

Agenda Item	10.
Report No	PEO 11/17

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** People

**Date:** 23 August 2017

**Report Title:** Care and Learning Capital Programme

**Report By:** Director of Care and Learning

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report updates Members on progress with the delivery of the Care and Learning capital programme and recommends some matters for approval and consideration. Members are reminded that all capital expenditure monitoring is now reported to the Places Committee.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are invited to:

- Consider the current position in relation to Inverness Schools as Section 4;
- Approve the granting of delegated powers in relation to the award of an early works contract and approval of the Stage 1 report for the Alness Academy project, as detailed in Paragraph 5.1;
- Consider the current position in relation to the additional works that will be required as part of the refurbishment of Inverness High School as Paragraph 5.2;
- Approve the allocation of £1.3M from the Free School Meals Programme for the project at Dalneigh Primary School as Paragraph 6.2;
- Approve the inclusion of Grantown Primary School in the list of priorities for the next three financial years to be considered as part of the review of the Council's capital programme as Paragraph 6.3;
- Approve an increased budget of £250,000 for the re-roofing and replacement windows project at Brora Primary School as Paragraph 7.1;
- Approve an increased budget of £100,000 for the toilet refurbishment project at Craighill Primary School as Paragraph 7.2;
- Consider the current position in relation to Roll Pressures as Paragraph 7.3.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 **Review of Capital Programme:** The review is ongoing and it is anticipated that it will be concluded later this year. The Care and Learning capital priorities to be considered as part of this review were approved by the Education, Children and Adult Services (ECAS) Committee in March 2017. Once the review process has been concluded, then the amount of capital funding available, and the timing of the investment in the approved projects, will be established.

### 4. Inverness Schools

- 4.1 The capital priorities referred to in Paragraph 3.1 include a number of key projects to address the various pressures facing schools in Inverness. A briefing session was held with Ward Members earlier this month to update them on the current position. The following is an update on some of these priorities and the main outcomes of the briefing session.
- 4.2 **Current Projects:** Work is underway to build an Additional Support Needs annexe at Cauldeen Primary School along with increased nursery provision at a total cost of £4M, and this is due to be completed later this financial year. Design work has commenced on a project to extend and partially refurbish Smithton Primary School, with an approved budget of £4M. Also, proposals are being advanced for a major development at Merkinch Primary School which would include a new Family Centre and enhanced community facilities.
- 4.3 **Modular Units:** Double classroom units are being installed at Hilton, Holm, Lochardil, Merkinch and Smithton Primary Schools to help alleviate some of the most immediate capacity and suitability issues (Merkinch already has two double classroom units in place). The new unit at Merkinch has been occupied with the others due to be completed in the coming weeks.
- 4.4 **Ness Castle:** It is anticipated that a report will be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee in October to formally commence the statutory consultation process for a new school to serve the housing developments at Ness Castle and Ness-Side
- 4.5 **Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis (BSGI)/Slackbuie Area:** There have been several meetings with the BSGI Parent Council to discuss potential options to address the pressures at the school. These include the school remaining on the current site or relocating to a new school on a new site that could accommodate future expansion. At the recent briefing session, Members were supportive of undertaking further consultation with the Parent Council and other stakeholders to seek their views on these options, and to consider at potential sites for a new build school. If the outcome of this process was that there was to reach a consensus to recommend that the Council should seek to progress with a new build school, then a formal statutory consultation would be required to give all interested parties further opportunity to comment in advance of a final decision being made.

### 5. Update on Major Projects

- 5.1 **Alness Academy:** This Committee agreed at its previous meeting in June to delegate powers to either the Director of Care and Learning or the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate Resources or People Committees and following consultation with Ward Members, in relation to any

budget, affordability or specification changes that may have been required over the summer recess period. There are two key milestones that are programmed to be reached before the next meeting of this Committee in October, and approval is sought to extend these delegated powers, subject to the Head of Resources consulting with the Director of Development & Infrastructure in his role as the Chair of the Capital Programme Board. The milestones are as follows.

- **Early Works Contract:** In order for work to start on the construction of the new building next year, it will be necessary to have one of the new synthetic playing fields available for use in advance. It has been agreed with Hub North Scotland Ltd. (HNSL) that a separate early works contract procured through HNSL would be the most appropriate method of delivering this and ensuring that it is completed on time. HNSL are finalising the design proposals for this and are likely to submit a cost for approval before the October meeting of this Committee.
- **Stage 1 Approval:** This is a key stage in the process, involving the completion of the outline design solution, cost and programme. A report is currently being finalised and will be submitted by HNSL for approval in September. An early approval is essential to allow the project to keep progressing, and it will also be necessary for the start of Stage 2 to overlap with the Stage 1 approval period.

5.2 **Inverness High School:** Work has commenced on the first phase of the refurbishment of the school. The removal of asbestos materials has allowed further structural investigations to be undertaken, and it is now evident that some of the original concrete structural beams will have to be replaced. Investigations are ongoing but it is clear that the scope of the first phase will have to be increased. A final structural report is expected in the next few weeks, and this will help identify the full extent of the additional works required, the effect on the programme, and if both of the planned phases of the refurbishment programme can be delivered within the overall approved budget of £10M. Further details will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee in October.

## 6. Free School Meals Programme

6.1 The Council received a capital allocation of £5M from the Scottish Government for the delivery of free school meals to Primary 1 to 3 children. To date, the following expenditure has been committed on completed projects. There are two projects in the programme that are still to be completed, at Dalneigh and Grantown Primary Schools.

- Balloch Primary - £450,000
- Dingwall Primary - £825,000
- Glenurquhart Primary - £375,000
- Lochardil Primary - £700,000
- Newtonmore Primary - £140,000
- Portree Primary - £60,000
- Equipment/Other Costs (Various Schools) - £350,000
- **Total - £2,900,000**

6.2 **Dalneigh Primary School:** Dalneigh has a single court hall for assembly, dining and PE, and does not have a production kitchen, A scheme has been drawn up for a stand-alone kitchen and dining block and the estimated cost of this project is £1.3M. It is proposed that funding should be allocated from the programme to allow

this project to proceed.

- 6.3 **Grantown Primary School:** Grantown Primary has insufficient kitchen and dining accommodation in an annexe building located across the road from the main building. The original proposal was to extend the school building to provide a kitchen and dining facility, with the vacated space in the annexe converted to allow the existing nursery provision to expand. However, it is evident that there are wider issues with the suitability of the accommodation in the school, particularly in respect of Additional Support Needs and the limited size of the existing hall. The total cost of addressing these issues would exceed the remaining balance of £800,000 in the Free School Meals programme. It is therefore proposed that Grantown Primary is added to the list of capital priorities for the period covering the next three financial years that was approved by the ECAS Committee in March 2017 to be considered as part of the review of the Council's capital programme. The aim would be to secure funding to add to the available £800,000, with the cost of the nursery element included in the delivery plan for the expansion of Early Years and Childcare provision. Proposals for the proposed scheme are currently being developed and further details will be reported to a future meeting of this Committee.

## 7. 2017/18 and 2018/19 Programmes

- 7.1 **Brora Primary School:** A budget of £180,000 is approved for re-roofing works and replacement windows. The scope of the required work has been reviewed and it is proposed that the budget is increased to £250,000 with the additional funding allocated from the Life Cycle Investment budget heading.
- 7.2 **Craighill Primary School:** The toilets at the school are in poor condition and some improvement works had been planned with an approved budget of £50,000. However, due to the delay in the delivery of the new Tain 3-18 Campus, more extensive work will be required to bring the toilets up to the necessary standard for the anticipated remaining life of the building. It is therefore proposed that the budget is increased to £100,000 with the additional funding allocated from the Life Cycle Investment budget heading.
- 7.3 **Roll Pressures:** The 15-year school roll forecasts are updated annually and published each October. Various measures have been agreed with colleagues in Development and Infrastructure to arrive at a revised methodology that will improve the accuracy of the forecast figures. This methodology will be used to test different scenarios within school catchment areas (e.g. high, medium or low rates of house building) and consider the implications of the results and different possible solutions that may be required. The school roll forecasts are currently being updated and will be analysed to identify any significant changes from previously published information, and also schools where there will be roll pressures requiring capital investment in the coming years. Further details of any investment likely to be required in 2018/19 will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee in October.

## 8. Implications

- 8.1 **Resource:** As set out in this report.
- 8.2 **Legal:** There are no particular implications to highlight.

- 8.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural):** There are no particular implications to highlight.
- 8.4 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever:** There are no particular implications to highlight.
- 8.5 **Risk:** Risk management is ongoing as part of the management of the capital programme.
- 8.6 **Gaelic:** The review of Inverness Schools includes the assessment of options for future Gaelic Medium provision.

Designation Director of Care and Learning

Date 15 August 2017

Author Brian Porter, Head of Resources, Care and Learning  
Robert Campbell, Estate Strategy Manager, Care and Learning

Background Papers Report to the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee on 1 March 2017 outlining the Care and Learning capital priorities.  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/71775/item\\_6\\_care\\_and\\_learning\\_capital\\_programme\\_-\\_monitoring\\_report](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/71775/item_6_care_and_learning_capital_programme_-_monitoring_report)