

Briefing Paper Chepstow School

In 2017, due to increased costs Cabinet agreed to defer the replacement of Chepstow School from Band B to Band C within the 21st Century Schools Programme. The reasoning behind this decision at the time was around condition and suitability of buildings, surplus places and challenges relating to deprivation.

Chepstow School dates from the mid-1960's, it was extended and refurbished in the late 1980's and then again in late 1990's. The school is attached to the adjoining Leisure Centre which is used by the school for PE. The Leisure Centre is also accessed by members of the public during the school day.

A condition survey was undertaken in January 2020. The outcome of the survey was as follows:

Condition Category C – meaning poor with some major defects

Suitability Assessment – B meaning Satisfactory. Performing as intended but does not effectively support the delivery of the curriculum in some areas.

The backlog amount of maintenance at the time of the survey was estimated to be £2.1m. However, since 2020 the Local Authority has funded work to replace the external cladding at the front of the school, replaced windows, relocate and improve the school reception area, redecoration, install LED lighting, resurface the driveway, and provide new signage, total cost in excess of £1.5m.

In recent months the focus for the 21st Century Schools Programme has shifted towards providing sustainable buildings for the future. Whilst previous criteria of reducing maintenance backlog and the delivery of the curriculum in fit for purpose buildings are still important the shift is now towards providing buildings that are either net zero carbon or reduce the amount of carbon they produce. From April 2022 future funding for 21st Century Schools programme is to be focussed on carbon reduction.

Despite some works being undertaken at Chepstow School, the building is not energy efficient and significant work is required to bring it to the standard expected for a 21st Century school.

Whilst undertaking repair works to the building will assist in reducing the backlog maintenance costs further work will be undertaken over the coming months to establish costs to undertake any work to remodel teaching accommodation to ensure it is fit for purpose and also retro fit the school to ensure net zero carbon compliance

The current capacity of the school is 1282 places and there are 738 pupils on roll (including 6th form) resulting in 544 surplus places which equates to 42%. The projections for the school indicate that these numbers will remain steady over the next 6 or 7 years with no significant growth through live births or housing development expected. The school currently sees a movement of pupils to Wyedean. The Headteacher and Chepstow School have worked closely with the

primary schools in the cluster to encourage a greater number of children to transition to Chepstow.

Work will commence in the next 12 months to look at primary and secondary education in the whole Chepstow area to ensure that the education estate is fit for purpose and delivers value for money.

Band C funding is scheduled to commence in 2024/25.