

Decision Maker: Children and Young People PDS Committee

Date: 20th March 2012

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **CALL-IN: THE BROMLEY SEED CHALLENGE SCHEME – ALEXANDRA JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Contact Officer: Kerry Nicholls, Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 020 8313 4602 E-mail: kerry.nicholls@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Resources

Ward: Penge and Cator

1. Reason for report

1.1 On 27th February 2012, the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People approved proposals for the Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme, funded through the Capital Maintenance Grant. The decision not to support the scheme proposed to improve ICT provision at Alexandra Junior School has been called in and the Committee is asked to consider what action should be taken in response to the call-in.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Committee is recommended to agree one of the following options:

- i) Take no further action on the call-in; or
- ii) Refer the decision back to the Executive giving reasons why it should be re-considered.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost £387,422
 2. Ongoing costs: Non-Recurring Cost
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head: £300,000 Seed Challenge
£150,000 Security
 5. Source of funding: DfE Capital Maintenance Grant
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance The Schools Finance (England) Regulations 2012
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 10,000 (total of pupils in schools affected)
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 On 27th February 2012, the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People approved proposals for the Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme, funded through the Capital Maintenance Grant. A scheme to improve ICT provision and convert one ICT room into year 5 classroom accommodation at Alexandra Junior School at a total cost of £45,400, including £22,700 of Seed Challenge funding, was included amongst the proposals submitted. Although it was accepted that the scheme would benefit the school's learning environment it had not scored as highly as other schemes and it was not supported. On 2nd March 2012, the decision not to support the scheme for Alexandra Junior School was called in by Councillors John Getgood, Peter Fookes, Kathy Bance, Mrs Anne Manning and John Canvin.
- 3.2 The grounds for the call-in submitted by Councillor John Getgood are:

On behalf of and with the support of Cllrs. Peter Fookes; Kathy Bance, Mrs Anne Manning and John Canvin, I am writing to call in the decision of the Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People of 27th February 2012 that the list of schemes set out in the Appendix to Report DCYP12030, The Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme, be approved.

We believe that the school's proposal was a well considered scheme. It would have allowed for an upgrading the school's outdated, fixed IT provision to match that needed for teaching a modern curriculum while at the same time freeing space to enable the school to move a Year 5 class out of an unsatisfactory mobile classroom into the main school. Members were able to see the importance of this scheme for themselves on a recent Members' visit. We are calling on the Portfolio Holder to support the Alexander Junior School application in the scheme on the following grounds.

We believe that greater weight should be given to proposals which have a direct effect on teaching and learning, especially while money for schools is tight. Alexandra Junior School has a newly appointed Head Teacher who is working hard to bring the school out of the Ofsted category of "Satisfactory", a priority for both this council and the Government. The new Head of Ofsted is proposing to do away with the 'satisfactory' category and replace it with 'needs improving'. Surely want to do everything we can to stop Bromley schools falling into this category. The proposed improvements at AJS will have a direct impact on standards, which is a key component to any Ofsted judgement.

It has been suggested that the scheme was not recommended for approval because IT provision should not qualify as part of a capital provision scheme. We believe this argument fails to distinguish between ad hoc IT provision and this scheme, which involves an extensive system replacement and development project, which should be considered as a capital requirement.

It has also been proposed that the school should apply again next year. Unfortunately, this is not practical as the school is expecting an Ofsted visit in the autumn and needs to improve its provision now. If the AJS scheme is not supported, the school will have to start on a less efficient and less effective scheme instead. We believe the decision did not give sufficient weight to the timeliness of the application.

We appreciate that at this stage, despite the strength of the application from Alexander Junior School, it would be difficult for the Portfolio Holder to reverse a decision affecting another school. However, given the significance of the Alexandra Junior School scheme, we ask that the Portfolio Holder supports a request to the Executive to make the sum of

£23,000 available out of last year's £2,000,000 under spend, so that the significant needs of Alexandra Junior School can be met.

This call-in supports the Building a Better Bromley priority to expand the curriculum opportunities for children and young people in Bromley schools to further improve educational attainment.

- 3.3 The relevant draft minute from the Children and Young People PDS meeting on 21st February 2012 is at **Appendix A**, the decision sheet signed by the Portfolio Holder on 27th February 2012 is at **Appendix B**, and the report considered by the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder and scrutinised by the Children and Young People PDS Committee on 21st February 2012 is at **Appendix C**.
- 3.4 Seed Challenge is an annual programme run by Bromley Council and funded by Department for Education Capital Maintenance Grant to support schemes at schools, through match funding, that seek to improve curriculum delivery, security and health and safety. Schools submissions are evaluated by officers with recommendations made to the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder about the schemes to support. The evaluation is based on the information provided to officers and each application's eligibility for funding is ranked on the basis of:
- The impact on curriculum delivery
 - Improvements to security
 - Improvements to health and safety
 - Provision of grant in recent years
- 3.5 In evaluating Alexandra Junior School's application for Seed Challenge funding all these factors were taken in to consideration. Particular note should be made that:
- The school had received support from the Seed Challenge programme in 2009-10
 - Although the school's submission made links to benefits of the scheme in relation to curriculum delivery and enabling the decant of the Year 5 class back into the main school buildings, mention was not made of the wider impact of the scheme in relation to supporting the new management team and addressing concerns with regards changes to the OfSTED inspection regime made as part of this 'call-in'.
 - The local authority through the provision of Seed Challenge capital seeks to make a lasting and sustainable improvement to school environments. As in previous years the Seed Challenge programme was over subscribed. A number of schemes bid for funding for ICT related projects. Due to the higher rate of depreciation of ICT equipment, in evaluating scheme bids for ICT projects attracted a lower score. 95% of the value of the bid submitted by Alexandra Junior School was for ICT equipment.
- 3.6 The two options before the PDS Committee when considering any call-in are to:
- i) Take no further action on the call-in; or
 - ii) Refer the decision back to the Executive giving reasons why it should be re-considered.

In exceptional circumstances only, for example an alleged intention of the Executive to act contrary to law or the policy and budget framework of the Council, there is a third option of referring the matter to full Council.

Non-Applicable Sections:	See report at Appendix C.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	See report at Appendix C.

**72 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF REPORTS TO THE CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

I) THE BROMLEY SEED CHALLENGE SCHEME

Report DCYP12030

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report setting out the proposed allocation of £300,000 available within the Council's Capital Programme through the Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme to deal with priority premises issues at Bromley schools. In addition an allocation of £150,000 had been made to support security and health and safety improvements at schools to match fund successful submission for security improvements.

Councillor John Getgood, a Governor at Alexandra Junior School, was concerned that school's bid had not received match funding. The Portfolio Holder noted the concern but highlighted that only a limited amount of funding was available. Schools that had not been successful in their bids were invited to submit bids to next year's Seed Challenge Programme for consideration. A Member was pleased to note the high proportion of funding relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabled access.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) Approve the list of schemes set out in the Appendix to Report DCYP12030 be approved.**
- 2) Approve the proposal that £76,829 be made available from the Council's School Security programme to provide match funding support for school submissions dealing with security issues.**
- 3) Authorise the Director of Children and Young People Services to submit planning applications at the appropriate time in respect of the schemes set out in Report DCYP12030 where appropriate.**

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, Councillor Ernest Noad has made the following executive decision:

THE BROMLEY SEED CHALLENGE SCHEME

Reference Report:

CYP PDS 210212 The Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme

Decision:

That the list of schemes set out in the Appendix to Report DCYP12030 be approved.

That £76,829 be made available from the Council's School Security programme to provide match funding support for school submissions dealing with security issues.

That the Director of Children and Young People Services be authorised where appropriate, to submit planning applications at the appropriate time in respect of the schemes set out in Report DCYP12030.

Reasons:

On 15 March 2011, the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder approved an allocation of £300,000 to fund a new round of the Bromley Seed Challenge programme for 2011-12. In addition an allocation of £150,000 was made to support security and health and safety improvements at schools. Both these programmes are fully funded by Department for Education Capital Maintenance Grant.

The proposed decision was scrutinised by the Children and Young People PDS Committee on 21st February 2012 and the Committee supported the proposal.

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Councillor Ernest Noad
Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People

Mark Bowen
Director of Resources
Bromley Civic Centre
Stockwell Close
Bromley BR1 3UH

Date of Decision: 27 Feb 2012
Implementation Date (subject to call-in): 5 Mar 2012
Decision Reference: CYP12018

Report No.
DCYP12030

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **Children and Young People Portfolio Holder**

Date: **For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Children and Young People PDS
Committee on 21 February 2012**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

TITLE: THE BROMLEY SEED CHALLENGE SCHEME

Contact Officer: Robert Bollen, CYP Strategic Property Manager
Tel: 020 8313 4697 E-mail: robert.bollen@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Gillian Pearson, Director of Children and Young People Services

Ward: Boroughwide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1. This report sets out the proposed allocation of £300,000 that is available with the Council's Capital Programme through the Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme to deal with priority premises at Bromley Schools
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2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1. **That the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People approve the list of schemes set out in Appendix 1 to this report.**
- 2.2. **That £76,829 be made available from the Council's School Security programme, to provide match funding support for school submissions dealing with security issues.**
- 2.3. **That the Director of Children and Young People Services be authorised, where appropriate, to submit planning applications in respect of the schemes set out in this report.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost £387,422
 2. Ongoing costs: Non-recurring cost
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head: £300,000 Seed Challenge
£150,000 Security
 5. Source of funding: DfE Capital Maintenance Grant
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional) -
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours -
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance: The Schools Finance (England) Regulations 2012
 2. Call in: Call-in is applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected) - 10,000 (total of pupils in schools affected)
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1. On 15 March 2011 the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder approved an allocation of £300,000 to fund a new round of the Bromley Seed Challenge programme for 2011-12. In addition an allocation of £150,000 was made to support security and health and safety improvements at schools. Both these programmes are fully funded by Department for Education Capital Maintenance Grant.
- 3.2. As DfE Capital Maintenance Grant is allocated by Government to be used only on improvements at local authority maintained schools, applications for the Seed Challenge programme were not sought from Academy Schools this year.
- 3.3. The Bromley Seed Challenge Programme replaced the Government's Seed Challenge Initiative that was in place from 2000 to 2005. The significant feature of the programme is the requirement for schools to provide match funding, providing them with an opportunity to bring forward schemes that benefit the school whilst engendering a genuine sense of shared responsibility and partnership.
- 3.4. The rules that will operate for Bromley's Seed Challenge scheme are as follows:
- Primary and special schools can receive a maximum grant of up to 50% of the total cost of a project.
 - Secondary schools can receive a maximum grant of up to 34% of the total cost of a project.
 - The minimum size of project to be considered for support will be £5,000.
 - The maximum size of scheme to be supported will be £100,000. Therefore the maximum grant available would be £50,000 to a primary or special school and £33,000 to a secondary school. In some circumstances consideration will be given to support a larger scheme, although the grant maxima would still apply. An example would be support for a scheme supported through a variety of funding means where Seed Challenge support would enable the scheme to progress.
 - Successful schools will be given until the end of December 2012 to complete works and claim match-funding contributions. Extensions will be considered in exceptional circumstances
- 3.5. As part of the 2011-12 programme, consideration was given to the impact the reduction in DfE Devolved Formula Grant to schools would have upon the programme and schools' ability to contribute towards improvements. In analyses of responses the majority of schools were able to make match-funding contributions in line with criteria set out in 3.4 above. On this basis all successful schemes will be awarded grant to a maximum level of 50% for primaries and 34% for secondaries.
- 3.6. Schools were asked to register expressions of interest. Expressions of interest have now been received and evaluated and a full list of submitted bids is set out in the Appendix 1 to this report. The total Seed Challenge support sought for each scheme amounts to £556,512.
- 3.7. In addition to £300,000 Seed Challenge grant, it is recommended that the Council's School Security programme is utilised to match fund successful submissions for security improvements. However, as set out above demand for support has outstripped the available grant and it has been necessary to undertake a prioritisation exercise to determine the schemes that should be supported.

- 3.8. The Director of Children and Young People Services met with the Head of Access and Admissions and the CYP Strategic Property Manager to review the submitted schemes. The following priority areas were used when assessing schemes:
- Urgent health and safety issues.
 - Urgent security issues.
 - Contribution to raising educational attainment.
 - Level of support already received through recent rounds of Seed Challenge.
- 3.9. A full list of all schemes together with an indication of whether officers are recommending support is attached as the Appendix to this report. The total schemes supported will require Seed Challenge grant aid of £310,593 and Security grant aid of £76,829.
- 3.10. All schools featured on the lists will be asked to clarify their Governing Bodies position on Academy conversion before agreement to release the grant award is made, as those schools in the process of converting will access direct capital grant from DfE on conversion. This will enable the LBB capital available as part of this method-funded initiative to be prioritised for Local Authority maintained schools.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme contributes to the Council's Building a Better Bromley: 2020 Vision. Progression of these schemes will assist in meeting two of the key outcomes within the CYP Portfolio Plan for 2011/12: 'Children and young people enjoy learning and achieve their full potential' in that the schemes will help children to attend and enjoy school and 'Children and young people are safe there they live, go to school, play and work' in that some schemes will improve health and safety in those schools.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Any application of grant monies received must be applied having due regard to any guidance published by DfE.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. This report makes recommendations on schemes that should be supported under the Bromley Seed Challenge Scheme. The total Seed Challenge allocation to support these schemes of £300,000 will be included within the Children and Young People Services Capital Programme. The proposed schemes to be supported will require Seed Challenge grant of £310,593. The small amount of over-programming of £10,593 will be contained through slippage on individual schemes. The £76,829 is available from existing security and health and safety budgets.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	

APPENDIX 1

School	Scheme	Total Cost	Seed Challenge Support Sought	Grant Awarded	Supported	Reason for Recommendation
Alexandra Infant	New Sensory Room and equipment for autistic pupils plus SEN equipment for playground	£32,000	£16,000	£16,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Alexandra Junior	To improve provision of ICT by upgrade of current desktop PCs with laptops etc and conversion of current ICT room to classroom for Yr 5 (at present in mobile accommodation)	£45,400	£22,700	£0	Not supported	Although the scheme would benefit the school's learning environment, it did not score as highly as other submissions.
Bickley Primary	Supply and install automatic gate access for vehicles and pedestrians*	£15,554	£7,777*	£7,777*	Supported	Scheme significantly enhances school security. Match-funded through School Security programme.
Bromley Road Infants	Relocation of main entrance and admin offices	£5,379	£2,690*	£2,690*	Supported	Scheme significantly enhances school security. Match-funded through School Security programme.
Burnt Ash Primary	Creation of stage/theatre in KS hall	£10,000	£5,000	£5,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Castlecombe Primary	Creation of x2 additional teaching spaces	£6,950	£3,475	£3,475	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Clare House Primary	Provision of additional portable classroom to accommodate 'Forest School'	£40,354	£40,354	£0	Not Supported	School did not offer to make any contribution to scheme.
Chelsfield Primary	Creation of small multi use learning area/meeting room	£18,600	£9,300	£9,300	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Dorset Road Infant	Creation of small multi use learning area/staff PPA	£14,600	£7,300	£7,300	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Edgebury Primary	Refurbishment of main kitchen	£26,875	£21,375	£13,438	Supported	Scheme tackled significant H&S issues in relation to the provision of school catering. Support provided at 50% grant aid
Farnborough Primary	Supply and Install automatic gate access for vehicles and pedestrians plus additional fencing	£24,000	£12,000*	£12,000*	Supported	Scheme significantly enhances school security. Match-funded through School Security programme.

School	Scheme	Total Cost	Seed Challenge Support Sought	Grant Awarded	Supported	Reason for Recommendation
Hawes Down Schools	Installation of security barrier to main vehicle entrance and upgrade to CCTV in this area	£30,800	£15,400*	£15,400*	Supported	Scheme significantly enhances school security. Match-funded through School Security programme.
Highfield Junior	Extension to main hall providing small hall and only ramped, disabled access for main school	£130,000	£50,000	£50,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major health and safety and accessibility enhancement at the school. Award based on clarification of school status
Highfield Infants	Alterations and refurbishment to develop existing Foundation Stage area	£31,900	£28,710	£15,950	Supported	Scheme significantly enhances learning environment. Support provided at 50% grant aid
Holy Innocents	Remedial works following PIR carried out by LBB contractor	£15,041	£7,520	£0	Not supported	Although the scheme would address health and safety issues, these costs should be funded from LCVAP
James Dixon	Installation of sustainable built outdoor classroom	£8,000	£4,000	£4,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Keston Primary	Extension and refurbishments to improve security to the main entrance hall	£59,225	£29,613*	£29,613*	Supported	Scheme significantly enhances school security. Match-funded through School Security programme.
Leesons Primary	New provision for SEN and after school club as part of refurbishment	£50,000	£25,000	£25,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Manor Oak Primary	Refurbishment of Children's Centre internal layout to accommodate re-location of Nursery.	£70,000	£35,000	£35,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Malcolm Primary	Resurface main playground and re-laying of grassed area with artificial grass.	£19,000	£9,500	£9,500	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum and H&S enhancement at the school
Marian Vian Primary	Awnings to KS1 outside learning area	£14,058	£7,029	£7,029	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Midfield Primary	Improvement of pathways within school grounds to provide DDA compliant accessible routes.	£17,000	£8,500	£8,500	Supported	This scheme would provide a H&S and accessibility enhancement at the school

School	Scheme	Total Cost	Seed Challenge Support Sought	Grant Awarded	Supported	Reason for Recommendation
Midfield Primary	Creation of external outdoor learning area as recommended by Ofsted. Will create nature area including a Gazebo style learning structure	£15,200	£7,600	£0	Not supported	This scheme is s lesser priority than the scheme submitted by the School that is recommended under this Programme.
Mottingham Primary	Introduction of activity and creative play facility within existing playground Reason: Low scoring submission due to previous successful submissions	£24,300	£12,150	£0	Not supported	Whilst this scheme would provide a worthwhile improvement, the scheme scores less highly as a result of the School's recent allocation under the programme
Oak Lodge Primary	Creation of outdoor learning area for Yr 1	£39,600	£19,800	£19,800	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Royston Primary	Resurface main playground following building project	£10,000	£5,000	£5,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum and health and safety enhancement at the school
Perry Hall Primary	Multi use activity/teaching zone to be located within the main playground with an all-weather canopy unit with a platform for use as external learning environment.	£17,500	£8,750	£8,750	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Perry Hall Primary	Dedicated adventure play equipment for KS1 to be installed in currently unusable grass bank areas. Reason: Support recommended for alternative bid	£15,500	£7,750	£0	Not supported	This scheme is s lesser priority than the scheme submitted by the School that is recommended under this Programme.
The Priory	Refurbishment of main school hall	£48,000	£16,320	£0	Not supported	Whilst the scheme would provide a worthwhile improvement, it scores less highly against the criteria in 3.8 above
The Priory	Refurbishment of student toilets Reason: Support recommended for alternative bid	£53,000	£18,020	£0	Not supported	Whilst the scheme would provide a worthwhile improvement, it does not score highly against the criteria in 3.8 above
Poverest Primary	Replacement of external doors	£12,000	£6,000	£6,000	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school

School	Scheme	Total Cost	Seed Challenge Support Sought	Grant Awarded	Supported	Reason for Recommendation
Red Hill Primary	Creation of a covered walkway between remote Yr 4 building and main school. Will double as outside learning facility	£29,800	£14,900	£14,900	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Southborough Primary	Creation of new KS1 playground area and improvements to access pathways to rear of school	£21,700	£10,850	£10,850	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Southborough Primary	Installation of wireless IT system to serve whole school Reason: Low scoring submission/support recommended for alternative bid	£11,960	£5,980	£0	Not supported	This scheme is s lesser priority than the scheme submitted by the School that is recommended under this Programme.
St Mary Cray Primary	Refurbishment of Breakfast Club room	£6,600	£3,300	£3,300	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Unicorn Primary	Creation of outdoor learning area for Special Needs and extended community activities	£65,000	£32,500	£32,500	Supported	This scheme would provide a major curriculum enhancement at the school
Wickham Common Primary	Supply and Install automatic gate access for vehicles and pedestrians	£18,700	£9,350*	£9,350*	Supported	Scheme significantly enhances school security. Match-funded through School Security programme.
Wickham Common Primary	Introduction of dedicated activity play area for whole school within the under-used grassed areas Reason: Support recommended for alternative bid	£20,000	£10,000	£0	Not supported	This scheme is s lesser priority than the scheme submitted by the School that is recommended under this Programme.
		£1,093,596	£556,512	£387,422		
			Seed Challenge	£310,593		
			Security*	£76,829		
			Total Grant	£387,422		