

<b>Decision maker:</b>	<b>Cabinet member contracts and assets</b>
<b>Decision date:</b>	<b>14 July 2017</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Department for Education priority schools building programme grant for Colwall CE Primary School</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Head of education development</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key decision**

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

## **Wards affected**

Hope End

## **Purpose**

To approve the acceptance of grant funding from the Education Funding Agency's Priority School Building Programme 2 (PSBP) for the rebuilding of Colwall CE Primary School.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

- (a) **the Department for Education and skills grant of £3.04m for building works and £150k for feasibility in relation to a replacement primary school in Colwall be accepted**

## **Alternative options**

- 1 The council could choose not to accept the offer of funding. This option is not recommended because the use of external funding enables the council either to

make capital investment elsewhere or to reduce its borrowing. The conditions of grant have been reviewed and can be complied with.

## Reasons for recommendations

- 2 In the Cabinet report on 21 July 2016, which approved the building of a new primary school in Colwall, reference was made in paragraph 8 to a successful bid to the Education Funding Agency's (EFA) Priority Schools Building Programme 2. The financial section in paragraph 12 stated the indicative funding from the EFA would be £3m. The total level of funding available has now been confirmed as £3.154m and, having reviewed the terms of the grant, the recommendation is to accept the funding.

## Key considerations

- 3 In the summer of 2014, the primary school in Colwall was relocated into temporary buildings due to severe water ingress problems. Subsequently Cabinet approved the building of a replacement school on a new site and provision was made in the capital programme of £6.5m, which included £1.2m for land purchase.
- 4 The Education Funding Agency Priority School Building Programme 2 is a national scheme to address schools across the country that are in the worst condition and most in need of investment. Schools and councils bid to be included in the scheme and Colwall was the only Herefordshire bid to be accepted. The EFAs central consideration of school building works provides opportunity to block commission standard design schools at considerable saving. However, the uniqueness of the Colwall location, being an area of outstanding beauty, and the desire to progress quickly with a permanent solution to reduce the cost of occupying temporary buildings, led to the EFA agreeing to local delivery by Herefordshire Council.
- 5 The EFA has very clear specifications about the size and design of schools to ensure value for money, longevity of the building, comfort and energy efficiency. These specifications provided a useful challenge to the design but necessary elements to satisfy planning requirements, such as making essential changes to roads and pavements and ensuring the school fulfilled its community expectations, including providing a nursery, led to a higher cost project than the grant available from the EFA.
- 6 Building work started in December 2016 and the works are due to be completed for occupation in January 2018.

## Community impact

- 7 A key principle of the council's schools capital investment strategy is that any financial investment must represent best value for investors and could come from a variety of sources. Acceptance of the grant supports that principle and the council's corporate plan priority to secure better services, quality of life and value for money..

## Equality duty

- 8 There are no additional implications arising from this report but we will pay due regard to ensure that we eliminate discrimination, harassment, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act. We will advance quality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; in addition we will foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## **Financial implications**

- 9 The EFA grant totalling £3.19m compares with the £3m set out as the indicative level of funding in the Cabinet report on 21 July 2016. This difference will be considered in the next corporate capital programme.

## **Legal implications**

12. The grant acceptance should be approved. However, the difference in cost between the final cost project and the grant should be documented.

## **Risk management**

- 10 The EFA grant provides opportunity to secure additional funding to support a major capital scheme. Council officers are assured that the conditions of the grant will be met through the completion of the building works.

## **Consultees**

None

## **Appendices**

None

## **Background papers**

- None identified.