

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	High Needs Capital Grant – Hampton Dene Primary School, Tupsley, Expansion of Learning and Communication Centre, Appointment of a Construction Contractor
Date of decision:	07.07.25
Decision maker:	Service Director for Education, Development and Skills
Authority for delegated decision:	The authority for the specified officer to take this decision is set out in the cabinet report approved 28 September 2023. High Needs Capital Grant - Hampton Dene Primary School, extension of Learning and Communication Centre
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	<p>Consultation was carried out in respect of the Herefordshire Capital Investment Strategy 2021- 2030 For Specialist Settings Educating Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).</p> <p>The Cabinet members for Community Services and Assets and Children and Young People have been consulted and are both supportive of the project.</p> <p>An online political group consultation took place on 4 September 2023. Councillor representing the conservative party, Independents for Herefordshire, Liberal Democrats and The Green Party attended. The session was recorded and circulated to all members to provide their views. The Liberal Democrats wanted assurance that the project would seek net zero in operation.</p>
Decision made:	<p>To award a contract to Speller Metcalfe to deliver the Hampton Dene Primary School extension to expand the Language and Communication Centre (LCC) and the appointment of a Multi-Disciplinary Design Team.</p> <p>The contract value is: £1,843,447. Contingency: £215,000</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>The LCC at Hampton Dene Primary School caters for children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with 16 places currently available for each specialism. This unit has been full since 2018 based on its intended capacity, however, the school has continued to admit children taking their numbers to 50% above capacity.</p> <p>The need to offer more places to meet demand has resulted in the creation of additional autism hubs in four mainstream schools as well as the proposed expansion at Hampton Dene Primary School.</p> <p>A feasibility study conducted in April 2023 confirmed that an expansion could be accommodated on the existing Hampton Dene Primary School site.</p> <p>The expansion will create two additional classrooms with the appropriate support space, toilets and outdoor space and will create a flexible learning environment to</p>

	<p>accommodate 16 pupils. The project is in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance Building Bulletin 104 – Area Guidelines for SEND and Alternative Provision</p> <p>Speller Melcalfe have been selected following a competitive tendering exercise in accordance with the council’s contract procedure rules.</p>
Equality Considerations	<p>Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the ‘general duty’ on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –</p> <p>a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;</p> <p>b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;</p> <p>c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 established a positive obligation on local authorities to promote equality and to reduce discrimination in relation to any of the nine ‘protected characteristics’ (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). In particular, the council must have ‘due regard’ to the public sector equality duty when taking any decisions on service changes. As this is increasing the capacity at a school which provides high need support for disabled children by increasing places and accessibility it supports the council in discharging its duty in line with the</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>The costs for the extension will be funded from the High Needs Capital Grant received from the Department for Education which has been approved by cabinet in the decision on 23 September 2023.</p> <p>Due to increased construction costs, the budget for this project has increased by £238,000 which is funded from the High Needs Capital Grant.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>The option not to extend the Language and Communication Centre (LCC) was considered. This was not recommended as the Learning and Communication Centre is currently over-capacity and there is an increasing need for spaces at the centre. The extension will resolve the current capacity issues and provide new additional spaces</p>
Details of any declarations of interest made:	<p>None.</p>

Signed:

Date: 07/07/2025

Liz Farr
Service Director for Education, Development and Skills