

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	To approve the tendering of a contractor to prepare a developed design for the rebuild of Peterchurch Primary School on its current site
Date of decision:	4 March 2021
Decision maker:	Director for Children and Families
Authority for delegated decision:	The authority for the specified officer to take this decision is set out in the cabinet report approved 3 December 2020 https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7383
Ward:	Golden Valley North
Consultation:	<p>Cabinet debated and approved to move to the next stage of the rebuild of Peterchurch Primary school, RIBA stage 3 Developed Design, on 3 December 2020.</p> <p>Consultation has taken place with the head teacher, Chair of governors, local parish and ward councillor who agreed to the rebuild of Peterchurch primary school.</p> <p>The cabinet member for commissioning, procurement and assets and the cabinet member for children & families have been consulted and are supportive of the proposal.</p> <p>Political groups were consulted on the proposal and no objections were received. Comments were received regarding the green certification of the new build which will be a key requirement of the design.</p>
Decisions made:	<p>To proceed to open tender of a consultant to prepare a developed design for Peterchurch Primary School.</p> <p>Funding to be provided from the Peterchurch Area School Investment budget at a cost of no more than £300k including all statutory and professional fees.</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>Peterchurch primary school occupies buildings which are in poor condition and which are unsuitable in many respects for the provision of primary education.</p> <p>In order to ensure that funding allocated to the rebuild of Peterchurch Primary School was properly targeted, a feasibility study was undertaken in order to prepare a concept design and identify the scale, scope and high level cost of work to be undertaken.</p> <p>The feasibility study demonstrated that a new build project delivers better value for money both in the short and the longer term. In addition it gives the council an opportunity to build its first carbon neutral school with green building certification showcasing its ambition to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.</p> <p>During this next stage, the concept design will be further developed with the</p>

	architectural, building services and structural engineering designs being developed and, crucially, the cost information aligned to the Project Budget.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	The costs for the developed design will be funded from the Peterchurch Area School Investment budget which has been approved by Council and in the cabinet decision on 3 December 2020.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>Do nothing – not recommended. A programme of work will need to be carried out over the next 3 years at a cost of approx. £420K, which is a significant amount of the modest maintenance grant supplied by government. In addition to planned work we would expect to incur further cost for reactive work in line with the previous 3 years (£125K). Given the extent of the dilapidation at the school, health and safety issues could arise for which the Council could be held liable. Children will continue to learn in an unsuitable environment.</p> <p>Close the school – not recommended. The council would have to follow the statutory process as defined in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which has additional requirements when considering the closure of a rural school. This is a long 5 stage process which will include a published consultation with clear rationale for the closure, alternative options, the impact on the community to name just a few matters that would need to be addressed. The school provides education for up to 150 children. Numbers on roll have fluctuated between 120 and 150 over the past 5 years. There is no capacity in the neighbouring schools to accommodate all the children currently on roll at Peterchurch, additional capacity would therefore need to be provided – at a cost. The nearest five schools are 4.9, 5.3, 6.8, 7.2 & 7.6 miles away from Peterchurch which would involve providing transport to enable the children to attend, this would again come at a cost and would have an impact on the environment. Given the above, it would be hard to justify that Peterchurch Primary is no longer required and the only option is the closure of the school.</p> <p>Acquire a new site adjacent to Fairfield High School and rebuild Peterchurch primary school there – this option has been explored in great detail and has been deemed as unviable. A study identified that significant transport and drainage infrastructure would be required. In addition, there was a lack of support from the local parish and schools.</p>
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None

Signed

Chris Baird
 Director for children and families

Date: 4 March 2021