

Report to Hartlepool Schools' Forum – 22 April 2016
From Katie Hammond, Projects Manager

Schools Capital Suitability Update

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Schools' Capital Subgroup reviewed all issues highlighted through the suitability surveys that were carried out in all schools eligible for Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding, these schemes were approved by Schools' Forum on 20 January 2016 and by Children's Services Committee on 8th March 2016.
- 1.2. The purpose of this report is to inform Schools' Forum of some changes to an approved scheme and seek approval for a further scheme.

2. Rift House Primary Extension

- 2.1. Rift House were awarded £400,000 to replace a mobile unit that was deemed to impose a health and safety risk. This scheme was approved while feasibility studies were carried out to look at the most suitable option for replacing this unit therefore, £400,000 was a rough estimate of cost.
- 2.2. Feasibility work has now been completed and the suggested solution would be to replace the mobile unit with an extension to the school's main building with a total cost of approximately £664,000.
- 2.3. This increase in cost is based on the fact that the replacement is for a permanent extension to the main building rather than providing another mobile unit and, that the school have requested that the extension be developed if a way to support how they would like to manage the school in the future.
- 2.4. The Headteacher presented his plans to Schools' Capital Sub Group on 14th April 2016 and justified the additional cost of his scheme. The school understands that some of the developments are based on their own desired requirements and have agreed to cover the cost relating to this. The school have agreed to pay a contribution of £114,000 to this scheme and requested an addition £150,000 contribution from the available Suitability Funding. This was agreed by Schools' Capital Sub Group meaning that moving forward the school would be allocated £550,000 of Suitability Funding to support the building of their extension and the removal of the mobile unit.

3. Springwell School Development

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- 3.1. Springwell School have requested funding to support them with converting the current library/conservatory into an ASD classroom which has an estimated cost of £85k.
- 3.2. This conversion will allow the school to accommodate their intake of children with ASD in September 2016. Without the conversion the school will not be able to meet this need.
- 3.3. The school is requesting that they are able to access Suitability Funding to support them with this conversion. The High Needs Block is top-sliced and contributes to the Centrally Retained element of school funding, of which capital funding forms a part.
- 3.4. If this funding is agreed further work will still need to be carried out to extend the school further in order to meet future needs for placements for children with ASD. The local authority is current reviewing future need and how an extension could be funding. It is possible that there will be an opportunity to bid to the EFA for specific funding open to special schools but, this will not be available until the 17/18 financial year.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. Approval is given in relation to the addition £150,000 needed to replace the mobile unit at Rift House with an extension to the main school building.
- 4.2. Approval is given for Springwell to access the available Suitability Funding to convert the library space into an ASD classroom in order for them to meet need in September.