

£18 million to transform primary education in Nottingham City

Nottingham City Council was delighted to learn on Friday, 27 March 2009, that the authority's Primary Strategy for Change (PSC) has been fully approved by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

The DCSF commented that the key strengths of the City Council's PSC are its longer term aims and the good strategic links across the authority which will support the delivery of transformation.

The approval of the PSC releases £11.5 million of funding over the next two years that marks the start of a programme to enable half of the city's primary schools to be rebuilt or re-modelled over the next 14 years subject to continued government funding.

The investment will transform teaching and learning and planning for this is already well underway. The priorities for investment over the first five years of the programme have been agreed based on the assessment of schools against a set of criteria. The first six schools identified as priorities for investment in 2009-2011 are:

1. Robin Hood Primary School - £2.9 million
2. Henry Whipple Primary School - £2.5 million
3. Greenfields Community School and Foundation Unit - £1.4 million
4. Blue Bell Hill Primary School and Nursery School - £1 million
5. Sycamore Primary School - £1.4 million
6. St Ann's Well Primary School - £1.4 million

Visioning is underway at each school to determine the nature of work to be undertaken at each school. The works will be delivered by the Local Education Partnership (LEP) which has been procured through the City Council's Building Schools for the Future programme. Work on the first three schools is due to start in January 2010 and be completed in February 2011.

Approximately £740,000 of the funding will be invested in the development of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) The VLE is being developed for secondary schools as part of Nottingham City Council's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and will be rolled out to primary schools as part of the Primary Capital Programme, as soon as September 2009. The VLE will be used to share resources, track and monitor learner progression and attendance and provide staff with discussion boards and social networking to share good practice.

Councillor David Mellen, Nottingham City Council's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, said: "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform Nottingham's primary schools, many of which are in a poor state of repair. Today's announcement means that we can 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.

"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 and ICT industries."

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 in each school could be used to accommodate health services, advice and guidance sessions and training courses. The design of the new schools will help agencies work together to deliver integrated support to families in a familiar, non-institutionalised environment. Local communities will also have access to high quality facilities including adult learning, ICT and sports facilities.

The programme will 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.

The Government has offered the council the opportunity to release in 2009/10 some of the capital grant currently programmed for release in 2010/11 as part of their work to stimulate the economy in the short term. After carefully considering this offer, the council has decided that the timetable for the PCP will stay the same and not to bring forward any expenditure which will ensure the quality of the works and the associated value for money.



The City Council will keep the strategy under review to ensure that it delivers both in terms of the planned outputs and outcomes for children and their families whilst continuing to work in partnership with schools and other key stakeholders, which is critical to the success of the strategy.

