

Written statement of a key decision
Cabinet member community services and assets

Title	High Needs Capital Spend
Decision maker	Cabinet member community services and assets Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251
Date of decision	27 August 2026
Report exemption class	Open
Reason for being a 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 concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.
A notice was served in accordance with Part 3 (Key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.	
General exception or special urgency (as defined in the constitution)	No
Purpose	To approve the spend of the High Needs Provision Capital Grant and Special and Alternative Provision Free School Alternative Places Grant to extend our inclusion offer in mainstream schools, increase places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and to improve Alternative Provision (AP) education arrangements.
Decision	That: a) Approval is given to spend up to £9.162m of Department for Education (DfE) capital grant funding, comprising £5.362m High Needs Provision Capital Grant 2025–2027 and £3.8m Special and Alternative Provision Free School Alternative Places Grant, to support the delivery of additional Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) capacity in Herefordshire; b) Approval is given for the programme to include, but not be limited to, the expansion of Westfield School, the development of support bases in mainstream schools, and the acquisition, assembly, adaptation or refurbishment of suitable council-owned or purchased land and/or buildings to create additional

	SEND capacity; and c) Authority is delegated to the Service Director for Education, Learning and Skills to take all operational decisions necessary, including the award of contracts, to deliver and vary the programme within the approved budget, including the use of any further Department for Education high needs, SEND or equivalent capital grant awards up to 2029-30 that are added to the capital programme by the Section 151 Officer.
Reason for the decision	As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50055394
Options considered	1. Do not approve expenditure of the grant funding. This option is not recommended. Herefordshire continues to experience increasing demand for SEND places. Without further investment in local capacity, the council would be more reliant on independent, non maintained, unregistered, or out-of-county provision, which is generally higher cost and can result in children and young people travelling further from their local communities. The position is that additional local capacity is required to support sufficiency, inclusion and cost avoidance. 2. Approve a fixed list of named schemes only. This option is not recommended. Although there are clear intended programme priorities, individual scheme costs and delivery routes remain subject to feasibility, site availability, statutory approvals, procurement, Department for Education design development and final cost certainty. In particular, the council contribution required for the proposed expansion of Westfield School cannot be confirmed until the Department for Education's School Rebuilding Programme design work has progressed sufficiently to identify the cost difference between the baseline rebuild and an expanded scheme. A fixed scheme list or fixed allocation at this stage would reduce the council's ability to respond to changing demand, affordability and deliverability.
Declarations of interest (see ▪ below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	3 September 2026

Councillor: Cabinet member community services and assets (Councillor Harry Bramer)	Date 27 August 2026
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- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;

and

- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted.