

Decision Maker: Education Portfolio Holder

Date: For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 12 June 2012

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **UPDATE FROM THE SEN EXECUTIVE WORKING PARTY**

Contact Officer: Mike Barnes, Deputy Assistant Director (Education)
Tel: 020 8313 4865 E-mail: mike.barnes@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Bob Garnett, Interim Assistant Director (Education)

Ward: Boroughwide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report provides an update from the Executive Member Working Group for Special Education Needs and seeks approval for the release of funds allocated as part of the basic need capital programme.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 **That the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee endorse the recommendations of the Executive Member Working Group as set out in Appendix B to this report.**
- 2.2 **That the Portfolio Holder for Education:**
- **approves expenditure of £400,000 from the Basic Need Capital Programme for the development of extra in-Borough provision at Crofton Infant School, subject to legal agreements being in place with regard to work undertaken in schools with academy status and relevant Chief Officer agreement to award of contract following tender in line with financial regulations;**
 - **approves expenditure of £30,000 for first phase works at Darrick Wood Secondary School to take place during Summer 2012, subject to legal agreements being in place with regard to work undertaken in schools with academy status; and,**
 - **approves the necessary expenditure for Officers to proceed with feasibility works for the second phase of the project at Darrick Wood Secondary School, subject to legal agreements being in place with regard to work undertaken in schools with academy status;**
 - **agrees that, where appropriate, the relevant Chief Officer be authorised to submit planning applications at the appropriate time in respect of the schemes at Crofton Infant and Darrick Wood Secondary School.**

Corporate Policy

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

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost: £465,000
 2. Ongoing costs: Non-Recurring Cost: Further Details
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Education Capital Programme
 4. Total current budget for this head: £9,769,662
 5. Source of funding: DfE Basic Need Capital 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: Statutory Requirement: Further Details
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 22 pupils
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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 Projects at Crofton Infant School and Darrick Wood Secondary School were included as “projects in development” within the Basic Need Programme approved by the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder on 26 March 2012 (DCYP12036) and, as such, the release of funding was subject to future reports to Members.
- 3.2 These projects have been subject to further consideration by the Executive Member Working Group at its meeting on the 29 May 2012. The projects were considered as item 6A of the working group “SEN Strategy Phase V Outstanding activities to seek approval” (**Appendix A**). The relevant extract from the draft minutes of the working group is attached (**Appendix B**).

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The need to ensure sufficient school places, including special needs places, is a priority within the Council’s Strategy “Building a Better Bromley” and contributes to the strategy to achieve the status of an Excellent Council.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has been allocated £9,769,662 in 100% capital grant for the financial years 2011-13 to meet basic need provision in schools.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As part of Section 14 of the Education Act 1996, the Council has a statutory duty to ensure that schools in its area are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide education suitable for the different ages, abilities and aptitudes and special educational needs of pupils of school age.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Basic Need Programme Update Report 3 (DVYP12036 – For Pre-decision Scrutiny by the Children and Young People PDS Committee on 20 March 2012



EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES

Briefing Paper	Member/Officer Working Group (SEN)
Date:	29 May 2012
Subject:	SEN STRATEGY PHASE V OUTSTANDING ACTIVITIES TO SEEK APPROVAL
Chief Officer:	Bob Garnett, Interim Assistant Director (Education)
Contact Officer:	Bob Garnett, Interim Assistant Director (Education) Mary Çava, Head of SEN and Disability Services

1. INTRODUCTION

1. This report provides brief information on progress towards ensuring complex needs are being met within borough, reducing reliance on costly out-borough placements, increasing parental confidence and reducing tribunals. It seeks approval from Members to carry out the outstanding work required to ensure Bromley pupils remain within Bromley provision.
2. In order to reduce reliance on out of borough placements the strategy has focused on four areas:
 - increasing provision in Bromley for targeted groups;
 - improving and increasing provision in primary school special opportunity units where appropriate;
 - increasing provision for short breaks (respite);
 - Improving co-ordination of support to families by continuing to develop a Joint Disability Service across Health, Education and Social Care.

2. INCREASING & IMPROVING PROVISION IN BROMLEY FOR TARGETED GROUPS

2.1 Specialist Support and Disability Service Audit

The robust SEN and Disability Autumn 2011 Audit had identified a shortage of specialist places for KS1 pupils for September 2012 and this is being managed by reaching agreements with special schools and units to take more children than originally planned. It was also agreed that due to the volume of complex needs children entering the school system at KS1 schools should be approached to consider further unit places.

After careful consideration Crofton Infants School, which already has a very successful and popular unit for complex needs signalled their willingness to expand provision to meet some of the increased need. Discussion between the Head Teacher and Governors has taken place to expand provision to create an extra group of 6/8 children and they are in agreement to this expansion.

The revenue for educating these children was factored into the budget for 2012/13 and basic needs funds are available to deliver adaptations to the buildings to achieve the required capacity. Capital funds have been allocated to enable the creation of required additional learning and outside play space at the school. A capital allocation of £400,000 for Crofton Infants School was agreed as part of the 2012/13 Basic Need Capital Programme presented to the CYP Policy Development and Scrutiny Meeting on 20 March 2012. The works at Crofton Infants were designated as a “project in development” and release of funding is subject to future reports to Members. The £400,000 allocation as set out in the report was initially funded by the Basic Need Capital Grant spread over 2012-13 and later years. The recent additional allocation to Bromley of £1.59m by the Department for Education for 2012/13 allows the whole scheme to be funded from 2012-13 allocation.

Recommendations

Members to agree the release of funds for the development of extra in-borough provision at Crofton School.

Risks if this were not to progress

There is an increase of 7% of new pre-school children with more complex needs being audited and requiring a Bromley school place with over 200 new children being referred across the audit year. At least six pupils will require immediate specialist provision in September 2012 to avoid being placed in high cost out of borough provision for complex needs. Transport has not been factored into this but will, of course be more costly to out of borough provision due to distances. Crofton Infants School has indicated they could meet this need in a cost effective manner.

2.2 Improving provision for Children with Hearing Impairment and Deaf Children

The Deaf Centre at Darrick Wood Senior School

The Deaf Centre/Hearing Impairment Unit at Darrick Wood Secondary School has an excellent reputation within the Borough but currently delivers the curriculum in teaching spaces that are not fit-for-purpose.

In September 2012, there will be 14 pupils in the Deaf Centre (which is maximum capacity). The centre will continue to be full to maximum capacity with predicted numbers which are currently moving through the primary provision.

The Deaf Centre currently comprises 2 partially acoustically treated rooms used as classrooms, one room used as staff/office space and further teaching spaces in dilapidated facilities provided externally to the main school building.

The rooms within the school are located in a good position. However they require more comprehensive acoustic treatment to ensure optimum learning and allow flexible sub-division for smaller group teaching. The external accommodation is not fit for purpose and it is proposed that the existing portacabins are replaced at a later date with acoustically treated modular accommodation.

£400,000 has been set aside from Bromley's Basic Need Capital Grant to support improvements to the hearing impairment unit's facilities at Darrick Wood Secondary School as set out in the reports to CYP Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 14 July 2011 and 20 March 2012. The works at Darrick Wood Secondary Hearing Impairment Unit are designated as a "project in development" and require further Member approval for release of the funds. The capital works are wholly funded via the Council's 2012-13 Basic Need Capital Grant Allocation.

Risk Factors without upgrading the facilities

Without appropriate, fit-for-purpose facilities we may lose pupils to expensive out of Borough provisions and we will accordingly lose highly qualified and well-trained, experienced staff. Parents of deaf children are highly knowledgeable about what they should expect for their children and currently the Deaf Centre meets these expectations in terms of outstanding specialist staff, the mainstream school and having a deaf peer group.

The current facilities at Darrick Wood Secondary School provided are of far lower standard than those provided to primary school age pupils at the nearby Griffins Centre. Current cost of provision per pupil at KS3 & 4 is £21,500. Costs for out of borough provision per pupil £35k upwards (Mary Hare School for the Deaf £60K.) There is a risk of tribunal activity where parents may seek alternative provision if not satisfied with the current configuration.

There are currently two phases to the proposed capital works at Darrick Wood Secondary School:

The first phase requires a small capital investment of £30,000 to modify the existing internal classrooms to ensure the acoustic standards required for deaf children are achieved and to allow sub-division through the provision of a flexible acoustic partition that will allow the effective teaching of smaller groups.

Recommendations

- (1) Officers are seeking agreement for the first phase works to take place during Summer 2012 as a small investment will bring about a significant enhancement to learning environment.
- (2) The second phase of the project involves the replacement of the existing dilapidated external portacabin accommodation. Officers are seeking agreement based on the need set out within this report to proceed with feasibility works and bring developed proposals back to Members for future decision.

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER OFFICER WORKING GROUP FOR SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Excerpt from the draft minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2012

**6.A SEN STRATEGY PHASE V - OUTSTANDING ACTIVITIES TO
SEEK APPROVAL**

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The release of funds for the development of extra in-Borough provision at Crofton Infant School be supported, subject to legal agreements being in place with regard to work undertaken in schools with academy status;**
- 2) The proposal for first phase works at Darrick Wood Secondary School to take place during Summer 2012 be supported, subject to legal agreements being in place with regard to work undertaken in schools with academy status; and,**
- 3) Officers proceed with feasibility works for the second phase of the project at Darrick Wood Secondary School, subject to legal agreements being in place with regard to work undertaken in schools with academy status.**