

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:

4372

Author:

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Department:

People

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Subject:

Basic Need Grant funding allocation for capital works at Djanogly City Academy, to ensure sufficiency of secondary school places

Total Value:

£64,000 (Type: Capital)

Decision Being Taken:

To allocate £64,000 of Basic Need Grant funding towards the specified capital works at Djanogly City Academy (Sherwood Rise site), to ensure the sufficient provision of secondary school places for the 2020 and 2021 academic years.

Reasons for the Decision(s)

Djanogly City Academy (DCA) have already delivered the capital works, which were required to make provision for an increased number of pupils which they admitted over their normal Pupil Admission Number, as agreed with the LA Education Department. Without this, there would have been insufficient secondary school places for the academic year 2020/21 and this coming academic year 2021/22. Therefore this is a retrospective funding contribution for works already completed. £64,000 capital contribution was agreed in principle with Djanogly Learning Trust on 16/9/20, subject to formal approval. This is funded from Basic Need Grant funding, which is already in place and allocated to the LA by the DfE to ensure we can meet our statutory duty to deliver sufficient school places. The LA's Major Projects team were commissioned to support and deliver the feasibility works and to assess how DCA (and some other City academies) could manage their existing school estates more effectively. These works were approved by Delegated Decision 3828, dated 16/3/20 and feasibility reports were completed to inform decision making.

Djanogly City Academy (DCA) agreed to admit a 'bulge' class of 30 more Year 7 pupils in September 2020, in excess of their Published Admission Number (PAN), which they had already increased by a further 60 pupils from the previous year to maximise their existing space. This further increase in excess of PAN was negotiated and agreed with the LA Education Dept to support the need for additional places. To enable this further increase, DCA needed to undertake essential works at their Sherwood Rise Campus where their Year 7 & 8 pupils are located, in order to effectively deliver the appropriate curriculum. The space analysis and feasibility work which had already been undertaken by that point, had identified that art space and IT suite provision was required to accommodate the significant growth in pupil numbers. The provision of an Art space at a cost of £46k and the provision of a second IT suite at a cost of £18k, totalling £64k. The school undertook other capital works in addition to this, but in the context of financial constraints and a limited budget, we limited our Basic Need contribution to those aspects.

This supports the Council Plan objective to ensure that 'all Nottingham children attend a school judged Good or Outstanding by OFSTED.' It is also a statutory responsibility for the Council to deliver sufficient school places for pupils in Nottingham. This project links to the Council's School Place Planning Strategy and is one of several solutions we secured to deliver sufficient school places and to maximise the number of Nottingham pupils attending good or outstanding schools. These necessary works are already benefitting existing and future DCA pupils in the delivery of the art and IT curriculum, and the full breadth of subjects which involve IT use.

Other Options Considered:

Do nothing. However, if DCA had not delivered the necessary works, they would have struggled to accommodate the significant increase in pupil numbers and to effectively deliver the curriculum. If the LA had not secured this value for money capacity solution in agreement with DCA, it would have resulted in a more expensive and less practical solution being sought. Alternatively, it would have risked insufficient secondary school places being secured for the academic years 2020/21 and 2021/22 for pupils in Nottingham, which the Council has a statutory responsibility to deliver.

Background Papers:

None

Published Works:

Delegated Decision 3828: Undertaking of feasibility studies for pre-selected secondary school sites, March 2020

Affected Wards:

Berridge

Colleague / Councillor Interests:

None

Consultations:

Date: 14/07/2021

Other City Council Bodies:NCC Capital Projects Board

On the 14th July 2021, confirmation was received from the Portfolio Office that the Capital Board have approved the application.

Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications:

N/A

Equality:

EIA not required. Reasons: There are no changes to policies or practices required in this decision.

Decision Type:

Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In:

Yes

Call In Expiry date:

24/09/2021

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance

Legal Advice:

The basic need grant (BNG) funding allocations are paid to local authorities to support the capital requirements for ensuring there are enough spaces for pupils by expanding existing maintained schools, free schools or academies, and by establishing new schools. This is a statutory obligation upon the Council.

The associated works with respect to Djanogly City Academy have already been undertaken to provide increased pupil numbers. This school are understood to have undertaken works additional to the IT suite and Arts space that this money is to contribute to, but the Council have considered those 2 elements to be essential to fulfilling its statutory duty and have deemed it appropriate to contribute the BNG funding to those elements of work only.

The spend has been approved via the Council's Capital Board and for reasons given within the report using the BNG funding in this way is deemed to offer value for money to the Council.

The cost of the works has already been incurred by the school but the Council had not committed to transfer the BNG funding with assessment of the costs and approval to do so. This report seeks authority to allocate and transfer the funds. Advice provided by Dionne Claire Scream (Solicitor) on 02/09/2021.

Finance Advice:

The basic need grant in this decision is secured and has been received by the Council. This project has undertaken the capital prioritisation process as set out in the Capital Strategy and been endorsed by the Capital Board. Therefore no further approval is required, prior to this decision amending the Capital Programme.

As this project is funded by ringfenced grant (i.e. Basic Needs Grant) it does not require approval from the S151 Officer / Chief Executive prior to transferring the monies to Djanogly Academy as it falls within the exemptions as set out in the Capital Amended Scheme of Delegation.

Advice provided by Tom Straw (Senior Accountant - Capital Programmes) on 06/09/2021.

Signatures

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| Eunice Campbell-Clark (Portfolio Holder Leisure, Culture and Schools) |
| SIGNED and Dated: 16/09/2021 |
| Catherine Underwood (Corporate Director for People) |
| SIGNED and Dated: 16/09/2021 |