

TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
DATE: 30 MAY 2019

NEW CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING FOR 2019-20
SPECIAL PROVISION CAPITAL FUND
Executive Director, People

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For the Executive Member to approve the release of £250k DFE Special Pupil Capital Funding scheme (SPCF) for inclusion on the Council's 2019/20 capital programme.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.2 **That the Executive Member approves the release of £250k of DFE Special Pupil Capital Funding Scheme for inclusion on the Council's 2019/20 capital programme to the following schools:**

a) Brakenhale Academy, SEND Transition Classroom and support: £150,000

b) Jennett's Park CE Primary School: SEND: Setting up a Dance/Relaxation Therapy and Sensory Room: £100,000

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Executive Member approval is required to release these new projects into the 2019/20 capital programme.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 N/A

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background to Funding

- 5.1 In March 2017 the Department for Education announced £215m of capital funding through the SPCF. Local authorities can use this funding to make capital investments in provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes investing in new pupil places and improvements to facilities for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans in mainstream and special schools, nurseries, colleges and other provision.
- 5.2 Funds are allocated to individual LAs on projected population growth for children and young people aged 2-18 between the years 2018-19 and 2020-21. Location factors are also applied to take into account the varied costs of building in different regions.
- 5.3 Before releasing the grant funding, the DfE require local authorities to complete and publish a short plan that sets out how they intend to invest their allocation, which is visible to parents, carers and other local groups. The plan for local authorities' SEND

capital provision allocations should sit coherently with their wider plan and be published with their local offer.

- 5.4 Local authorities must also consider how to invest capital and revenue in a joined-up way to get the most out of each project, and this grant funding can be combined with other capital funding, or pooled between a group of local authorities to develop provision, which can support a wider area.

Eligibility

- 5.5 This funding is primarily intended to develop provision for pupils with more complex special educational needs (i.e. an EHC plan or a statement of special educational needs) in mainstream and/or special schools. However, local authorities are free to spend the fund on other education-based provision for children and young people aged from 0 to 25 where this meets local needs, such as early years settings or further education colleges.

- 5.6 Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there is a school place available for every child. The Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to keep the provision for children and young people with SEN and disabilities under review (including its sufficiency), working with parents, young people, and providers. In this context the Departmental Management Team considered how best to use this capital allocation from the special provision fund to support the Council's plans to meet local need.

- 5.7 The following types of provision are eligible: Mainstream schools including academies, free schools and faith schools
- Further education (FE) colleges
 - Specially resourced units:
 - Special schools
 - Pupil referral unit
 - Any other education provision that is attended by pupils who have education, health and care plans and are aged between 0 and 25 and not otherwise covered.

Examples of projects which could be funded by the SPCF

- 5.8 DfE guidance states that Local Authorities can invest their share of the special provision capital fund in:
- Creating new (additional) places at good or outstanding provision
 - Improving facilities or developing new facilities

- 5.9 The following examples have been given by the DfE of projects that are eligible for funding;
- Expansion(s) to existing provision including on and offsite
 - Reconfiguring provision to create additional space for places or facilities.
 - Re-purposing areas for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Other capital transactions that result in new places or facilities' improvements
 - Cross border provision where this supports good outcomes for children in the area
 - Expanding outstanding special provision
 - Helping children gain independence within their local community
 - Adding resourced provision to a successful mainstream school
 - Setting up new learning kitchens to teach pupils the skills they need to be independent in adulthood and skills that can support them in employment

Examples of projects which are not consistent with the intended use of SPCF

5.10 The following examples have been given where projects would not meet the eligibility criteria;

- Higher education including universities and other higher education provision
- Any provision for those aged 25 and over.
- Provision of places for pupils who do not have health and care plans
- Disabled access works e.g. ramps or widening doorways.
- Revenue expenditure such as furniture, equipment, training or staff costs
- Maintenance work, which will be covered by Devolved Formula Capital funding
- Individual mobility equipment such as wheelchairs. However, local authorities can spend this funding on capital installations such as ceiling hoists for lifting non-ambulant children into a hydrotherapy pool.

Bids received

5.11 There were a total of 12 bids received of varying degrees of quality and relevance to compliance for the 2018 – 19 year. Following meetings and consultations with schools and the Bracknell Parent and Carer forum, colleagues and stakeholders acknowledged a better understanding of the conditions of the grant which have subsequently been reflected in the 2 bids that have been received for the 2019 – 20 round.

Evaluation criteria

5.12 Bracknell Forest Council as the responsible body has the flexibility to distribute funding based on local priorities and need, but the guidance from DfE is to use the funding to create new places and improve facilities at existing schools.

5.14 The value of the grant in 2019/20 is £250,927 and the total value of all of the bids received is £250,000.

5.15 It should be noted that DfE have announced future years funding of an additional £250,927 in 2020/21.

Allocation of funds:

5.16 Funding allocations will be offered subject to provision of a suitably detailed and appropriate cost plan. Successful bidders will also be required to enter into a funding agreement in order to ring-fence the grant to the agreed purpose.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Finance

6.1 The Director of Finance is satisfied that sufficient funds exist to agree the recommendation.

Borough Solicitor

6.2 There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 All schools including maintained, special, academy and faith schools were invited to submit bids in the 2019 spring term.

- 7.2 The Parent Carer Forum was also consulted. However, as they had a bid accepted in 2018 – 19, they chose not to submit a further one for this round.
- 7.3 The local area SEND Improvement Partnership Group were also consulted with in March 2019.
- 7.4 There has also been liaison with neighbouring local authorities.
- 7.5 Local authorities are required to complete and publish a concise plan by end of May 2019 to show how they intend to invest their share of the fund once the decision to allocate it has been made.

Contacts for further information

Kashif Nawaz Head of Children’s Support Services
01344 353318 kashif.nawaz@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Chris Taylor Head of School Property, Places and Admissions
01344 354062 chris.taylor@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

David Eagle Education Property and Contracts Officer
01344 354004 david.eagle@bracknell-forest.gov.uk