

The Highland Council
Education, Children and Adult Services Committee
8 October 2015

Agenda Item	7.
Report No	ECAS 82-15

Care and Learning Capital Programme – Future Investment Priorities

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This report sets out a proposed process for establishing future investment priorities for generic budget lines within the capital programme. Through this process, the intention would be to engage with Members at Ward level on officer assessments of priorities, capture Member views on local priorities, and thereafter bring a report back to Committee for approval. The establishment of future priorities would then allow forward allocation of budget lines on a 2-3 year basis, improving forward planning and delivery of projects, and also providing greater certainty to communities and Members.

1. Background

- 1.1 The most recent review of the General Fund capital programme was approved by Highland Council in March 2015. This set out funding proposals and an outline programme for the ten years from 2014/15 to 2023/24.
- 1.2 As a result of this review, a number of new major projects were approved along with a range of generic budget headings. It was agreed that Strategic Committees would be asked to consider allocations from these generic headings on a multi-year basis to improve forward planning, project delivery, and help satisfy stakeholder interests and expectations.
- 1.3 The approved ten-year programme of Care and Learning projects is included at **Appendix 1**. The main generic budget headings under consideration and the total available funding over the ten-year period are listed below.
 - Community and Leisure Facilities (£6,939,000)
 - Adult Services - NHS (£10,561,000)
 - Life Cycle Investment – Schools (£59,841,000)
 - Roll Pressures – Schools (£17,260,000)
 - Sustainable School Estate Review - Inverness Schools (£48,000,000)
- 1.4 The Highland Council approved a report in 2010 that outlined the strategic review of education provision that would result in the creation of a sustainable school estate. The Sustainable School Estate Review (SSER) commenced in Caithness in 2011 with the second phase covering Easter Ross schools. Subsequent phases focussed on schools in Skye and Lochalsh and Inverness. It is recognised that any review of future investment priorities in schools in line with the process outlined in Section 4 will need to take account of any further phases of the SSER process and a programme for these will be developed and reported to a future meeting of this Committee.

2. Community and Leisure Facilities

- 2.1 The vast majority of the properties that fall under this heading are operated by High Life Highland and priorities are agreed in principle with them prior to seeking approval from this Committee.
- 2.2 One of the key investment criteria over the next few years will be to identify projects that will increase community participation and also generate additional income to assist High Life Highland in achieving their budget savings targets.
- 2.3 Work is underway in determining priorities for the next few years and a proposed programme will be endorsed by High Life Highland and shared with Ward Members prior to being brought to a future meeting of this Committee for approval.

3. Adult Services (NHS)

- 3.1 Investment priorities for this budget heading are developed in conjunction with colleagues at NHS Highland. Design work is currently underway on the refurbishment of the Wade Centre in Kingussie, which has an approved budget of £1,300,000, along with a number of smaller projects.
- 3.2 NHS Highland is currently considering options for current and future service provision across the North Coast. A budget of £1,500,000 has been allocated to the replacement of Caladh Sona Community Care Home with the bulk of the expenditure planned for 2016/17 and 2017/18. Once the outcome of the current review is known then the overall budget heading will be largely committed for this and the next two financial years.

4. The School Estate

- 4.1 **Proposed Approach:** Work is ongoing to identify schools that should be prioritised for investment from the generic budget headings from 2017/18 onwards. The proposed process for assessing priorities within the school estate will be as follows:
- Assessment of investment priorities based initially on the core facts (which represent in essence an 'average' score for the entire campus) as described in Paragraphs 4.2 to 4.5.
 - Further analysis of the core fact information taking into account officer assessment of the most pressing investment needs within individual schools as well as other factors, as listed in Paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7.
 - Based on this, an officer view of the priorities within each Associated School Group (ASG) will then be discussed with Members at Ward level. An example template is set out at **Appendix 2**.
 - Member views will then be captured and reflected within the ASG analysis. The proposed timescale is to conclude this by the end of 2015.
 - Officers will re-prioritise where necessary across the estate to present a prioritised programme. The prioritised list will then be taken to a meeting of this Committee for approval.
- 4.2 Once a prioritised list has been established, this will then be used as the basis

for forward allocation of the generic budget lines on a 2-3 year basis. Clearly priorities may change over time, and any immediate demands that emerge will be reported to this Committee as they arise. There will therefore need to be a degree of flexibility within the budget allocation approach to allow for change to be accommodated. Future reports will set out the proposed budget allocation basis.

4.3 **Prioritisation Criteria:** The Scottish Government provides guidance to local authorities on a number of core facts which are reported on annually. These aim to establish a baseline picture of the current school estate and to provide a way to measure the benefits of long term investment. There are three core facts that are particularly relevant in determining capital investment priorities in schools as listed below, with further details of the current position in the subsequent paragraphs.

- **Condition:** A methodology incorporating a scored weighting system is used to assess the physical condition of a school and produce an overall rating (A – Good; B – Satisfactory; C – Poor; D – Bad).
- **Sufficiency:** This provides a means to analyse the current and future occupancy levels by looking at the teaching spaces that are available in conjunction with data on future school roll projections.
- **Suitability:** This measures the extent to which a school building and its grounds are appropriate in providing an environment which supports quality learning and teaching; again, an overall rating ranging from A to D is produced.

4.4 **Condition:** The results of condition surveys of all of the Council's school buildings were published in May 2014. These results will be continuously updated to take account of capital investment and of any significant deterioration in condition. The data can also be used to prioritise investment in elements of the building fabric (such as roofs, windows and electrical and heating installations), or individual blocks or buildings. There is a particular issue with the condition of ageing modular accommodation at a number of schools (such as Balnain, Broadford, Invergarry, Lochcarron, Munloch, Poolewe and Ullapool Primary Schools).

4.5 **Sufficiency:** The Planning Capacities of all primary schools are being revised in line with guidance issued last year by the Scottish Government. It is anticipated that a consistent approach to calculating the capacity of Secondary Schools will be developed by 2016. Once the annual review of school roll projections is complete later this year, any potential pressures will be re-assessed.

4.6 **Suitability:** All schools are currently being resurveyed as part of what will become an ongoing process. The results will help to identify instances where the accommodation is not adequate to fully support the size and nature of the school in question. Some of the surveys carried out to date have resulted in relatively low scores for several schools and options to address the issues that have been identified are being considered.

4.7 **Other Factors:** There are a range of other factors that need to be taken into consideration.

- Additional Support Needs: Current and future demand, both on an individual school basis and across ASG's.
- Early Learning and Childcare: The implications of potential further changes in provision in relation to the capacity of existing and proposed facilities.
- Gaelic Medium Education: Current and future demand.
- Playing Fields: Improvements to poor quality facilities along with consideration of the installation of further synthetic surfaces following the recently completed "pilot" project at Lochardil Primary School and in recently completed new school projects.
- School Meals: The implications of any further changes in provision in relation to the suitability and usage of existing facilities and those currently being improved.

4.8 **Secondary Schools:** Due to the larger size of these schools, there is a higher incidence of situations where the condition or suitability of individual blocks or buildings on the campus may vary considerably from the overall rating (e.g. new build extensions at Fortrose and Kingussie will improve the overall score for these schools).

4.9 **Summary:** The evaluation of the above criteria and factors will help to inform investment decisions on large projects (comprising new builds, extensions or refurbishment) as well as small to medium size improvements. This could either be within the SSER process or for individual schools which may sit out-with this process for various reasons (such as location, demographics or size). An example of the latter would be Strathconon Primary School, which has a number of issues. However, there may be instances where the best value option may be a complete new build due to the relatively high cost of extending and refurbishing the existing buildings, the scale of the condition and suitability issues, the quality of the existing buildings or the difficulty in carrying out improvements in a phased manner.

5. Inverness Schools

5.1 As part of the review of the capital programme earlier this year, a separate budget allocation of £48 million was approved for Inverness schools. ~The main aim of this is to address some of the accommodation issues caused by the significant increase in projected school rolls and other pressures. Previous reports to this Committee have identified a number of priorities in primary schools initially.

5.2 The most immediate priorities are for extensions at Merkinch and Smithton as well as an Additional Support Needs annexe at Cauldeen. Details of the final proposals for Smithton and Cauldeen will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee for approval, while work is ongoing to establish the level of investment required at Merkinch.

5.3 The roll projections for schools in the Charleston area also highlight that there is likely to be a need for future investment at Kinmylies, and possibly Muirtown. This will be reviewed further later this year once the updated roll projections are available.

5.4 Options for increasing the capacity of Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis (BSGI),

either on the existing site or a new site, are currently being considered. Also, a new school will be required to meet the additional demand from the developments at Ness Castle and Ness-Side, with the new site at Ness Castle likely to be released in the second half of the 10-year capital programme.

- 5.5 Other primary schools may also require some capital investment, possibly including Cradlehall, Hilton, Holm and Lochardil. However, the scope for extending some of these schools may be limited. The extent and timing of any further investment will be subject to some extent to the outcome of the review of the options for BSGI as well as the timescale for a new school at Ness Castle.
- 5.6 While the initial focus has been on primary schools, the pressures affecting secondary schools will have to be considered in the near future. A consistent approach to secondary school capacity modelling, as referred to in Paragraph 4.4, will be an essential part of this.
- 5.7 The factors referred to in Paragraph 4.7 will also have to be assessed. Particular consideration will have to be given to the provision of appropriate Early Years and Childcare facilities either in individual schools or across an ASG where necessary.
- 5.8 It is proposed that the approach for consulting with Ward Members on future priorities and for seeking the approval of this Committee as outlined in Section 4 will also be adopted here.

6. Implications

- 6.1 **Resource:** Some of the proposed capital investment will create additional capacity and start to relieve the pressures facing some schools.
- 6.2 **Legal:** A consistent approach to school capacity modelling will enable the Council to identify measures required to meet its statutory obligations.
- 6.3 **Equalities:** The proposed approach will take account of the need for appropriate accommodation to be provided for pupils with additional support needs.
- 6.4 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever:** This will be taken into account when planning major capital investment projects.
- 6.5 **Risk:** A consistent approach will allow the Council to identify any relevant risks as part of the future capital investment decision making process and for alternative measures to be put in place in the event that capital funding is not available.
- 6.6 **Gaelic:** The review process in Inverness has clear implications for enhanced Gaelic-medium provision and for provision at Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis.
- 6.7 **Rural:** One of the aims of the revised methodology is to ensure that there is a consistent approach across the School Estate.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Members are asked to approve the proposed approach outlined in this report and to note the proposed timescale for the consultation process to take place at Ward level.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning





Date: 29th September 2015

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June 2013 Line No.																	
Annex 1/2A (Yrs 1-5)	Annex 2B (Yrs 6-10)	OBC Ref.	Project Name	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total for 2014/15 - 2023/24 £000			
				£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		£000		
Health & Social Care Programme																	
17		SW 07	Residential Unit, CSER / Wick Children's Home	390										390			
152	230	HSC/2013/07	Adult Services (NHS)	561	1,000	1,500	1,500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	10,561			
172		HSC/2013/08	Avoiding Out-of-area Children's Placements	52	850									902			
183	254		Children's Services Investment	259	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	2,059			
169	244	HSC/2013/14	Minor Works and Equipment Replacement			105	105	105	105	105	100	100	100	825			
			Residential Unit for Children with Autism			250	1,500	250						2,000			
Estate Management																	
			Catering, Cleaning and Facilities Management	200										200			
			C&YP Act - Early Learning & Childcare	1,217	750	850	176							2,993			
			C&YP Act - Households in Receipt of Benefits		2,350	2,350	242							4,942			
			Free School Meals	250	1,750	2,750	250							5,000			
129	211	ECS/2013/15	SSER - Major Schools											-			
130	212	ECS/2013/16	SSER - Primary Schools											-			
			SSER - Tain 3-18 Campus		1,250	7,350	20,000	15,000	1,400					45,000			
			SSER - North West Skye			500	4,500	4,500	500					10,000			
			SSER - Inverness Schools		500	2,500	5,500	10,500	10,000	7,000	8,500	3,000	500	48,000			
			SSER - Future Projects					400	7,100	14,500	7,500	5,000	5,000	39,500			
			SSER - Remaining Phases of Review	150	150	150	100	100						650			
43	158	236	ECS 12/13 ECS/2013/10	4,162	1,129	1,975	6,475	4,000	9,600	5,000	9,750	5,500	12,250	59,841			
42	155	233	ECS 11 ECS/2013/14	872	988	1,000	2,200	1,450	2,450	1,450	2,700	1,450	2,700	17,260			
			Former Achintore School	10										10			
			ICT Investment	350										350			
			ICT Investment - Additional		1,500	1,000								2,500			
			Radon Remedial Works	250										250			
TOTAL				55,532	66,650	45,305	59,585	47,755	38,255	30,255	31,000	16,750	23,000	414,087			

KINGUSSIE HIGH ASG										
Property	Condition		Sufficiency		Suitability		Early Years and Childcare		Other/Immediate Issues	
	Status	Comments	Status	Comments	Status	Comments	Status	Comments	Status	Comments
Alvie Primary						To be surveyed				
Aviemore Primary				Roll projected to increase in coming years		Not yet surveyed				
Gergask Primary										
Kingussie Primary								Refurbishment of nursery being considered		
Newtonmore Primary				Currently over capacity, GP room in use as classroom						Extension to kitchen programmed for summer 2016
Kingussie High - Main Building		School has overall rating of B but C for this block				To be surveyed		N/A		Issues with PE changing facilities
Kingussie High - Extension						To be surveyed		N/A		

Key

	Immediate Priority
	Current/Potential Issues
	No Immediate Issues
	Funding Approved