

07 November 2016

Dear Colleagues

SCHOOL'S CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

I am pleased to update you on the progress of the schools capital investment strategy and planned next steps.

As you know, the strategy was approved by cabinet on 13th February 2016. We have with the help and assistance of head teachers, governors and others moved forward with the approach set out in the strategy.

In particular we have:-

- Engaged with all schools through individual meetings and conversation, and area meetings and discussions
- Revised school place planning areas, linked to the core strategy and neighbourhood planning process.
- Developed a more detailed understanding of issues and contexts for individual schools and planning areas (These are all available on the website <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/schools-capital-investment-strategy>) The technical team are implementing improvements to the council website and new SCIS content will be able to be added after Christmas.
- Considered schools five year budget plans, as these may inform sustainability and continuity, particularly where the roll is less than 105 or there are predicted budget challenges.
- Committed some £8m in improvement and maintenance of schools including sums from the council, the Education Funding Agency (EFA), Department for Education, Diocesan Board of Education and the local controlled voluntary aided programme (LCVAP) for capital.

Our next steps are to:

- 1) Improve the understanding we have of future housing development and how it might affect schools and place planning.
- 2) Devise an interactive "on line" shared detailed record of condition, suitability, and health and safety compliance in all schools.

- 3) Take forward in very consultative manner, investment plans for the school planning areas set out below.
- 4) Look at opportunities to implement joint investment for small scale improvement work.
- 5) Work with the EFA and regional schools commissioner's office on capturing potential funding streams as they emerge from national government

The stages of the consultation process for each school place planning area so far and the next steps are:

SCIS planning area and schools within the area	What we have done	Next steps
<p><u>Rural Golden Valley</u> – Fairfield High School, Peterchurch P.S, Longtown P.S, Clifford P.S, Ewyas Harold P.S, Michaelchurch Escley P.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Held meetings with HTs and CoG to explore options - Held focused meetings of HTs, CoG, Councillors, LA officers and the Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing to agree the preferred option - Giving consideration to rebuild Peterchurch P.S as a one form entry school, on a co-located site with Fairfield H.S. At the same time remodelling and improving aspects of Fairfield H.S. - HTs and CoG have discussed and agreed the identified strongest option at full GB meetings. - LA, Councillors, HTs and CoG met again on October 11th to consider a format for wider consultation on the proposed option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LA officers are investigating feasibility (including land availability) of strongest option. - Develop detailed project plan for strongest the end of Autumn Term 2016 - Consult on detailed proposals January 2017 - Seek planning approval Spring 2017 - Seek cabinet approval of detailed scheme summer 2107
<p><u>Ledbury and rural Ledbury</u> – John Masefield High School, Ledbury P.S, Cradley P.S,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs and CoG to explore options. - Colwall school to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete build of Colwall school - Complete feasibility study on

<p>Bosbury P.S, Colwall P.S, Ashperton P.S, Eastnor P.S.</p>	<p>rebuilt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposal to expand Ledbury P.S to a 3 form entry 	<p>the proposal to extend Ledbury P.S to a three form entry school</p>
<p><u>Special School provision</u> – Barrs Court School, Westfield School, Blackmarston School, Brookfield School and Specialist College. (Also includes discussion of SEN provision in mainstream schools and SEN hubs).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options. - - Agreed timeline to devise improvement strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scale of overall special school provision to be agreed - Consider DfE special school capital bid - Further viability and financing feasibility to be undertaken January 2017
<p><u>Hereford City North</u> – Bishops High School, Aylestone High School, The Robert Owen High School, St Paul’s P.S, Hampton Dene P.S, Broadlands P.S, St Francis Xavier P.S, Holmer P.S, Trinity P.S, St Thomas P.S, Lord Scudamore P.S, St James P.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options. - Recognised need to rebuild St James on new site as part of plan to serve the north of the city. - Planned to rebuild Trinity P.S as a 3 form entry school on the new Three Elms development site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LA officers investigating feasibility (land availability) of strongest option for St James - Work with developers to agree Trinity project timescale and funding
<p><u>Hereford City South</u> – The Hereford Academy, St Martin’s P.S, Our Ladies P.S, Marlbrook P.S, Riverside P.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options - Agreed to take forward feasibility to make Marlbrook 3 form entry and replace temporary buildings - Considering options linked to future housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop detailed plans for Marlbrook with a view to opening the extension September 2018 - Discuss implications of strategic housing approach
<p><u>Ross Town</u> - John Kyrle High School, Brampton Abbotts P.S, Bridstow P.S, Ashfield Park P.S, St Joseph’s P.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options. - Neighbourhood Planning Group (NPG) engaged with discussion and options - Proposed preferred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LA work with Neighbourhood Planning Group (NPG) to understand future options for housing and schools.

	<p>option is new school for Ashfield Park in more accessible part of town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Head teachers and governors - Fed back thoughts of full GB regarding preferred option on 3 October 	
<p><u>Kington and rural Kington –</u></p> <p>Lady Hawkins High School, Kington P.S, Eardisley P.S, Almeley P.S, Pembridge P.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options - Concept of co-locating high school and primary school being considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take forward discussion and feasibility for co-location
<p><u>Bromyard and rural Bromyard –</u></p> <p>Queen Elizabeth High School, St Peter's P.S, Bredenbury P.S, Pencombe P.S, Brockhampton P.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options - Concept of co-locating high school and primary school being considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take forward discussion and feasibility for co-location
<p><u>Wigmore and rural Wigmore–</u></p> <p>Wigmore High School, Leintwardine P.S, Wigmore P.S, Orleton P.S, Luston P.S, Kingsland P.S, Shobdon P.S.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options - Proposed preferred option is new build for Kingsland P.S. on a compliant suitable site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss land availability and options
<p><u>Rural East Hereford –</u></p> <p>St Mary's High School, Fownhope (St Mary's) Primary School, Lugwardine Primary School, Mordiford Primary School, Withington Primary School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with HTs, Governors and officers to consider options - Proposed preferred option to replace the current temporary accommodation with permanent at Mordiford P.S. and improve facilities for parent drop off and parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct feasibility study for proposed improvements at Mordiford P.S.

Investment in other SCIS planning areas

Strategies for investment in other SCIS planning areas where less substantive capital issues have been identified, will also be considered during school year 16-17, so that mid to long term plans may be formulated and discussed. These areas, and the schools within them are listed below.

SCIS planning area	Schools within the area
Leominster and rural Leominster	Earl Mortimer High School, Kimbolton St James P.S, Leominster P.S, Ivington P.S, Stoke Prior P.S.
Weobley and rural Weobley	Weobley High School, Weobley P.S, Dilwyn St Mary's P.S, Canon Pyon P.S, Staunton-on-Wye P.S.
Rural North Hereford	St Michael's P.S, Burley Gate P.S, Wellington P.S, Marden P.S, Sutton P.S, Burghill P.S, Credenhill St Mary's P.S, Stretton Sugwas P.S.
Rural West Hereford	Kingstone High School, Madley P.S, Clehonger P.S, Kingstone P.S.
Rural South Hereford	Little Dewchurch P.S, Steiner Academy, Much Birch P.S, Kings Caple P.S.
Rural Ross	Gorsley Goffs P.S, Weston-under-Penyard P.S, Lea P.S, Walford P.S, Goodrich P.S, Whitchurch P.S.
Rural South Herefordshire	St. Weonards P.S, Garway P.S, Llangrove P.S.

In addition to the detailed work done to plan investment in primary schools, we are very aware of the significant site and buildings issues faced by a number of high schools within Herefordshire. In some cases, improvements to high schools may be planned for as part of strategies to improve adjacent primary schools. This may be the case in the Golden Valley. In other areas where this is not the case, high school improvements will be consulted on and planned for individually. The SCIS team will be continuing consultation on the key issues faced by high schools during school year 2016 – 2017.

Other elements of the strategy:

Funding for capital investment

We are looking at combinations of several different mechanisms to fund the identified projects for the first phase of the strategy. These include; receipts from land sales, schools contributions, section 106/CIL contributions from developers, council borrowing, revenue funding, basic need funding etc. Where capital projects are envisaged that include academies in order to support local authority place planning, joint funding arrangements between Herefordshire Council and the EFA will be sought.

Officers have met with a number of EFA officials over the past three months to clarify the national approach. The priorities nationally are still significantly focused on providing sufficient places and on the expansion of free schools (academies) as new builds. At the

same time useful progress has been made in highlighting the work taking place on the SCIS and Herefordshire's context.

Small Scale Capital Projects

Proposals are being drafted which will give consideration to supporting schools who have small scale capital projects that are in line with the SCIS principles and have significant capital funding sources already identified. The Capital Consultative Group, which has a number of school representatives, will be central to consideration of these proposals where some match funding from the Local Authority could support such forward thinking solutions from schools. Any school wishing to explore such a shared solution should contact Andy Hough (ahough@herefordshire.gov.uk) who will table any such proposal at a Capital Consultative Group meeting for discussion.

School place planning

We have developed further the forecast school population for primary and secondary schools in the county.

Over the next five years the number of primary school places we need is expected to increase by 600 (this includes the impact of new house building). This will reduce our surplus places overall from 10% to 7%. We currently have 14469 places available places for a population of 13170.

The SCIS principle is to provide 10% surplus. To address local pressures and plan for the aforementioned surplus we will look to create one extra form of entry at St James CoE school in Hereford (to alleviate pressure on places across all schools in the north of the city) and one at Ledbury P.S. (to ensure that Ledbury town primary school has enough capacity to accommodate all of its nearest children)

Across the secondary sector the number of places we need is expected to increase by 700. This will reduce our surplus places from nearly 14% to 7%. There are a number of secondary schools with space in addition to their published admission capacity to accommodate more children.

One of the reasons why Herefordshire has not benefitted from capital funding from central government in the past is that there has been a significant percentage of primary and also high school places surplus to need across the county. It is important that we periodically review school size and occupancy, so that schools may operate at maximum efficiency. SCIS officers have been discussing optimum school sizes as part of their consultation with school leaders, so that where necessary a school PAN may be adjusted upwards or downwards where trend would suggest that this is sensible. This will help to ensure that schools are assisted in planning for the future and providing education for their local communities in suitably sized high quality school buildings. Taking this strategic approach will help the local authority to demonstrate to central government that Herefordshire schools are deserving of funding to further improve our school estate into the future.

School admissions

In addition to looking at school planned admission numbers, we are mindful of our responsibility to support schools by having a fit for purpose local authority admissions and

oversubscription policy, so that parents and schools have clear understanding of how pupils are allocated places. The council is currently consulting on changes to oversubscription criteria for maintained schools.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/schools-admissions/consultation-on-school-admission-arrangements-201819>

If you are concerned about any aspect of the process as described, or have questions that you would like to ask, please do get in touch with one of the team, a member of the capital consultative group of head teachers or myself.

The Head teachers who are currently members of the Capital Consultative Group are –

- Sue Gaston Headteacher Fairfield High School and Longtown Primary School (maintained sector) sgaston@fairfield.hereford.sch.uk
- Kathy Weston Headteacher St James C.E. Primary School Hereford (maintained sector) kweston@st-james.hereford.sch.uk
- Simon Robertson Headteacher Aylestone Business and Enterprise College and the federated schools of Broadlands Primary School and Withington Primary School. (maintained sector) srobertson@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk
- Adam Breakwell Headteacher St James C.E. Primary School Kimbolton and Orleton C.E. Primary School. (maintained sector) abreakwell@kimbolton-st-james.hereford.sch.uk
- Geraint Mills Headteacher Ashfield Park Primary School Ross-on-Wye (maintained sector) gmills@ashfieldpark.hereford.sch.uk
- Kevin Wright Headteacher St Peter's Primary School Bromyard (maintained sector) kwright@st-peters.hereford.sch.uk

Yours sincerely



JO DAVIDSON
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