

# SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROGRAMME

## Overview & Scrutiny Report February 2025

This report provides an update on the Torbay Schools Private Finance Initiative (PFI) project and the Schools' Capital Programme.

### ***TORBAY SCHOOLS PFI:***

Torbay Council has a PFI contract in place for The Spires College (secondary) and Homelands Primary. The contract expires in October 2027 and Officers are working on the expiry plan for the next 2 and a half years. The main focus at this point in the project is the Expiry Condition. This focuses on ensuring that the assets are handed over to the schools in good condition and in accordance with the clauses set out in the contract. The DfE completed an initial survey in September 2023. This provided an baseline review of the estate and a benchmark for future surveys. The contract now requires the LA to undertake its own independent surveys that will be used to develop a rectification programme for the remainder of the contract. This set of surveys was due to be undertaken in October 2024 (3 years prior to expiry). However, there have been delays in securing the information needed from the PFI Provider and therefore finalising the scope for the surveys. As a result, the survey has been delayed and will now be completed during the February 2025 half-term.

Negotiations with the PFI Provider to rectify any issues identified from the survey will be critical to a successful handover. The current relationship between Torbay Officers and the PFI Provider is collaborative and effective but there is likely to be challenge during the process that will need to be carefully managed.

### ***SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROGRAMME***

#### ***PRIMARY***

##### **St Michael's Academy Free School Paignton**

St Michael's Academy is a new "Free School" which is being managed, funded, and delivered by the DfE. The school opened in September 2021 in temporary accommodation with the expectation it would move into its new premises Spring 2022. Unfortunately, this project has experienced unforeseen delays due to the collapse of the main contractor, MIDAS and then a further collapse of the second completion contractor, ISG. Officers are meeting the DfE weekly to gather updates and ensure the project is being progressed. The DfE have recently entered into a PCSA with a new completion contractor, Keir. The permanent/new accommodation is expected to be completed in Spring 2026. Until then the school will remain in temporary accommodation. All current and prospective parents are being kept up to date with the situation. There are no resource implications or risks for the LA as its contribution was to provide the site for the school which is complete.

##### **Windmill Primary School / Inglewood**

The conditional approval from DfE for a second free school for Paignton has been withdrawn due to a fall in demand for primary school places across Torbay. A site for a new school is still secure through a S106 agreement for the Inglewood development. Officers are in discussion with the developer regarding the timescale for triggering the S106 transfer of the school land to the Council. At this point there is insufficient demand for the primary school but strategically it is important to secure a site for a school for the longer-term. If primary demand increases then the LA would need to re-submit the free school application or alternatively would need to fund the capital.

### ***SPECIALIST PROVISION***

#### **Paignton Academy STEPs & SEN Provision**

STEPs is an enhanced resource provision catering for secondary pupils with ASD. The provision is run by Paignton Academy, part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) and is the only secondary provision of this type within the local area. STEPs is currently located approximately 1.5 miles from the main school site at QED Community Centre. Managing a provision based off site is having a detrimental impact on service delivery with logistic issues and

lack of facilities. The pupils attending the provision have fewer opportunities for integration and miss access to wider facilities such as sport centres, libraries, and social spaces.

The LA and the Trust agree that the only solution to address the ongoing service issues and ensure the provision remains open is to relocate it to the main Academy site. To facilitate the relocation of STEPs, the Academy requires sufficient fit for purpose accommodation to be re-provided on its Borough Road site. To support this relocation, the LA has allocated £750,000 of Higher Needs Provision Capital to this scheme. To ensure value for money and maximise the capital investment, this project has been aligned with the Trust’s strategic vision for the Academy. Rather than treat the relocation in isolation, the Trust has taken the opportunity to review and reconfigure its existing accommodation to better fit its service delivery needs and are contributing £500,000 towards the total cost.

This has resulted in a two-phase capital project.

- Phase 1 will be the refurbishment of existing library area into a suitable environment for an enhanced resource unit for the relocation of STEPs.
- Phase 2 will consist of the demolition of 2 condemned mobiles and the building of a new block with 2 purpose-built spaces to accommodate PAs existing onsite SEND provision. The academy’s library will then move into the space vacated by the onsite SEND unit.

The entire project is being managed by the Council in collaboration with the TRUST. The works are currently on site. Phase 1 was completed in September 2024 and Phase 2 will be completed by September 2025.

### Higher Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA)

The Council has an unallocated balance of £3.6m HNPCA. The table below indicates the projects in the pipeline for this funding. These are in the early stages of development and will require further feasibility work to establish actual costs. There are further discussions pending regarding the allocation of the remaining balance.

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT PROPOSAL/DETAIL	Indicative Budget
YMCA	Refurbishment of YMCA Building - ON HOLD PENDING A DECISION BY COUNCIL ON LONGER TERM SERVICE NEEDS	£ 185,000
Locality Pilot	Funding applications invited from schools to increase SEND provision within schools. Linked to Locality Pilot.	£ 1,000,000
Combe Pafford	Sensory Room development	£ 50,000
Mayfield Chestnut	Expansion: Additional 8 places	£ 50,000
Mayfield Torquay	Expansion: Additional 25 places	TBC
Mayfield Post16	Relocation to MyPlace from Ocombe House	£ 500,000
Brunel	Expansion: Additional 8 places	£ 80,000
Brunel	Supported Internships	£ 100,000
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£ 1,965,000</b>
<b>Funding available</b>		<b>£ 3,600,000</b>
<b>Balance/contingency</b>		<b>£ 1,635,000</b>

### LA Repairs & Maintenance Programme

This is a rolling programme of essential repairs and maintenance projects at LA maintained schools. The LA currently has a carry forward of £342,278 from previous years and an allocation of £348,883 for 2024-25. Officers have reviewed recent condition surveys to identify priorities. These include projects which reduce school’s carbon emissions supporting the Council’s pledge to become carbon neutral. Works included in this programme are:

School	Description of Works	Agreed Budget
Cockington Primary	Cockington School Latent Defects	£595
Mayfield BXM Chestnut	Boiler replacement. It is no longer possible to source replacement parts. A temporary 'fix' in place whilst investigating Air Source Heat Pumps.	£30,000
	To bring electrical wiring up to current regulations & address EICR defects	£10,856
	Construct a new bitumen macadam footway crossing	£1,639
Mayfield PTN Ocombe House	Gas compliance works	£4,204
	Rationalisation of redundant pipework to reduce risk of legionella	£6,639
	Drainage	£1,246
	Intruder alarm upgrade. Existing system failing causing false alarms	£17,382
Mayfield, TQY	Ocombe House Electrical & Lighting	£6,402
	Works to address bowing masonry	£20,000
	To bring electrical wiring up to current regulations & address EICR defects	£16,799
	To replace the air handling unit in the hydrotherapy pool area with a heat recovery unit to address temperature & humidity issues	£131,811
	Contribution to Solar PV installation	£29,716
Sherwell Valley PS	To address external emergency lighting issues throughout the site & replace exit boxes for all blocks	£15,000
	To review fire doors throughout the site & address shortfalls	£14,540
	To refurbish Year 3 Girls & Boys and Year 4 Boy's toilets	£40,000
	Plastered/rendered block masonry to window reveal.	£6,078
	Fencing	£23,807
Watcombe PS	To install Manual Call points throughout school linked to fire system	£6,386
	To rationalise and improve electrical installations throughout	£11,740
	Emergency lighting works	£3,171
	Match funding to support school's installation of solar panels	£12,000
	Gas Leak in main boiler room - replacement pipework/repair	£4,600
	Latent defects - Watcombe Nursery Heat Pump Installation	£2,802
White Rock PS	To replace boiler in Block N with heat source pump	£70,000
	To install emergency lighting & address electrical issues	£6,688
White Rock Defects	Survey work over summer 2024	£105,000
Sherwell Valley PS SALIX BID	To design and undertake feasibility of new carbon neutral heating system for entire school site and submission of Salix bid	£10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£609,101</b>

Any unallocated funding is held to address unforeseen breakdowns or works that may be needed during the year, particularly during the winter.

For further information on any of these projects, or the Children's Services Capital Programme, please contact:

**Clare Talbot**

Education Team – Pride & Place

[clare.talbot@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:clare.talbot@torbay.gov.uk)