



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning

Cabinet – 16 November 2023

### Capital Programme Authorisation for the Commitment of Capital Grant Funding Awarded to Support Learners with Additional Learning Needs

<b>Purpose:</b>	To comply with Financial Procedure Rule No 7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals) to commit and authorise schemes in the Capital programme.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Financial Procedure Rules
<b>Consultation:</b>	Finance, Legal, Access to Services
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) The capital scheme in the sum of £1,458,714 to support learners with additional learning needs is approved and included in the capital programme for 2023/24.
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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Welsh Government has made an award of capital funding to Swansea Council of £1,458,714.00 to support learners with additional learning needs.
- 1.2 The aim of the grant is to optimise pre-16 learning environments for those with Additional learning Needs (ALN) and increase accessibility to promote inclusive practice, support learning and pupil wellbeing. This will support the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, and Curriculum for Wales in school settings.

Eligible expenditure includes the following capital costs:

- Upgrading facilities, learning environments, equipment, and physical resources,
- Purchasing new equipment or physical resources,
- Works to improve inclusivity of facilities and learning environments.

## **2. Description of project**

### **Overview**

- 2.1 The grant must be spent by the 31 March 2024.
- 2.2 A review is being undertaken to identify options deliverable within the tight timescale, that are a strategic fit, eligible and which provide the greatest benefit.
- 2.3 These are summarised below:
- ALN equipment expenditure
  - Support any ALN upgrade works for the pilot Specialist Teaching Facility (STF) projects
  - ALN home to school transport pilot
  - To develop a practical workshop at Maes Derw to support on site learning.

### **ALN equipment expenditure - £120,000**

- 2.4 This can be used to offset current and planned spend that will provide a revenue saving.

### **Pilot Specialist teaching Facilities - £838,714**

- 2.5 As part of the design phase for the project to support sufficient specialist places in Swansea, various Schools will receive capital grant funding to undertake various ALN upgrade works to improve facilities and inclusivity in schools across the local authority area as identified in line with strategic priorities.
- 2.6 This is complex work and there is no additional funding so the opportunity provided by this grant is welcomed to support the development clusters. The development process will focus on putting in to practice the vision of the STF review working party. It is likely that some capital investment will be required to make improvements within existing facilities to allow for the flexible approach advocated. This work is identified as a key priority and allocating funding to these clusters will positively increase the pace of change. If clusters are not able to spend the money in the time frames, then it can be allocated as an addition to the ALN equipment provision and to further support any ALN upgrade works.

- 2.7 The project is likely to include minor enhancements of spaces and equipment across the clusters.

### **ALN home to school transport pilot - £200,000**

- 2.8 It is proposed that we purchase new school minibuses to improve access to specialist teaching facilities for pupils with ALN in Swansea, to support inclusive learning and improve the long-term wellbeing of pupils accessing education that is wholly aligned with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- 2.9 A memorandum of understanding will be agreed with the schools that will ensure use of the new facility is used to support objectives.
- 2.10 Aim: To optimise flexibility in home to school transport and improve access to specialist teaching facilities for pupils with significant learning difficulties.
- 2.11 Objectives: In supporting a more inclusive and holistic transport arrangement for pupils with ALN, we consider the objectives of the project to have a profound positive impact on overall pupil wellbeing:
- Improving equality, equity and inclusion within education for pupils with ALN.
  - Enhancing support and access to high quality localised provision by minimising difficult journeys and regulating more challenging behaviour
  - Encouraging positive wellbeing amongst children with learning difficulties in line with the LDSA 2022-2026.
  - To develop and enhance opportunities of joint working, co-production and collaboration with stakeholders and service providers including transition services (parent/school) across education.
  - Encouraging improved relationships between parents/carers and school staff.
  - Improve attendance and behaviour management.
  - Aiding independent travel skills and developing long-term life skills for future learning and work.
  - Improving accessibility to meet the needs of children and young people by recognising diverse needs.
  - Increase site safety and improve and develop the management of localised provision.
  - Reduce restrictive practice in school transport.
  - Benefit the environment by reducing carbon footprint.
- 2.12 This initiative will align with the following:
- Learning Disability Delivery and Implementation and Strategic Plans 2022-2026
  - Swansea Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2028
  - The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act 2018
  - Learner Travel Wales Measure 2018
  - Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 2004

### **Inclusive improvements at Maes Derw - £300,000**

2.13 It is proposed to develop practical vocational workshop areas and facilities at Maes Derw to support on site learning and wellbeing for pupils with ALN.

2.14 Objectives:

- To improve outdoor learning facilities for wellbeing and to increase accessibility,
- To upgrade the vocational curriculum, offer for those with ALN
- To improve access for EOTAS pupils and all schools

### **3. Integrated Assessment Implications**

3.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the Socio-Economic Duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development.

3.3 Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

3.4 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

- 3.5 An IIA screening has been undertaken and it has been determined that the project does not require a full IIA report. The project will have a positive impact on children, parents and poverty / exclusion with both Welsh-medium, English-medium and faith schools benefitting from the funding.
- 3.6 All key stakeholders will be communicated with throughout the project's delivery.

#### 4. Financial Implications

##### Capital

- 4.1 Welsh Government awarded £1,458,714 capital grant to the Council on 7 June 2023 to support learners with additional learning needs. The funding relates to eligible capital expenditure during the period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and was paid on the 18 September 2023.
- 4.2 The Council will be required to report at the end of the financial year on how the funding has been used in line with the terms of grant. A sustainability impact assessment may also need to be completed to demonstrate how sustainability has been considered as part of this grant.
- 4.3 An indicative breakdown of planned expenditure is below; this will be subject to ongoing refinement as the projects are developed and will be contained within the overall awarded £1,458,714 allocation:

	Indicative allocation	Capital / Revenue treatment
ALN equipment	£120,000	Capital
Support for various school ALN upgrade works as part of the pilot Specialist Teaching Facility (STF) project	£838,714	Capital
ALN home to school transport pilot	£200,000	Capital
To develop vocational practical workshop at Maes Derw to support on site learning and wellbeing for pupils with ALN	£300,000	Capital
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,458,714</b>	

- 4.4 The authority is required to submit a monitoring form by the 30 May 2024 explaining the details of the expenditure.

- 4.5 It is proposed that the allocation of grant for the ALN Equipment spend can be used to offset current and planned spend that will provide a revenue saving.
- 4.6 Those schools that receive a grant will be requested to review and confirm the information at the end of the financial year that will need to detail spend;
- Equipment / Physical Resource Purchase
  - Equipment Upgrade
  - Upgrading existing ALN facilities
  - Works to improve inclusivity of facilities and learning environments
- 4.7 The authority will work with those schools identified during the design phase to refine the required scope of works and costs plans.
- 4.8 School projects identified to support sufficient specialist places in Swansea will receive capital grant funding to undertake various ALN upgrade works to improve facilities and inclusivity in schools across the Local Authority area as identified in line with strategic priorities. Any forecast underspend will be reallocated for ALN Equipment provision and further support any ALN upgrade works. There is the possibility that as the allocation of funding will vary slightly the capital revenue mix may similarly vary, however it is all funded from the grant.

## **Revenue**

- 4.9 Schools are funded from an overall delegated budget – the Individual Schools Budget (ISB). There is a funding formula that allocates a budget share to each individual school from the ISB.
- 4.10 Any ongoing revenue costs, such as staffing costs, to support the STF provision and transport pilot will be funded from within the overall delegated budget share.

## **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Council will need to comply with the terms and conditions attached to any grant funding referred to in this report.
- 5.2 All contracts for works, goods and services necessary to deliver the projects must be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the relevant EU Regulations as appropriate. The contractual liabilities/obligations of the Council and any appointed contractors will be covered by the individual contracts entered into.
- 5.3 Delivering this project will assist the Council in complying with its duties under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) (Wales) Act 2015.

**Background Papers:**

Report of the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning to Cabinet 15  
December 2022 Capital programme authorisation for the commitment of capital  
grant funding awarded to support learners with additional learning needs  
Report of the Director of Education, Education & Skills Service Transformation  
Committee 27 September 2023 for Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places

**Appendices:**

Appendix A Financial Implications Summary

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS SUMMARY

Portfolio: EDUCATION

Service: PRIMARY PROVISION

**Capital Programme authorisation to support learners with additional learning needs capital grant.**

<u>1.1. CAPITAL COSTS</u>	2023/24 £'000		TOTAL £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>	1,459,		1,459
EXPENDITURE	1,459		1,459
<u>Financing</u>			
Welsh Government Capital Funding Grant learners with additional learning needs	1,459		1,459
FINANCING	1,459		1,459
<u>1.2. REVENUE COSTS</u>	2023/24 £'000		FULL YEAR £'000
<u>Service Controlled - Expenditure</u>			
Employees )			
Maintenance )			
Vehicle running costs )			
NET EXPENDITURE	0		0
<u>Financing</u>			
Welsh Government Capital Funding Grant learners with additional learning needs	0		0
FINANCING	0		0