

CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

8th April 2010

UPDATE ON BETTER SCHOOLS FOR ALL

1. The Better Schools for All Strategy was approved by Cabinet and Council in Summer 2008 (Report No.96/2008) with DCSF approval in November 2008 releasing total grant funding of £ 12.9m to be spent by 31st August 2011. Of this £4.8m will be used to refurbish and improve all primary schools, with the exception of Oakham CofE and The Parks Schools which are being rebuilt (refer to separate Little Build report for update).
2. A Project Board has been established to include a number of Head teachers, Governor representatives, CYPS and Development Portfolio Holders and officers from CYPS and Development Directorates working in partnership to deliver a transformational learning programme. The Board meets monthly to provide strategic direction and to oversee progress, concentrating on key topics. Following an initial period of consultations with schools and high level briefing throughout 2009, the Capital Projects team were charged with mobilising the BS4A programme in October 2009.
3. **VISION**
Learning Visions have been developed by each school supported by CYPS which will be embedded within the detailed design briefs for these schools. A two day 'Transforming Primary Learning in Rutland' programme was completed by all school head teachers in March. This reinforced the importance of the learning vision driving forward changes to the pedagogy and environment together delivering transformational change.
4. **PROGRESS TO DATE**
All schools have now had an initial visit from Capital Projects Children & Young People's Services officers to review project requirements, assess condition survey data and prioritise needs and to understand schools key drivers for changes. High level design briefs have been prepared for each school that demonstrate the links against the strategic themes of the approved BS4A Strategy.
With the appointment of the Framework contractor Willmott Dixon (approval by Cabinet on 16th February 2010) to deliver the construction schemes across all schools, follow on visits have now commenced to discuss requirements in much more detail. This involves a designer exploring ideas for physical changes and improvements translated from the visions and the high level design briefs, identifying any technical issues and major maintenance priorities and producing a detailed design brief from which the construction work can be specified.
5. **BUDGET**
Early spend against an enabling budget of £50k was agreed by Cabinet (16th February) and £69k has been agreed by Cabinet (30th March) to cover the urgent repairs to the heating system at Edith Weston School. The contractor is preparing initial budget costs and feasibility reports for each of the schools in readiness for the next report to Cabinet on 18th May. This may recommend some alterations to the indicative sums the schools are working with to ensure a consistent approach to improving learning whilst tackling the most pressing condition needs.