

Summary of Capital Investment Plans relating to Priory Primary School

1. Background

In June/July 2010 the Government led Primary Capital Investment Programme was withdrawn. Under the Programme, North Tyneside Council had carried out an appraisal of standards, deprivation, and surplus places to identify those school pyramids (comprising high schools and feeder primary schools) that would benefit from early investment through the initiative. The initial investment under the initiative was targeted towards schools in the North West of the Borough. The second phase of investment was to be targeted towards the South East Cluster of schools, including Priory Primary School.

Following the national review of schools capital investment and the withdrawal of the Primary Capital Investment Programme (June/July 2010), the authority identified key asset management investment priorities for all schools (including Priory Primary School) to be funded from the formulaic capital allocations awarded by the Department for Education (DfE) to all local authorities for both Capital Maintenance and Basic Need.

Due to the volume/value of works required across North Tyneside's full school estate, and based on the available budgets allocated by the DfE, only the top four priorities identified by the condition surveys were considered (D1, D2, C1, and C2) based on the DfE criteria below:

GRADE	Score	Definitions
A	1	Good, Performing as intended
B	2	Satisfactory, Performing as expected, but showing minor deterioration
C	3	Poor, Exhibiting major defects, and /or not operating as intended
D	4	Bad. Life expired and/or at risk of imminent failure

PRIORITY	Score	Definitions
1	4	Urgent work that will prevent immediate closure
2	3	Essential work required within two years
3	2	Desirable work required between three to five years
4	1	Longer term work beyond five years

2. Capital Maintenance/Basic Need Investment

In July 2010 a Mayoral Task Group was established to ensure a continued open and transparent approach to school capital investment across the school estate. The officer and cross party elected member group assisted in the formulation of a comprehensive programme of investment for the school estate across North Tyneside based on the DfE criteria identified above. Work was also undertaken with a sub group of headteachers.

As part of the meetings with the Headteacher sub group, the draft 5 year Modernisation Investment Programme was discussed to ensure that the school estate was made fit for purpose. The information was then circulated to all schools on 31 January 2012 as part of the formal consultation arrangements.

The sub group of headteachers also looked at how best to deliver an investment programme across the school estate with specific reference to basic need and suitability. The sub group agreed the following local criteria would be used in the prioritisation of works and would be based on:

- Health and Safety;
- Teaching inhibited by current provision and/or location;
- Accommodation beyond useful life;
- Isolated location (e.g. if there is teaching accommodation separate to a school building);
- School expansion;
- Removal of surplus accommodation.

This information was then subsequently circulated to all schools on 24 February 2012 as part of the formal consultation arrangements.

Any challenges made to the draft investment priorities were then considered by officers and if appropriate, the programmes amended before the final versions were submitted to Cabinet at the meeting held on 12 March 2012. Priory Primary School did not raise any challenges to the draft investment priorities.

3. Priority Schools Rebuilding Programme

Following the national review of the schools capital investment programme by the DfE, the DfE announced the Priority Schools Rebuilding Programme. Invitations were invited from local authorities by 14 October 2011 for the opportunity to apply for the rebuilding of schools, under a PFI arrangement. All bids submitted under this initiative, were required to comply with pre-determined criteria, that the outstanding value of condition backlog repairs were equal to or greater than 30% of the notional rebuild costs. This was based upon an area rate and formula applied by the then Partnerships for Schools (PfS) on behalf of the DfE.

The full school estate across North Tyneside (except existing PFI sites and those schools less than 10 years old) were compared against the identified criteria, and 5 schools were identified as being suitable for submission under this invitation. Priory Primary School did not meet the criteria as the school's calculation percentage of condition against the costs of a new building was identified at 5.68% and was therefore not eligible to be included within the bid submitted by North Tyneside.

4. Priory Primary School

The minutes of a Governing Body meeting held on 26 March 2012 state that:

‘there is no realistic likelihood of achieving capital investment in the school to (for example) address ICT replacement, address the problems with the school power supply, or in fact to address any issues unless a Health and Safety need could be demonstrated’.

However, included within the 5 year investment priorities for the school estate, were items for Priory Primary School for the period 2012/13 to 2016/17 with a total estimated investment of £670k to cover those items detailed below:

- roof repairs & renewals
- electrical improvements
- window repairs & renewals
- repairs & renewal of rain water goods
- toilet improvements and
- proposals to remove mobile/modular teaching accommodation and replace with permanent new build as part of the Basic Need Investment Programme.

The Authority had already begun a phased delivery of roof and window repairs and renewals to the school and was actively seeking engagement with Priory Primary School with regard to the replacement of mobile/modular accommodation. The most recent works were completed during the summer 2012 holiday period (approx £70k) with the necessary making good / internal redecoration works to the new roof lights completed during the October 2012 holiday period. Following the announcement of the academy proposals, all other works were suspended on the understanding that there were no essential works (i.e those required to prevent school closure) required before September 2013.

The school also received previous capital investment during the 2011/12 financial year totalling £90k linked to improvements to the Out of School Mobile and cavity wall ties/insulation.

Given the limited funding available from the DfE, the North Tyneside investment programmes must be delivered to those schools with the greatest need. However, as the funding allocated to the Authority has only allowed the prioritisation of those items within Asset Management Priorities D1, D2, C1 and C2, those works deemed to be of a lower priority have not been prioritised within the current 5 year programme.