

## City Council signs contract worth £7.8 million to transform primary education in Nottingham

Financial Close has been reached today on the first phase of Nottingham City Council's multi million pound Primary Capital Programme which will enable half of the city's primary schools to be rebuilt or re-modelled over the next 14 years subject to continued government funding.

Nottingham City Council has reached an important milestone in the programme by signing legal contracts worth £7.8 million with the Local Education Partnership (LEP) which has been procured through Nottingham City Council's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project.

The first four primary schools identified as priorities for investment in 2009-2011 are:

1. Robin Hood School;
2. Henry Whipple School;
3. Greenfields Community School and Foundation Unit; and
4. Blue Bell Hill School.

Pupils, staff, parents and members of the local community have been fully involved throughout the design and development process at each school. This should result in the schools being appropriately designed and equipped for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning with children's services at the heart of the community and within easy reach of every family. At Robin Hood Primary, a new two story teaching block will be created and at Henry Whipple Primary the open courtyard will be roofed to create internal multi-use space. Greenfields Primary will benefit from a new multi-use hall space and larger classrooms whilst at Blue Bell Hill Primary the inside will be remodelled and there will be a new entrance and reception area. The new schools have been specifically designed to allow use of the space by the local community 52 weeks of the year.

Tim Byles, Chief Executive of Partnerships for Schools, the organisation responsible for delivering the full suite of schools capital programmes, said: "With three BSF schools already open, Nottingham City has done a great deal to improve the life chances of pupils as well as local communities as a whole. This milestone marks the first financial close on primary schools in Nottingham since Partnerships for Schools took over responsibility for the Primary Capital Programme and I look forward to following their progress".

Councillor David Mellen, Nottingham City Council's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, said: "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to create state of the art schools at the heart of local communities so that every primary aged child and their family has access to the best facilities possible. Reaching financial close is an important milestone and means that construction work on this exciting programme will begin soon. As well as transforming teaching and learning in the city, this huge investment will support the local economy during this challenging time by creating jobs and training opportunities in the construction industry."

Mark Harding, LEP General Manager, said: "Mark Harding, inspiredspaces LEP General Manager, said: "The delivery of Nottingham's Primary Capital Programme by the LEP is evidence of the good working relationship between all interested parties. It also demonstrates the success of the LEP in its ability to deliver schemes that meet and exceed expectations. The use of the LEP in delivering more schemes reinforces the City Council's decision to invest in the partnership and provides increased value for money to the people of Nottingham. I now look forward to completion of the works, which will provide greatly improved environments for the primary school children to learn in, giving them opportunity to thrive and succeed".

In addition to state of the art, sustainable schools and facilities, Nottingham's approach will also bring benefits to the city's economy and local communities. The new schools are being designed as dual-purpose buildings which will act as 'community hubs' from which a range of services for local residents can be delivered. Community space has been designed in each school to enable schools to support families with children aged 0 to 11 in order to engage families at the earliest stage. Local communities will also have access to high quality facilities including adult learning, ICT and sports facilities.

The programme will also contribute to Nottingham City Council's ambition to become a carbon-neutral council by 2016 and a carbon neutral city by 2100 by ensuring that new school buildings reduce carbon emissions. Sustainability is a key feature of the designs for the schools and there is a commitment to ensuring that all school buildings and refurbishment projects achieve a very good BREEAM (environmental assessment method) Schools rating.

