



**Executive**  
13<sup>th</sup> November 2006

**Report from the Director of  
Children and Families**

For Action

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Phase 2 Children's Centres – Capital Programme Approval**

Forward Plan Ref: C&F06/07 011

**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 On 17<sup>th</sup> July 2006 the Executive agreed to a number of recommendations leading to further development work on seven phase 2 Children's Centre capital projects.
- 1.2 This report follows that report and seeks approval of capital project proposals and associated capital allocations from the block grant. Paragraphs 3.2 to 3.17 set out the details of the project proposals and capital allocations.

**2.0 Recommendations**

The Executive is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the revised capital allocation of £374,000 for Wembley Primary School and Children's Centre following the approval of capital in July 2006.
- 2.2 Approve the capital allocation of £415,000 for the remodelling of the caretakers house and enabling works at Lyon Park Infant and Junior Schools.
- 2.3 Approve the development of Children's Centres at both Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health and Care and the associated capital allocation of £100,000 for each centre.
- 2.4 Approve the capital allocation of £412,548 to refurbish St Raphael's Youth and Community Centre pending consultation as outlined in paragraphs 3.9 – 3.11.

- 2.5 Note the risks attached to the Queens Park Community School project and agree to receive a further detailed report in January 2007. The Executive is also asked to note the work being undertaken with Hopscotch Nursery in respect of their accommodation in this area.
- 2.6 Note progress on the Fryent Primary School project and the increased capital allocation of £450,000.
- 2.7 Delegate authority to the Director of Children and Families in consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources to re-allocate capital funds within the overall programme budget as necessary to ensure the affordability and deliverability of all projects.

### **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 The previous report to the Executive about the phase 2 Children Centres in July 2006 advised members that approval from the Sure Start Unit to a reduction in the government target for phase 2 Children's Centres in Brent from 9 to 7 was being sought. Officers are now able to confirm that this reduction has been agreed provided that the necessary coverage of the borough can be achieved from the 7 centres.

#### **Individual Project Proposals**

##### Wembley Primary School including Children's Centre

- 3.2 In July 2006 the Executive approved the commitment of up to £415,000 of the combined Sure Start Grant capital allocation (subject to Sure Start Unit approval) to support the inclusion of a Children's Centre and crèche in the new school. £300,000 of this capital allocation was sourced from the Children's Centre budget as shown in table 1 in paragraph 4.1.
- 3.3 Sure Start Unit approval of £374,000 from the combined capital budget is currently being sought. The Executive is asked to approve this revised capital allocation. The revision in allocation is due to detailed cost estimates being confirmed since July 2006; there is no reduction in the facilities to be provided. It is not anticipated that this Children's Centre will be completed by the Sure Start deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 but the capital grant allocation will be spent by this deadline. Officers are also currently working with the headteacher and governing body to ensure that some Children's Centre services are available by March 2008.

##### Lyon Park Infant and Junior Schools' Caretaker's House

- 3.4 Executive approval was given in July 2006 to transfer the caretaker's house to the Children and Families' Department and thereafter deploy it as a Children's Centre. The property has therefore been removed from the disposals schedule (see paragraph 4.3 below). A feasibility study demonstrates that remodelling work to the existing caretaker's house will provide good Children's Centre facilities and with an extension to the existing school nursery will provide

enhanced amenities for the maintained school provision. Both Infant and Junior School Headteachers are supportive of this arrangement.

- 3.5 It was acknowledged in the last report to the Executive that enabling works may be required in the school grounds to facilitate extended community use in the absence of a residential caretaker. It is proposed that this work takes place as part of the Children's Centre development to enable the house to be released and the school to operate as a campus of buildings offering community services. The approach recommended is acceptable to both the Infant and Junior Governing Bodies. The Executive is asked to approve a total sum of £415,000 from the capital budget to be spent on the caretaker's house and school grounds security (the latter using the Extended Schools element of the combined capital budget).

#### Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health and Care

- 3.6 In July 2006, officers were working with Brent PCT to reach agreements over sharing accommodation in both Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health and Care in order to deliver Children's Centre services. A deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> September was set to reach those agreements. Brent PCT have agreed in writing to make space within Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health and Care available to the Council. This will be at no charge on a quid pro quo basis for accommodation to be provided for PCT staff to provide health services in Local Authority owned Children's Centres at no charge. The Executive is now asked to approve the development of Children's Centres at both Wembley and Willesden Centres for Health and Care.
- 3.7 The existing accommodation in both centres is sufficient to deliver the core offer and will be shared on a timetabled basis. Many of the core offer services are already delivered from both sites. The Children's Centre will build on the clinical specialism of the hospitals in working with children with developmental delay and will expand a range of services to families living in both catchment areas. The centres also offer the potential to share some staff posts, generating both revenue savings and more integrated staff teams.
- 3.8 It is anticipated that the Council will have a lease agreement with the PCT securing accommodation for 25 years. There will be no direct capital or revenue cost for the accommodation. No significant capital works are required but the Executive is asked to approve a provisional capital allocation of £100,000 for furniture, equipment and some minor refurbishment if required.

#### St Raphael's Youth and Community Centre

- 3.9 In July 2006, the Executive approved in principle the recommendation to change the use of St Raphael's Youth and Community Centre to become a combined Children's, Youth and Community Centre.
- 3.10 The Executive is now recommended to approve the provisional capital allocation of £412,548 to this project. Officers will undertake consultation with the local community to seek their views on how this capital investment in the community centre could best be used. Children's Centres are good examples

of partnership working and rely on the ability of a centre manager to co-ordinate the services of a number of statutory and non-statutory organisations. This centre manager role could be widened to ensure that the same principles are applied to non-Children's Centre services provided for the whole community.

- 3.11 The Executive is asked to receive a further detailed report on this project following the development of a model of service delivery and investment proposal for the centre.

#### Queens Park Community School

- 3.12 Following Executive approval in principle to a combined Primary Care and Children's Centre at Queens Park Community School, officers have undertaken further work to confirm the feasibility of the project. The Children's Centre could in principle be freestanding or could include a health centre and/or nursery provision. This development does not compromise the school's ability to expand to accommodate an additional 2 forms of entry. A feasibility study has been undertaken for the combined Children's Centre and health centre and this is the preferred option due to the enhanced benefits for families of having all services on one site. The development also gives opportunity to economise by sharing accommodation and potentially staff roles. The Executive is asked to note the risks attached to this project and to receive a further detailed report in January 2007. The Executive is also asked to note the work being undertaken with Hopscotch Nursery in respect of their accommodation.

- 3.13 The risks to this project include the securing of both planning and DfES approval to construct the combined development as described above including health provision on school playing fields, the possible enforceability of a covenant restricting all development except a sports pavilion on part of the site and the need to clarify the project brief (including confirmation of finance arrangements) with Brent PCT/Staverton Surgery. The most significant of these risks is that the PCT Board was unable to approve revenue funding for Staverton Surgery when it met in September 2006. This revenue funding is required to provide a rental income to the Council to support the raising of capital to construct the building. The combination of all these risks, in particular the PCT funding, is delaying progress on this project and is compromising the ability to successfully deliver a Children's Centre in this area. All of these risks are being managed and reviewed by the Children's Centre Steering Group who will advise on the future direction of the project to be recommended to the Executive in a further detailed report on this project in January 2007. A capital allocation of £558,166 has been made for this project based on the estimated costs provided by the architect's feasibility study.

- 3.14 Officers will also undertake a study of the Winkworth Hall site to consider the possibilities of housing a Children's Centre either in the current building or in a redevelopment on the site as an alternative to the Queens Park Community School site.

- 3.15 Officers in Property and Asset Management and the Early Years Service are working with a local childcare provider (Hopscotch Nursery) currently located at Winkworth Hall to help them identify alternative premises in the event of

disposal or redevelopment of that site. They have been offered space within the Queen's Park Community School project, if it proceeds, as a re-location option. Hopscotch Nursery has been informed of the anticipated rental cost to them of using this space. This rental income is required by the Council to raise capital as described in paragraph 3.13. There is no requirement to house full day childcare in this phase 2 Children's Centre. If a nursery is to be included in the project the council will need to be sure that this is financially viable and would need to have an agreement to lease in place with a potential nursery provider before making a commitment to include a nursery in the project. If the officers' study of the Winkworth Hall site indicates that it would be suitable for use as a Children's Centre, the inclusion of nursery provision on the site would also be considered.

### Fryent Primary School

- 3.16 The Executive approved a provisional sum of £400,000 of Children's Centre capital for this project in July 2006. The Children's Centre would be a standalone building offering facilities to deliver the core offer on the Fryent Primary School site. Due to the increased capital made available from the Extended Schools Budget, the allocation for this project has increased to £450,000. The facilities to be provided remain as those detailed in the generic development brief provided as an appendix to the July report. The original capital allocation by officers was considered tight but achievable but there can be more confidence of delivery within budget with this increased allocation. As with all schemes, capital allocations will be used to provide as many good quality facilities for the community as possible.

### Capital Approval

- 3.17 The capital grant funding available for all schemes is limited and due to a delay in appointing a consultant, the provisional capital allocations shown in paragraph 4.1 have not been reviewed by a quantity surveyor as intended and are still therefore subject to revision. The Executive is asked to delegate authority to the Director of Children and Families in consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources to re-allocate capital funds within the overall programme budget as necessary to ensure the affordability and deliverability of all projects.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The total Children's Centres capital allocation for 06/07 and 07/08 (combined) is £2,049,714. In addition, an allocation of £360,000 has been made from the General Sure Start Grant (Extended Schools) capital funding to support the development of Children's Centres on school sites. This is reflected in the total funding available shown in table 1 below. The capital allocation is direct grant rather than supported borrowing and therefore in itself has no net impact on the Council Tax. The capital allocations made to each project in June 2006 have been revised to reflect the needs of individual projects and increased capital allocation available (see table 1 below).

**Table 1 – Summary of Capital Allocations**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Scope of Works</b>	<b>Revised CC Allocation (Sept 06)</b>	<b>CC Allocation (June 06)</b>
Wembley Primary School	Facilities in new build primary school	374,000	300,000
Fryent Primary School	New build on former production kitchen site	450,000	400,000
Lyon Park Schools	Remodelling and possible extension of Caretaker's House	415,000	364,816
Heritage Family Centre with St Raphaels Community Centre	Refurbishment/remodelling of community centre	412,548	324,898
Willesden Centre for Health and Care	Use of existing accommodation, possible minor works/equipment purchase	100,000	50,000
Wembley Centre for Health and Care	Use of existing accommodation, possible minor works/equipment purchase	100,000	50,000
Queens Park Community School	New build Children's Centre and Primary Care Centre	558,166	560,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<i>2,409,714</i>	<i>2,049,714</i>

4.2 As reported in July 2006, these capital projects bring with them liability for ongoing running costs. A revenue grant is confirmed up to March 2008, after which time no revenue grant funding is confirmed for the Local Authority, although this is the expectation. The risks associated with this were detailed in the July report. It is intended that a further report seeking approval of the full revenue expenditure profile will be submitted for Executive approval at a later date.

4.3 The Council's capital disposals programme as approved by Full Council on 6th March 2006 includes a forecast gross receipt of £250k associated with Lyon Park caretaker's house. The capital disposals programme details the individual disposals that are forecast in each year and contribute towards the achievement of the general fund capital receipts target within the resources section of the Council's Capital Programme. The transfer of this property will mean that there will be no associated receipt to the Council which could impact on the potential to realise the capital receipts target and put strain on the Council's ability to fund the expenditure approved in the capital programme.

## **5.0 Legal Implications**

5.1 Works contracts in respect of the development of the Children's Centres will need to be procured in accordance with the requirements of the Council's standing orders and the EU Procurement Regulations where applicable.

5.2 Where the funding for projects is to come partly from third parties such as Brent tPCT, funding agreements with partners will need to be drawn up clearly specifying who will be responsible for any capital project overspends, what measures will be in place to reduce the risk of overspends and specifying an appropriate apportionment of overspends and other costs between partners.

- 5.3 As these are grant funded works there will be outputs upon which the grant is dependent and there is the possibility of claw-back of grant monies should projects fail to meet their specified outputs.
- 5.4 The Council will need to enter into contracts and other arrangements with partners to commission services and make accommodation available to deliver the Children's Centre services. Any such contracts and arrangements will need to be monitored to ensure that targets are met and best value is achieved.
- 5.5 With the exception of Queens Park Community School, day to day responsibility for managing school buildings and grounds is devolved to the governing body under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 subject to any direction given by the local education authority under Schedule 13. If the premises are not being used for school purposes it would seem reasonable for the Council to make such directions as it needs in order to make appropriate alternative use. Any change of use of the property would need to be considered by the Council as local planning authority and by way of a formal application.
- 5.6 St Raphael's Youth and Community Centre is subject to a protected business tenancy. Should the Council wish to recover possession it would need to notify the tenant of its intention to occupy for its own purposes and /or redevelop and serve a Section 25 notice upon that basis. Whilst the Council can commence repossession proceedings immediately the notice is served, the Council cannot obtain vacant possession within 6 months save by consent.
- 5.7 There is a covenant in favour of the Church Commissioners imposed on an area of land to the south of Queens Park Community School. It is currently intended to construct part of the proposed children's centre on this land. Officers are currently considering the enforceability of this covenant.

## **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 Diversity implications were fully considered in the July report. At the time of that report, an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out. A copy is available from the office of the Director of Children and Families. It is anticipated that there will be a positive impact on equalities as a result of this capital programme.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

- 7.1 There are no staffing/accommodation implications with the project options recommended in this report.

### **Background Papers**

- i) Equality Impact Assessment – September 06
- ii) Report re. C&F06/07-001 – Children's Centres – Phase 2 Capital Programme (17<sup>th</sup> July 2006)
- iii) Correspondence between PCT and Local Authority
- iv) Project files

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