary School	Roof works	£100,000	April 2021 (projected)
James Calvert Spence College	Roof works	£33,000	August 2020 (actual)
Collingwood School	Electrical supply upgrade	£25,000	October 2020 (actual)
Hexham Sele First School	Heating system works	£20,000	February 2021 (projected)

Allendale Primary School	Boiler replacement and heating system works	£250,000	August 2021 (projected)
Cleaswell Hill School	Lighting system upgrade	£40,000	August 2021 (projected)
Collingwood School	Lighting system upgrade	£45,000	August 2021 (projected)
Ellington Primary School	Lighting system upgrade	£60,000	June 2021 (projected)
Stakeford Primary School	Lighting system upgrade	£40,000	August 2021 (projected)
Otterburn Primary School	Lighting system upgrade	£35,000	June 2021 (projected)
Choppington First School	Lighting system upgrade	£60,000	August 2021 (projected)
Broomhill First School	Lighting system upgrade	£50,000	June 2021 (projected)
Bedlington Station Primary School	Dampness ingress remediation	£30,000	April 2021 (projected)
Mowbray Primary School	Playground collapse remediation	£50,000	April 2021 (projected)
Belford Primary School	Roof works and window replacement	£150,000	August 2021 (projected)
Otterburn Primary School	Dampness ingress remediation	£25,000	June 2021 (projected)
The Dales School	Heating system works	£125,000	August 2021 (projected)

School Nurseries Capital Fund

In July 2018, the Department for Education (DfE) announced a capital bidding round of £30 million to create new high-quality school-based nursery places for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds to deliver the government's commitment to build more school-based nurseries, and to boost social mobility. The council successfully bid for capital funding to expand nursery provision in two locations in the county. As both of the selected schools were Academies, they were required to contribute a minimum 25% of the capital costs and to take on the responsibility of project delivery with oversight provided by NCC Children's Services.

A breakdown for each of the projects, which are now complete, is shown below.

Setting/school	Description	Value	Project completed within budget
Cramlington Village Primary School	A bespoke pod enabling the creation of an additional 15 full-time nursery places and 15 wraparound places.	£114k	✓
Blyth Morpeth Road Primary School	A modular building enabling the creation of an additional 16 full-time nursery places and 13 wraparound places.	£332k	✓

Basic Need

The local authority receives grant funding from central government on an annual basis to grow school capacity due to increases in school age pupils. This grant funding allocation is based on an annual data return that relates to pupil predictions. Projects have been delivered for Special schools as well as mainstream schools, which included both local authority-maintained schools as well as academies.

The full list of schools is contained in the table below. A total investment of £7m has been delivered, or is planned to be delivered, within the reporting period.

School/setting	Description	Value	Completion Date	Project completed within budget
Whytrig Middle School	Creates 144 places	£672,457	Phase 1: September 2018 - (1x double classroom mobile)	✓
			Phase 2: September 2021 - (1x double classroom mobile)	

Chantry Middle School	Creates 120 places	£711,025	Phase 1: September 2018 (refurbishment)	✓
			Phase 2: September 2021 (double classroom modular build)	
Blyth Horton Grange Primary School	Creates 210 places	£2,058,451	August 2019 (New build extension)	✓
Blyth New Delaval Primary School	Creates 105 places	£1,049,473	September 2019 (New build extension)	✓
St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy	A 6-classroom modular build, an extension to the main hall and additional car parking	£2,500,000	September 2020 (classrooms and hall extension) April 2021 – additional car parking	✓

Section 106

S106 monies have been used, for the first time in Northumberland, at Stannington First School to provide a purpose-built, standalone modular classroom and associated ancillary areas to accommodate additional pupils attending the school as a result of the local housing development at St Mary's, Stannington. The scheme was delivered to programme in September 2020 for a budget of £293,000.

Bedlington Reorganisation

Children's Services were under considerable pressure to accommodate a significant increase in pupil numbers at St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy following partnership reorganisation. This became necessary as Meadowdale Academy unilaterally changed their age range to become a primary school. This, in turn, affected the education pathway and resulted in a larger number of secondary school places being required in Bedlington (as Meadowdale Middle School was no longer able to enrol these pupils).

Linked to the reorganisation of Meadowdale Academy has been the extension of the age ranges of Bedlington West End Primary and Bedlington Whitley Memorial CofE Primary School (formerly first schools) following statutory consultation by the Council. Details of the capital schemes are in the following table.

School/setting	Description	Value	Completion Date	Project completed within budget
St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy	A 6-classroom modular build, an extension to the main hall and additional car parking	£2,500,000	September 2020 (classrooms and hall extension) April 2021 – additional car parking	✓
Bedlington West End Primary School	Modular built replacement kitchen, main hall and 3 classrooms	£1,600,000	February 2021	✓
Whitley Memorial Primary School	10% contribution to the refurbishment of classroom spaces	£10,300	September 2019	✓

Special School Places

A capital investment of £3.09m facilitated the increase in the number of SEN places at Hexham Priory Special School and the creation of a satellite unit of the Dales Special School in Ashington. The Hexham Priory project was completed within budget in October 2018 whilst the Ashdale project was also completed within budget by February 2019. Further SEN capital schemes have also taken place as detailed below to grow capacity in both special and mainstream schools with the introduction of additional resource are set out in the table below.

School/setting	Description	Value	Completion Date	Project completed within budget
Collingwood	Refurbishment of former Children's Centre to create specialist Sixth Form accommodation	£200k	August 2019	✓
Hillcrest	Modular double classroom and associated ancillary facilities	£478,332	October 2020	Exceeded as a result of CV-19
Astley ARP	Temporary modular building to incorporate an Additional Resource Provision (ARP) on the grounds of Astley High School.	£313,452	September 2020	Exceeded as a result of CV-19
Seaton Sluice ARP	Internal refurbishment to incorporate an ARP within Seaton Sluice First School.	£91k	September 2020	✓
Princess Louise Special School	A DfE funded Free School on the site of the former Princess Louise First School site.	Unknown at this stage	September 2022	N/A

Darras Hall Primary School

The first two phases of the £5.8m scheme to replace the dilapidated buildings of Darras Hall First School were delivered to programme by December 2018. A state-of-the-art, purpose-built two-form entry Primary School was constructed within budget by the appointed contractor, Galliford Try. This highly successful project has been very well received by the community of Darras Hall, with the school Headteacher, Victoria Parr, commenting:

"The new school building has impacted positively on all groups within our school community. A modern, fit for purpose building, designed specifically with our pupils in mind has provided us with the flexibility to deliver our curriculum in a tailored way. We know that a school is more than bricks and mortar, but we also know how a change of environment impacts on staff and pupils. The spacious, light, teaching and play spaces foster a sense of calm and purpose in pupils of all ages, as noted by staff, parents and pupils themselves."

Phase 3 sees the demolition of the remaining former school buildings and is currently underway, due for completion by March 2021.

Morpeth First School

The contractor BAM Construction started work on site in August 2018 to construct the £6.85m new build school and its associated playing fields. The scheme was delivered to programme and within budget in August 2019. The former Goosehill First School has been relocated from its town centre location to much more suitable and spacious facilities adjacent to County Hall. The two-form entry first school incorporates numerous outstanding features including a large purpose-designed nursery, first floor outdoor classroom, studio and community-use facilities.

Again, this project has been welcomed by the school community with Sandra Bell, the Deputy Headteacher, commenting:

“Staff and children are delighted to have the opportunities that the new Morpeth First School building provides following its opening in Summer 2019. The school offers so many more facilities for teaching and learning than the previous building, including a practical room for cooking and design and technology, small group support rooms and a large room which is currently being used by our Thrive practitioner to support the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils. The Early Years unit is state of the art, with lots of space and wonderful resources for the children to begin their educational journey with us. The children particularly like the outside space available to them including the field and the multi-use games area (MUGA) allowing more than one class to be able to have PE at a time. The rooftop terrace has been fantastic for drama, outdoor science activities and even a bit of outdoor, socially distanced singing. A truly inspiring building for all pupils and staff!”

Haydon Bridge Reorganisation

Cabinet approved the implementation of school reorganisation in the Haydon Bridge Partnership of schools in July 2018. The capital schemes have now been completed on budget, and a breakdown of the projects is set out in the table below.

School/setting	Description	Value	Completion Date	Project completed within budget
Haydon Bridge High School	Rationalised teaching accommodation and refurbishment of remaining teaching blocks together with roof and window replacements.	£4.5m	June 2020	✓

Greenhaugh Primary School	A classroom extension including toilet and cloakroom provision	£366k	September 2019	✓
Otterburn Primary School	A classroom extension to include toilet and cloakroom provision	£360k	August 2019	✓
Wark CofE Primary School	Minor internal refurbishment	£10k	August 2019	✓

Major Capital Projects

Ponteland Schools and Leisure Development

Following the revision of the project and the conclusion of the re-tendering process in September 2018, Kier Construction were selected as the preferred bidder for the scheme and commenced on site in November 2018. The scope of the project was to construct new facilities for Ponteland High School, Ponteland Primary School and Ponteland Leisure Centre within one building on the existing Leisure Centre site, along with the construction of a new Fire Station off site - all of which constituted Phase 1 of the project.

The scheme boasts numerous benefits, and one of the fundamental advantages of its multi-functional nature and the operational efficiencies it provides is shown through the design: harder-working circulation spaces; shared services (e.g., facilities management and catering); internal and external sports facilities shared between schools and leisure centre; shared building services plant; and lower overall demand for services such as car parking.

These efficiencies were able to release budget for added value within the facilities, including teaching walls in every classroom, a lecture theatre, a 'Clip 'n' Climb' climbing centre, soft play, aqua play, and increased school dining facilities. The added value to the local community via the project totalled more than £2m and the

above features were provided in addition to the 6-lane swimming pool, learner pool, gym, spinning studio, spa, 4-court sports hall, dance studios, community library, café, bar, children's play park, 3G all-weather sports pitch and additional natural grass pitches.

Kier were progressing well on site for a number of months, completing the Fire Station in January 2020 and proceeding with all internal and external works; however, Covid-19 meant that the construction programme had to be revised. Although many construction sites closed during the Covid-19 outbreak, work on the Ponteland Schools and Leisure facility continued throughout the pandemic. Despite depleted workforces initially and supply chain issues, Kier and their sub-contractors went to extreme efforts to ensure that their site operatives were able to continue to work safely and make as much progress as possible. Remarkably, Phase 1 of the scheme concluded on 2nd November 2020 – a mere 8 weeks after the proposed initial opening and saw the facilities handed over ready for use by the schools and leisure centre.

The second phase of the £43m construction project is due for completion in late Spring/early Summer 2021 and will see the demolition of the old High School and Leisure Centre, the formation of additional car parking, and the creation of grass sports pitches on site.

Hexham Academies Scheme

In February 2019, Cabinet approved the business case for the redevelopment of the existing Queen Elizabeth High School site in Hexham in order to construct new school buildings, refurbish the Grade II-listed Hydro building and provide state-of-the-art sporting facilities for both QEHS and Hexham Middle School.

A competitive tender process was undertaken over the following months and resulted in Galliford Try being selected as the preferred contractor in July 2019 before entering into contract in December 2019. The £37.9m construction budget for the scheme is predominantly funded by NCC with a contribution of £11.2m from the DfE. This budget also includes an allocation of £400k from NCC's Renewable Energies Fund to enhance the sustainable offering for the new build elements of the scheme. In addition, the Council was successful in receiving grant funding of c.£480k from the Football Foundation to provide a new all-weather grass pitch which has also been incorporated into the scheme.

Planning approval was granted in January 2020 and Galliford Try commenced on site in earnest in February 2020 with construction work being carried out in phases. The scale of the impact of COVID-19 is yet to be determined on this scheme; but, despite this, the project has been progressing well on site and Phase 1 will see the new build schools, formation of two all-weather grass sports pitches and refurbishment of the Hydro building aiming to be complete for the commencement of the school year in

September 2021 as planned. Phase 2 will see the demolition of the old High School buildings, formation of the new bus and car park, and construction of a grass sports pitch and is due for completion at the end of April 2022.

IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

Policy:	The consultation has been consistent with the Council's policy to review changes to schools in accordance with local wishes and needs.
Finance and value for money	Capital investment in schools using the council's own capital as well as grants from central government specifically for the purpose of growing school capacity or maintaining school buildings.
Legal	The building contracts are let using JCT DB16 form or another appropriate contractual framework. Where required, an external construction specialist lawyer will be drafting the contract on behalf of the local authority.
Procurement	The tendering of the contracts is procured with support from the central procurement teams, using a variety of NCC or pre-existing frameworks.
Human Resources:	N/A
Property	The projects all improve school buildings and will therefore address the significant backlog maintenance issues for each establishment.
Equalities	N/A
Risk Assessment	Project risk registers are maintained for each project/programme and these are reported on a monthly basis to the Property Liaison Group, or Project Board, who oversee the capital programmes.
Crime & Disorder	This report has considered Section 17 (CDA) and the duty it imposes and there are no implications arising from it.
Customer Considerations:	The proposals set out in this report are based upon a desire to act in the best educational interests of current and future children and young people in Northumberland.
Carbon Reduction	It is not envisaged that this proposal would have a significant positive or negative impact on carbon reduction.
Consultation	This report has been considered by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
Wards	All

Background Papers

None

Report Sign Off

Finance Officer	AE
Monitoring Officer/Legal	HL
Human Resources	N/A
Procurement	TP
I.T.	N/A
Executive Director of Children's Services	CM
Portfolio Holder(s)	GRT

Data Protection Implications

In carrying out the Phase 1 and Phase 2 consultation set out in this report, the Council has acted in compliance with Data Protection Act 2018 via the Council's Data Protection Policy

Specifically,

- Data gathered during this consultation process has been dealt with fairly - e.g., the responses from members of the public have been anonymised, whilst those responding within a public role have been identified e.g., Chairs of Governors, Dioceses and so on.
- The data and information gathered during Phase 1 and Phase 2 consultation has been used to assist in informing the recommendations set out in this report and will not be used for any other purpose, i.e., it will not be shared with another service area or any third party.
- The data and information gathered has been limited to that which would assist in informing the recommendations set outs that will arise from this consultation.

The Council has set out how it deals with information received as part of consultation in the Council's Privacy Notice, at

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Contact/Information.aspx#privacynotices> .

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