

Report to CABINET

Property Management Programme Update

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Growth

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19 January 2026

Reason for Decision

This paper provides information about the School Backlog Maintenance programme. This includes work requiring Capital investment to the schools that are still under OMBC control. Cabinet is requested to note the scale of investment required to OMBC controlled schools and approve the funds provided by the School Condition Allocation (SCA) to proceed with the identified prioritised work.

Executive Summary

Significant funding is required to address identified schemes in respect of the School Backlog Maintenance programme over the next 3 years covering 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Recommendations

The recommendation is for Cabinet to approve the budget to enable commission of the required works in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. This will assist to maintain and facilitate improved functional use of our schools, avoid school closure and mitigate relevant operational and health and safety risks. Cabinet members are asked to note and approve the delegation of approval of individual contract awards to the Director of Growth with financial updates to be issued to Cabinet at the end of each financial year.

School Condition Allocations**1 Background**

- 1.1 This paper focuses solely on school backlog maintenance and the School Condition Allocation (SCA). The SCA refers to the funding provided to maintain and improve the condition of school buildings and grounds. This funding is distributed to various bodies responsible for school maintenance, including local authorities, multi-academy trusts, and voluntary-aided bodies. It is a guaranteed, annual source of funding based on factors such as the number of pupils in a school and the condition of the buildings. SCA helps address issues such as building compliance, energy efficiency, and health and safety.
- 1.2 By using the 'Get Information About Schools' (GIAS) tool on the DfE website, a finalised list of schools still under the control of OMBC to provide maintenance has been obtained, this list has been further validated by the OMBC Finance Team. The GIAS system is the DfE's register for several organisation types and where information on other organisations is recorded and maintained.
- 1.3 To fully understand the condition of school buildings and to aid bodies in the distribution of funding, the DfE launched the second tranche of Condition Data Collection surveys (CDC 2). CDC surveys are one of the biggest condition data collection exercises in the UK public sector and have been collecting data on over 22,000 educational establishments between 2021 and 2026.
- 1.4 The Condition Data Collection 2 (CDC2) programme is the successor to the Condition Data Collection (CDC) programme, which ran from 2017-2019. This followed the Property Data Survey (PDS), which ran between 2012 and 2014. CDC2 collects condition, contextual and building management data for every government funded school in England. Data from CDC2 will directly inform future investment in the condition of school buildings and will provide an evidence base to support the successful delivery and development of education capital policy.
- 1.5 OMBC do not carry out their own condition surveys as the budget was withdrawn in 2015, so there is a heavy reliance on CDC survey information. However, in addition to the CDC 2 survey information, the OMBC Property team have used a significant amount of their 'local knowledge' for a more in depth understanding of the school estate and to pinpoint schools that have serious issues.
- 1.6 The most severe implication of poor building condition or services failing is if a school is forced to close. Due to this the OMBC Property team have used their 'local knowledge' and have advised on schools that have consistently failing or 'end of life' boilers, Building Management Systems (BMS), poor-quality building fabric and have provided an estimated cost to rectify the issues
- 1.7 Combining both CDC 2 survey information and OMBC Property team local knowledge, a comprehensive list of schools with the most urgent requirement for works will be created, prioritised and acted upon across 2026/27 – 2027/28. The works that have been carried out in summer 2025 have been boiler replacements at six schools. A seventh boiler replacement that started during the October 2025 half term is nearing completion. A shortlist of five more schools for potential boiler replacements and other works in 2026 has been drafted, discussions with the Procurement Team on how these works will be procured are due to commence in the coming weeks

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The current position of school budgets is detailed in the table in Appendix A within the closed section of this report. These amounts are reviewed regularly, but until contracts are let these are the best estimates. The proposed additional forecasted budget requirements for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 are detailed in the table in Appendix B

3 Options / Alternatives

- 3.1 The option proposed is the first step in forming a comprehensive plan to rectify a substantial amount of school backlog maintenance work in 2026 – 2028. The works proposed will not only improve the environment that teachers teach in and children learn in, but will ensure that the risk of school closure due to services / building fabric failure is significantly reduced.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 The proposed position of school budgets is detailed in the table in Appendix B within the closed section of this report. This table provides information on all 29 schools currently under the control of OMBC and their proposed additional forecasted expenditure in 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- 4.2 Once the 2026/27 boiler replacement works have been completed, this will have resolved the schools that have the most severe boiler issues. In 2027/28 it is proposed that electrical rewires should be focused on as there are numerous schools that have issues in this area.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 There have been numerous collaborative meetings held since April 2025 to collectively review and agree the Backlog Maintenance programme based on priority assessment, asset strategy, budget availability and procurement considerations. Technical officers in collaboration with colleagues in finance, procurement and education have confirmed the specific schemes which are required in either 2025/2026, 2026/2027 or 2027/2028

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The proposed programme of works represent capital expenditure and will be a charge against the Place - Corporate Property capital programme.
- 6.2 A general School Condition Allocation (SCA) provision and other resources exists within in the capital programme against which these schemes will be a charge.
- 6.3 The proposed expenditure on all schemes are anticipated to be phased as follows:

2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
£1,115,752	£1,617,665	£1,742,000	£863,000	£5,338,417

- 6.4 There is a possibility that contribution from schools may be sought, if this occurs the call against the grant will be reduced and that amount allocated to the general provision for future schemes.

(Jit Kara – Senior Accountant)

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council has statutory responsibilities under the Education Act 1996, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and associated fire and premises legislation to ensure that

maintained school buildings are safe, suitable and well-maintained. The proposed programme of condition and compliance works supports the Council in meeting these duties and mitigating associated health and safety risks.

The Council receives an annual School Condition Allocation (SCA) from the Department for Education, which is intended to fund essential building condition, compliance, heating, electrical and health and safety works in maintained schools. The works outlined in this report fall within these permitted categories of SCA expenditure and are therefore consistent with the intended purpose of this capital funding stream.

All procurement and contract awards arising from this programme must comply with the Procurement Act 2023, the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, and the relevant scheme of delegation within the Council's Constitution.

No subsidy control issues arise, as the programme relates to the delivery of non-economic public education functions. Any implications linked to individual school academy conversions will require separate legal advice at the appropriate time

(Pamela Nsofor- Solicitor)

8 Procurement Implications

- 8.1 This is a budget paper. As we the council is not at sourcing stage, procurement has no implication. Procurement support overall funding scheme.
(S. Kapoor- Central Procurement Unit)

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

- 9.1 See Appendix A

10 Key Decision

- 10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

- 11.1 NEI-11-25

12 Background Papers

None

13 Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix A – Impact Assessment Report