

## **TRAFFORD COUNCIL**

**Report to:** Executive  
**Date:** 27 January 2025  
**Report for:** Decision  
**Report of:** Executive Member for Children and Young People

### **Report Title**

**Education and Early Years Basic Need and High Needs Capital Report – Part I**

### **Summary**

The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient places in schools and early years settings, and also sufficient school places that meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The Council has received funding from central government and this report provides detail of the progress that has been made in respect of existing projects supporting the delivery of the Council's statutory duty and seeks approval to proceed with additional proposals.

### **Recommendation**

That the Executive agrees the proposals contained within this report as the detailed capital programme for 2025/26 and into 2026/27, specifically:

1. Approve the Secondary School expansion proposal detailed in section 6.1 of the report:
  - North Cestrian School (5FE to 7FE) 60 places – Proceed with a Planning application for expansion.
2. Approve the High Needs (SEND) capital proposal detailed in section 6.2 of this report:
  - Brentwood School (increase from 45 places to 80 places including individual learning spaces) – additional funding.
  - Broadoak School – creation of a 25-place Resourced Provision.
  - Broomwood Primary School – creation of 10 place Reception/KS1 Nurture Centre for social, emotional and mental health needs.
  - Small capital grants scheme for primary and secondary mainstream schools to develop in-house inclusion/ nurture group provision.
3. Approve the allocation of Basic Need capital funding and High Needs Capital Provision to carry out work to improve the facilities and expand provision for pupils detailed in Appendix A: Proposed Capital Projects, Basic Need Capital Programme, Table 1 and High Needs (SEND) Capital Provision Programme, Table 2.

4. Note the completion of previous SEND / High Needs Capital schemes in Appendix B.
5. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Place and the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance, to carry out the following for the capital projects included in the Basic Need Capital Programme and High Needs (SEND) Capital Provision Programme:
  - Submit planning applications as required.
  - Enter into any procurement exercise and negotiate, agree and enter into the terms of any contracts and other documentation necessary to progress the projects.
  - Appointment of any relevant contractors and specialists required to deliver.
6. Delegate authority to the Director of Legal and Governance to enter into all legal agreements required to implement the above decisions.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Sarah Butters, Head of Service – Education Places & Access  
 Karen Samples, Director of Education Standards, Quality & Performance

Extension: 912 3233 / 912 5100

Background Papers: None

The Best Start for our Children and Young People	Having sufficient school places to provide education that meets a range of needs is essential for children and young people to thrive and lead healthy independent lives.
Healthy and Independent Lives for Everyone	
A Thriving Economy and Homes for All	Not applicable.
Address the Climate Crisis	Improving the quality of our school buildings helps to reduce energy and carbon consumption.
Culture, Sport and Heritage for Everyone	Not applicable.
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	Not applicable.
Financial Considerations	The estimated capital cost of the schemes, now recommended for approval in Appendix A, is £7.800m which can be financed by capital grant from the DfE.
Legal Implications	All changes to schools' status, closure, expansion and amalgamation, and new schools, are subject to statutory processes, which will need to be adhered to as appropriate for each scheme. In addition, the Council has statutory duties in relation to the provision of school and early education places, including using its planning powers to secure provision. The Education Act

	1996 sets out the statutory duty on local authorities to secure sufficient school places, which they must do with regard to securing special educational provision for pupils with SEND. The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to support children and young people with SEND, including keeping the sufficiency of educational provision under review.
Equality/Diversity Implications	Schools are subject to current legislation regarding Equality and Diversity.
Sustainability Implications	School buildings are procured requiring successful contractors to meet required sustainability criteria.
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	School buildings are assets that need to be maintained.
Risk Management Implications	Operational risk of buildings closing if capital maintenance works not undertaken and insufficient school places and insufficient SEN school places.
Health & Wellbeing Implications	The condition of School buildings affects the Health and Wellbeing of all staff and pupils.
Health and Safety Implications	All building work is subject to appropriate current Health and Safety/CDM regulations. Failure to respond to condition issues, which have health and safety implications, will find the Council in breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act.
Socioeconomic Duty Implications	Not applicable.

## 1. Background

1.1 There has been a rolling programme of capital expansion across Trafford Schools to ensure the Council is able to meet its statutory duty in relation to the provision of school and early years places.

1.2 The Council sets its priorities for the allocation of capital resources using these key principles:

- Ensuring there is an appropriate level of school places, so every child has a school place and parental choice is maximised.
- Expanding existing schools to protect financial viability, noting the Department for Education (DfE) no longer supports the creation of single form entry (FE) schools (schools with only one form per year group).
- Taking account of emerging and changing demographics, including inward migration, and housing developments.
- Using the learning environment efficiently to enhance the provision for vulnerable pupils.
- Ensuring health and safety issues are identified, prioritised and addressed.
- Supporting growth and economic investment.
- Making judicious use of public resources.

This maximises the impact of basic need funding, whilst providing opportunities to improve the suitability and condition of the existing stock.

- 1.3** Between 2010 and 2026, the Council has been allocated £105.6m of basic need funding which has been used to commission the expansion of 38 schools and provide an additional 4,646 places. The Council has been identified by the DfE as exemplar with regards to its effective and efficient use of basic need funding.
- 1.4** The DfE utilise data provided in the annual School Capacity (SCAP) Survey to estimate the number of additional places needed, based on the DfE's school capacity assessment. An important point to note is that the DfE calculation deploys a methodology which assumes that Councils will provide places for all pupils who wish to access a school in their area. This differs from the local sufficiency assessment methodology, which is to ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty to ensure sufficient places for all pupils resident in the Borough.
- 1.5** Trafford has good transport links and high performing, popular schools, many of which are oversubscribed, making it an attractive option for pupils from outside of the Borough. The 3-year average indicates that 5% of primary pupils in reception year are not resident in Trafford. For secondary pupils in Year 7, the 3-year average is much higher with 14% of pupils not resident in Trafford, with selective schools contributing significantly to this.
- 1.6** Trafford being a net importer of school places creates a significant difference between the DfE estimation of additional places needed and the number of places indicated in the Council's local sufficiency assessment.
- 1.7** Demand for school places is influenced by a broad range of social, economic and demographic factors, reflecting wider trends within community and society at any given point in time. In 2021/22, Trafford experienced an unprecedented increase in demand from pupils moving into the Borough mid-way through their education and this trend continued into 2022/23, which created significant pressures. These trends have now changed and in 2023/24, Trafford started to see a significant reduction of inbound migration, linked to cost of living factors, with outbound migration between birth and aged four seen in some areas for the first time. This same issue is being experienced by other Councils in our region who share similar demographics, with cost-of-living factors driving a reduction in the number of families in more affluent areas.
- 1.8** The selective education system in Trafford creates additional complexities, with a unique pattern of pupils in upper year groups in the primary phase moving into the Borough in preparation for applying for grammar schools. This trend remains unchanged and this pattern continues, despite changes in overall migration patterns. Additionally, the Council is not the Admission Authority for 18 of our 19 secondary schools; this responsibility lies with the school's governing body because they are an academy or faith school.
- 1.9** Due to this complexity, providing a place for every child resident in Trafford has not been easy to achieve but the Council continues to meet the statutory duty despite the challenges.
- 1.10** The DfE sufficiency framework lays out that it is for local authorities, academy trusts and local partners to balance the supply and demand of school places, in line with changing demographics locally, and that the number of places should be increased in response to need and reduced/repurposed where no longer required. It notes that forecasting demand for school places is inherently difficult, and additional factors like changes in international migration patterns make it even more challenging. All projections are subject to uncertainty as they depend on the information available at

any given moment in time and cannot allow for future changes in demographic behaviour.

- 1.11 Achieving the right balance between sufficient places and overprovision is critical to maintain stability within the existing school system and to avoid compounding financial challenges for schools.

### Local Authority Funded Projects

- 1.12 The Executive have previously approved the following schemes to increase capacity and the table below shows progress to date.

<b>CAPITAL PROJECTS – PREVIOUSLY APPROVED EXPANSION SCHEMES</b>			
<b>School</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Additional Places</b>
2 Schools		Completed Sept 2010	140
3 Schools		Completed Sept 2011	420
3 Schools		Completed Sept 2012	203
2 Schools		Completed Sept 2013	210
4 Schools		Completed Sept 2014	770
5 Schools		Completed Sept 2015	553
3 Schools		Completed Sept 2016	295
Park Road Primary, Sale	Expand from 45 to 60 places per year group	Completed Sept 2017	105
Broadheath Primary	Expand from 60 to 90 places per year group	Completed April 2018	210
Brooklands Primary	Expand from 70 to 90 places per year group	Completed Sept 2018	140
Gorse Hill Primary	Expand from 50 to 60 places per year group	Completed June 2019	70
Worthington Primary	Expand from 45 to 60 places per year group	Completed Nov 2020	105
Blessed Thomas Holford	Expand to 290 places per year groups	Completed Nov 2021	400
Sale High	Expand from 198 to 210	Ongoing	60
Firs Primary	Expand from 60 to 90 places per year group	Completed Sept 2023	210
Willows Primary	Expand from 45 to 60 places per year group	Completed Sept 2023	105
Templemoor Infant	Expand from 60 to 90 places per year group	Completed Sept 2023	90
Moorlands Junior	Expand from 60 to 90 places per year group	Completed Sept 2023	120
Woodheys Primary	30 places in key stage 2 (temporary)	Complete Feb 2022	30
Broomwood Primary	30 places in key stage 2 (temporary)	Completed May 2023	30
Altrincham College	Expand from 180 to 240 places per year group	Ongoing	300
Sale High	30 places in Year 7 in Sept 2023 (temporary bulge, a	Completed Sept 2023	30

<b>CAPITAL PROJECTS – PREVIOUSLY APPROVED EXPANSION SCHEMES</b>			
<b>School</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Additional Places</b>
	bulge class being a one-off class for one year only)		
Stretford High	Expand from 190 to 200 places per year group	Completed Sept 2023	50
<b>Total:</b>			<b>4,646</b>
<b>CONDITION / SUITABILITY ISSUES</b>			
St Vincent's	Two additional classrooms to replace 2 very small first floor classrooms.	Complete Dec 2017	-

**1.13** Almost all schemes detailed have been completed to target date and on budget.

### **DfE Funded Projects**

**1.14** In 2018 and 2019, grammar schools were able to submit bids to the DfE's Selective Schools Expansion Fund (SSEF) which supported grammar schools to expand to address a need for additional places in their area. There were conditions requiring applicants to set out plans to increase applications from children eligible for the pupil premium and to help raise standards more widely. The following Trafford schools were successful:

- Altrincham Grammar School for Boys – increased published admission number (PAN) to 202 from September 2020, creating 30 places per year group, 150 additional places in total.
- Altrincham Grammar School for Girls – increased PAN to 204 from September 2021, creating 30 places per year group, 150 additional places in total.
- Stretford Grammar School – increased PAN to 160 from September 2020, creating 32 places per year group, 160 additional places in total.

**1.15** The DfE's School Rebuilding Programme (SRP) carries out major rebuilding and refurbishment projects at school buildings across England, with buildings prioritised according to their condition. Responsible bodies could nominate schools for consideration subject to strict criteria and successful schools were announced in 2021 and 2022. These projects replace existing provision rather than creating additional places. The following Trafford schools were successful, noting the two projects nominated by the Council have been allocated to the second phase of the programme which is provisionally expected to enter delivery from April 2025 with an expected three-year project timeline:

- St John Vianney School – non-maintained special school in Stretford nominated by the school.
- St Ann's RC Primary School – mainstream school in Stretford nominated by the Diocese of Salford.
- Barton Clough Primary School – mainstream academy in Stretford nominated by Bright Futures Educational Trust.
- Sale High School – non-selective foundation school in Sale nominated by the Council. Due to enter feasibility in January 2025.
- Stretford Grammar School – selective foundation school in Stretford nominated by the Council. Feasibility started with DfE.

## 2. School Place Demand – Basic Need – Primary

### Forecast Methodology

- 2.1** In building projections for future demand for school places, information from a number of sources is collated and analysed including GP registrations, pupils on roll on the termly school census, Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG), Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and coordinated admissions data to forecast migration. Forecast pupil numbers are submitted to the DfE as part of the annual School Capacity (SCAP) survey which generates a Basic Need funding allocation.
- 2.2** The Council is closely monitoring the potential impact of VAT on independent school fees on demand for places in the state-funded schools sector, which includes meeting regularly with Trafford independent schools. In most planning areas, all pupils in the independent sector could be accommodated within the state-funded schools sector within existing vacancies should this be required. An identified risk is pupils in upper primary year groups in the Altrincham planning area where mitigation would be through creation of additional classes within existing accommodation should this be required.

### Primary Overview

- 2.3** In the 2024 admission round there were sufficient reception places in all areas across the Borough. On national offer day (16 April 2024) every applicant was offered a place, with 96% of Trafford resident on-time applicants allocated their first preference school and 99% allocated one of their top two preferences. There were reception vacancies in all areas.
- 2.4** Trafford has always experienced a unique pattern of inbound migration into upper year groups in primary schools as pupils get ready to access the selective education system.
- 2.5** In 2021/22 and 2022/23, Trafford experienced an unprecedented increase in demand from pupils moving into our area mid-way through their phase of education – both primary and secondary – which created significant pressures.
- 2.6** Before the pandemic, the average number of primary in-year applications received across the school year was 909. In school year 2021/22 a total of 1,414 applications were received, an increase of 56%. This reduced to 1,244 in school year 2022/23, a reduction of 16% on 2021/22, but still 37% higher than the pre-pandemic average.
- 2.7** This trend has now changed and in 2023/24, Trafford started to see a significant reduction of inbound migration, with 974 applications received in school year 2023/24, a reduction of 22% on 2022/23, and only 7% higher than the pre-pandemic average.
- 2.8** The table below shows the assessed position for each of the primary planning areas for school year 2024/25 at 12 December 2024. This is a current snapshot position.

Red = Below 3% vacancy rate

Amber = 3 to 6% vacancy rate

Green = More than 6% vacancy rate

Planning Area	Reception to Year 2	Year 3 to Year 4	Year 5 and Year 6
Altrincham	6%+	6%+	<3%

Sale East	6%+	<3%	<3%
Sale West	6%+	<3%	<3%
Stretford	6%+	6%+	6%+
Urmston	6%+	<3%	3% to 6%
Partington	6%+	6%+	6%+

- 2.9** All primary in-year applications received in the 2024 autumn term, where residency has been confirmed, have been allocated a school place. This means the Council continues to meet its statutory duty with regards to offering a place although it is noted that in some areas, parental preference is less likely to be accommodated and in-year applicants may have to travel further to access a place.
- 2.10** This has been achieved through allocating through the normal admissions process and through utilisation of the Fair Access Protocol (FAP). The FAP is designed to ensure that unplaced and vulnerable children, and those who are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, are allocated a place as quickly as possible.
- 2.11** In-year applications, the impact of inbound migration and school vacancy rates (including where the Council is not the admission authority) are monitored regularly by Place Shaping Board and the School Places and Capital Board. Intelligence is shared amongst neighbouring Councils via the GM Pupil Place Planning Group and the regional Educational Building and Development Officers Group (EBDOG). The Council is working closely with the DfE Pupil Place Planning Team to monitor the sufficiency position and identify potential solutions.
- 2.12** As well as the permanent expansions projects listed in paragraph 1.11, the following short-term temporary measures have been implemented:

#### **Altrincham Planning Area**

- Broomwood Primary School – 30 places in Y6 bulge class for school years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 achieved through conversion of intervention space into classroom. Currently assessing whether ongoing requirement for 2025/26.

#### **Sale West Planning Area**

- Woodheys Primary School – 30 places in Y5 bulge class for 2021/22, moving to Y6 in 2022/23, achieved through conversion of ICT suite into classroom. Further two-year agreement in place for 30 places in Y5 bulge class in 2023/24 which moved to Y6 in 2024/25. Currently assessing whether ongoing requirement for 2025/26.

- 2.13** Catchment areas identify priority areas for admission to community schools, voluntary controlled schools, and to some academies. These areas are reviewed annually to ensure that sufficient places exist in each area, or neighbouring area, to accommodate all the children resident in that area. It is accepted that in some years, a very few schools may not be able to allocate places to all the residents in their area, however, when this occurrence becomes routine, or where there is no suitable alternative provision elsewhere, the provision of additional places or amendments to the relevant catchment areas will be considered.
- 2.14** The birth rate in Trafford is decreasing, following the national trend. The pupil place planning formula is complex and there are factors that will offset some of this decrease, including in-bound migration into our area in the years between birth and starting school;

in-year applicants requiring a school place midway through their education; and new housing developments which will yield additional pupils. However, these factors will not fully offset the birth rate decrease.

**2.15** This means there is an identified requirement to reduce the number of reception places in some areas to support the financial sustainability of schools. The Council has worked collaboratively with headteachers, governing bodies, academy trusts, diocesan representatives and trade unions, sharing the latest primary sufficiency information and agreeing the approach for reduction in provision.

**2.16** As admission arrangements for 2025 are already determined, the process to reduce the published admission number (PAN) is to submit an in-year variation request to the Office of Schools Adjudicator (OSA). The OSA reviews all the evidence and makes a determination. The following schools, where the Council is the admission authority, have opted to submit requests through this process:

- Oldfield Brow Primary School (Altrincham) from 60 to 30 – request approved
- Stamford Park Primary School (Altrincham) from 70 to 60 – request approved
- Willows Primary School from 60 to 45 (Altrincham) – request approved
- Heyes Lane Primary School from 90 to 60 (Altrincham) – request in progress
- Woodheys Primary School (Sale West) from 60 to 45 – request in progress
- Highfield Primary School (Urmston) from 40 to 30 – request approved

**2.17** The consultation on the admission arrangements for September 2026 included proposals to reduce the PAN at the following additional schools where the Council is the admission authority:

- Broomwood Primary School (Altrincham) from 60 to 45
- Firs Primary School (Sale West) from 90 to 60

In addition to this, some own admission authority schools (academies and voluntary aided schools) were also proposing to reduce PAN for 2026. All admission authorities must determine their admission arrangements for 2026 no later than 28 February 2025.

**2.18** Due to ongoing higher levels of demand for places in upper year groups, some schools are opting for a lower PAN for reception but with a higher maximum admission number for key stage two year groups.

### **3. School Place Demand – Basic Need – Secondary**

**3.1** The unprecedented surge in demand for primary school places as described in paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 above went on to have a significant impact on admissions into secondary school.

**3.2** The Council coordinates the normal round of admission into year 7. On national offer days in 2023 and 2024, there was just enough capacity to offer a place to everyone who applied. However in 2023, 92 children resident in Altrincham and Sale could not be allocated places at any of their preferred schools and were allocated places at the nearest school with a vacancy. This number reduced to 31 children in 2024. At the end of the allocation process in 2023, every secondary school in Trafford was full and some schools allocated places above their published capacity. On national offer day in 2024, every place was allocated at every school, including some over their admission number, aside from 3 undersubscribed schools.

- 3.3** The Council is the admission authority for only 1 of the Borough's 19 secondary schools and it does not coordinate in-year admissions. Due to recent increasing pressure on places and implementation of an improved application system, all secondary in-year applications are now channelled through the Council so there is increased oversight of the position.
- 3.4** The table below shows the assessed position for each of the secondary planning areas for the school year 2023/24 as at 12 December 2024. This is a current snapshot position.

Red = Below 3% vacancy rate  
 Amber = 3 to 6% vacancy rate  
 Green = More than 6% vacancy rate

Planning Area	Lower Year Groups	Upper Year Groups
Altrincham	Red	Red
Sale	Red	Red
Stretford	Green	Green
Urmston	Amber*	Amber*
Partington	Amber	Green

\* In Urmston area, 79% of vacancies are only for boys.

- 3.5** Representations were made to the DfE about the sufficiency challenges and regular meetings were held with the DfE to review the local sufficiency position and consider potential solutions. This included fully exploring the potential to establish a new secondary school. There are two routes to establishing a new school:

#### **Central mainstream free schools programme**

For this route, the DfE invites applications from groups to establish high quality new schools. The DfE can provide the capital for land and construction for these free schools. To secure best value for money, where possible the DfE look to supplement this funding with other contributions such as the provision of a site from a Council or contributions from developers. In the latest exercise in 2022, government developed plans to open a total of 15 new mainstream schools in education investment areas; those with the lowest education standards, meaning that Trafford was not eligible.

#### **Presumption free schools**

Where a Council identifies the need for a new school, it must seek proposals to establish free school through this process. The Council is responsible for providing the site and meeting associated capital build costs which are estimated to be upwards of £25m. This would have to be funded using DfE Basic Need funding and/or contributions from developers. The minimum sized secondary school is usually 6 forms of entry (180 PAN) or in exceptional circumstances 5 forms of entry can be considered (150 PAN). Trafford does not currently have this level of shortfall of places and so this was not a feasible option as the evidenced shortfall in demand falls significantly short of the required minimum numbers for a new school. This remains the current position, but it is possible a new secondary school may be needed as a result of future housing developments in 5 to 10 years' time and this will remain under review.

- 3.6** The Council considered expansion of all non-selective secondary schools in Sale and Altrincham prior to commencing the expansion project currently underway at Altrincham College, noting there are no easy expansion options due over-developed sites, limitations of space and communal facilities within existing sites.
- 3.7** There are ongoing challenges with the existing project to expand Altrincham College from 6 forms of entry to 8 forms of entry. Planning Permission was granted for the scheme in August 2024, but the contractor appointed to deliver the works entered administration in August 2024. The Council has now secured another contractor to deliver the project, but there is a risk of the timeline for places slipping back and additional mobile accommodation being required to accelerate the project to deliver by September 2026.
- 3.8** A Priority School Rebuild bid at Sale High School was submitted to the DfE and was successful. The project has been allocated to the second phase of the programme which is provisionally expected to enter delivery from April 2025 with an expected three-year project timeline. The DfE strongly advised against the creation of any permanent or temporary additional accommodation on this site ahead of the rebuild project.
- 3.9** Other options to create additional secondary capacity have been considered:
- Schools have been asked to take additional pupils over their published admission numbers. A significant number of additional places across all secondary year groups has already been achieved in this way.
  - Vacancies in neighbouring Council areas have been explored, primarily along border areas with Cheshire East and Manchester, but there are limited vacancies. This option is linked to parental preference and whilst some applicants each year have successfully achieved places in other areas, this is in line with the oversubscription criteria for each school, places cannot be guaranteed, and availability fluctuates.
  - Creation of temporary bulge classes in existing schools through the addition of temporary accommodation/mobile classrooms. This presents significant operational challenges in the secondary sector due to curriculum planning for teaching time and use of specialist spaces. Mitigation options for potential bulge classes at two schools for 2025 are being explored.
  - Existing school expansion onto satellite site if non-education accommodation can be identified. Other Councils who have exercised this option have encountered significant operational and curriculum challenges.

#### **4. Free Early Education Places**

- 4.1** The Council has a statutory duty under existing legislation to secure early education provision for eligible early years children in the Borough. A range of ambitious early years and childcare reforms are currently being rolled out, bringing the extension of early education to a wider age group. Phased roll out of the new entitlements commenced in April 2024 and will be further extended in September 2025. These are the entitlements:
- 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of children from 9 months up to 2 years old (due to be extended to 30 hours from September 2025).
  - 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of 2-year-old children (due to be extended to 30 hours from September 2025).
  - 15 hours entitlement for families of 2-year-olds receiving additional support (formerly known as the 2-year-old disadvantaged entitlement).

- Universal 15 hours entitlement for all 3 and 4-year-olds.
- Additional 15 hours entitlement for working parents of 3 and 4-year-olds.

**4.2** The early education sector is facing significant recruitment and retention challenges, both nationally and locally, coupled with the substantial impact to the sector of the scheduled increases to minimum wage and employer national insurance contribution. To date, the Council is meeting its statutory sufficiency duty for early education and childcare places however this is expected to become more challenging with the extension to 30 hours per week for younger children from September 2025.

**4.3** The Council has been allocated a Childcare Expansion Capital Grant of £561,468 for the provision of new places to support the expansion of:

- 30-hours entitlement places for children aged 9-months to 3-year-olds.
- Wraparound provision for primary school aged children.

**4.4** The Council has also been allocated a Wraparound Childcare Programme Revenue Grant of £685,372 over a 3-year period from 2023/24 to 2025/26. The purpose of the grant is to support Councils to increase the supply of wraparound places, to ensure provision for all parents who may need it, meeting current demand and building the capacity to meet future demand. It should be noted that this is not about delivering free wraparound support, it is about expanding provision to ensure working parents can access a place should they wish to pay for this service.

**4.5** The annual sufficiency assessment carried out in 2023 indicated that Trafford did not require additional places to meet the requirements of the first two phases of the reforms which was to deliver 15-hour places for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to 2 years. A further detailed sufficiency exercise commenced in November 2024 to assess the Council's readiness to deliver the extension to 30 hours per week for these younger age groups. It is expected there will be a small shortfall of places in some areas for younger children and capital funding will be targeted to address this once the assessment is complete.

## **5. School Places Demand – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

**5.1** High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNCPA) is funding to support the provision of new places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those requiring alternative provision. The Council's funding allocation was originally £4.73m for 2022/23 and £3.68m for 2023/24. In March 2024, the Council received additional funding of £2.120m for 2022/23 and an additional £863k for 2023/24, along with an allocation of £1.213m for 2024/25.

**5.2** In Trafford, children with additional needs benefit from excellent mainstream and specialist school provision. However, there is very limited capacity to meet increasing demand for places in both primary and secondary settings in the future.

**5.3** The Council's strategic priorities are to increase capacity within local specialist provision, including small specialist classes and resourced provision within mainstream schools, to meet the increasing demand for places. The Council is committed to supporting schools and settings within the Borough to meet this increasing demand as local provision offers the best outcomes for the children and young people of Trafford. This fits with the Council's commitment to inclusive mainstream settings within its SEND Ambitions plan, and the aim to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND within the local area. The Council's understanding of local priorities is informed by the SEND Joint Strategic Needs

Assessment, the SEND Ambitions Plan and the knowledge that all places in special schools and small specialist classes are full in September 2024.

- 5.4** Small specialist classes (SSC) have been developed to make sure most pupils with complex special educational needs can have their additional needs met within a mainstream school. These classes are usually for around 10 pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Staff are experienced and trained in the specialism of each class as well as general special and additional needs. Pupils from the SSC often spend time in the bigger classes in the school when they show themselves able to cope with the social and educational demands of the mainstream class in particular areas of the curriculum, and they are fully integrated into general school life.
- 5.5** All SSCs at mainstream primary are currently full, which resulted in the Council identifying requirements for additional SSCs for which expressions of interest were invited from schools:

Area	Need	Key Stage
South / Central Trafford (WA14, WA15, M33)	Social communication/ Autism spectrum / complex needs	KS1 and KS2
North / West Trafford (M16, M32, M31, M41)	Social communication/ Autism spectrum / complex needs	KS1 and KS2

- 5.6** An expression of interest round for mainstream primary schools was undertaken in 2022, unfortunately partner schools identified were not able to proceed. A second expression of interest round was undertaken in March 2024, resulting in the Council identifying two new partner schools to progress, one in the South of the Borough and one in the West.
- 5.7** The second round has brought further primary interest due to spaces opening up in more schools, enabling the Council to consider an increased number of opportunities due to greater value for money. The Council has also identified a partner school in the South of the Borough to deliver a Reception/KS1 Nurture Centre for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- 5.8** The Council has previously identified a number of proposed schemes linked to the Corporate Priorities, some at specific schools and some inviting expressions of interest from Trafford schools:

Type	School	Scheme
Additional classes	Brentwood School (secondary special)	Expansion for increasing cohort size. Additional capacity for 80 places to meet needs of secondary age children.
Additional specialist class	Broadoak School (secondary mainstream)	Creation of 25 place resourced provision
Additional small specialist class	Broomwood Primary School (primary mainstream)	Creation of 10 places Reception/KS1 Nurture Centre for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
Inclusion/ Nurture provision	Various – bid to small capital grant scheme	Expressions of interest to deliver in-house inclusion/nurture group provision

Type	School	Scheme
Specialist satellite provision	Various – expression of interest request	Expressions of interest to explore a satellite provision model to deliver specialist school places on mainstream school sites through locality partnerships between mainstream and special schools

- 5.9** A public consultation was announced on 18 November 2024 inviting comments on these proposals and any additional ideas for how the Council should spend the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) funding allocation for 2024-25. The consultation period ran until 16 December 2024. The Council awaits the 2025/26 DfE funding allocation announcement and further consultation will then take place around any new proposals.
- 5.10** The scope of the Brentwood expansion has been increased to allow for 10 additional pupils in each year group (an increase of 80 places rather than the originally proposed 45 places) to ensure the accommodation requirements meet the needs of the school as the cohorts move through all year groups. Individual learning spaces have also been designed to cater for more individual pupil needs. The increase in scope requires additional capital funding to deliver the project. The school continues to be supportive and has adapted spaces within the school to allow pupil places to be available ahead of the project completion. Further additional funding is being requested to support the delivery of the project now that all works have been fully costed.
- 5.11** The Council's two current resourced provisions are now at maximum growth and are oversubscribed. The Council has been working closely with the Dean Trust and is proposing to create an additional 25 place resourced provision at Broadoak School, a secondary school in the West of the Borough, from September 2026. This is an exciting opportunity for the Council to be able to work together to provide a geographical model for resourced secondary provision, so children's needs can be met in their local community.
- 5.12** In December 2024, mainstream schools were invited to bid for small capital grants to support delivery of in-house inclusion/ nurture group provision, with up to £10,000 per school available to improve the physical environment, with a requirement to support professional development of the workforce to enable successful outcomes for children and young people with SEND. A panel will review expressions of interest and allocate grant funding to successful schools in February 2025.
- 5.13** An expression of interest process was also undertaken to further explore a satellite provision model to deliver specialist school places on mainstream school sites, through locality partnerships between mainstream and special schools. This work is ongoing.
- 5.14** Appendix B 'Update on Previous High Needs (SEND) capital projects' details all previous SEND / High Needs capital schemes.

## 6. Proposals

### Basic Need

**6.1** Following a thorough analysis of the options, including consideration through the School Places and Capital Board, it is recommended to proceed with this proposal:

### **Altrincham Area**

#### **North Cestrian School – Former Loreto Preparatory School Land**

- The original feasibility study carried out in 2022 for North Cestrian School was to consider options for expansion from 5FE to 6FE within the existing site. Options allowed for the correct number of teaching spaces, but did not resolve the larger space issues such as dining and sports facilities and further investment in future years would have been required as the expanded cohort worked through the school, meaning it was not the preferred option.
- A second feasibility study was undertaken to review an expansion from 5FE to 7FE and to understand what opportunities may be presented by the closure of Loreto Preparatory School in August 2023, on the adjacent site. Expansion of this school from 5FE to 7FE would only be possible if the additional site could be acquired.
- In November 2023, a site disposal brief was produced upon the instruction of the owners of the site, the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loreto Sisters).
- In February 2024, the Council formulated its position with regard to the disposal of the land and highlighted the importance and materiality in the planning process of the need for school places and the protection of community facilities. This is in the context of a lack of alternative sites for school expansion or a new school, should for the site be utilised for residential redevelopment. As a result of these factors, the Council determined that it would strongly resist any planning application for residential redevelopment of the site and that the valuation of the land should not be based on its anticipated value for residential use.
- In March 2024 the Council's Executive approved the principle of acquiring the site, but the Council has been unsuccessful in doing so.
- There is very limited land available in the South of the Borough and the Loreto Preparatory School site therefore represents the only viable way of expanding secondary school provision in the south. It is a once in a generation opportunity to acquire a site that meets the needs of Trafford and that in planning terms has an established educational use.
- It is therefore proposed that the Council proceed with a planning application to incorporate Loreto into North Cestrian school site to increase the provision from 5FE to 7FE. During the design stage the Council will continue to try and acquire the site by private treaty negotiation however, a planning permission and private treaty negotiations are an important precursor to a potential Compulsory Purchase (CPO) of the site. The use of CPO powers is always a last resort, but an important one in this case to protect this important education provision for the Trafford community. Any such use would be subject to a future report to the Executive.
- Approval is sought for funding from the School Capital Programme to progress to RIBA stage 3 design to prepare for, and submit, a planning application for the proposed expansion of North Cestrian School.

### **High Needs**

**6.2** Following a thorough analysis of the options and review by the School Places and Capital Board, it is recommended to proceed with the following proposals:

- Brentwood School – further additional funding to support the expansion of 80 places (increased from the original 45 places proposed) and inclusion of individualised learning spaces, now works have been fully costed.
- Broadoak School – Creation of a 25 place Resource Provision for September 2026.
- Broomwood Primary School – Creation of 10 place Nurture Centre for reception and key stage 1 children with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Small grants scheme – to support primary or secondary mainstream schools to develop in-house inclusion/ nurture group provision.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1** The Council has a Basic Need allocation of £19.177m for 2025/26 and awaits the DfE funding announcement for 2026/27. £9.637m of this funding remains unallocated and is therefore available for further projects. For the additional places which are attributable to pupils yielded from new housing developments, agreements providing for education contributions have been entered in to under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which is a mechanism by which the impact of a development on a local area can be mitigated. Those contributions have not yet been received and so these places are to be forward funded by the Basic Need grant. Grant allocations are based on projections of pupil numbers across both the primary and secondary sectors. Although this is not a ring-fenced grant it, is a Council priority to ensure sufficient primary and secondary school places exist.
- 7.2** No further additional capital funding is being requested at present to complete the project at Altrincham College. The contractor appointed to deliver the works entered administration in August 2024. The Council has now secured another contractor to deliver the project but there is a risk of the timeline for places slipping back and additional mobile accommodation being required to accelerate the project to deliver by September 2026.
- 7.3** The projects proposed in this report are at the budget estimate stage and are yet to be fully costed, the estimated capital expenditure of £7.800m can be financed from the following funding streams:
- Basic Need Capital Grant 2025-26
  - High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) 2022-23 additional grant
  - High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) 2023-24 additional grant
  - High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) 2024-25
  - S106 Developer contributions requested for secondary provision in the Altrincham areas (estimated and yet to be received), will be forward funding by Basic Need Capital Grant.

As detailed in Appendix A: Proposed Capital Projects, Table 1 & Table 2

## **8. Legal Position**

- 8.1** It is important to note that the Council has a general duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that there are available in its area sufficient schools in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education (s. 14 (2)). This general duty has been characterised as a target duty in *Meade v London Borough of Haringey* [1979], rather than absolute, though the Council must be able to show a reasonable cause i.e., an emergency, as to why it cannot fulfil

the duty and it must take all statutory steps to overcome obstacles to its fulfilment (R v Inner London Education Authority ex parte Ali and Another [1990] COD 317).

- 8.2** In addition, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 amends Section 14 of the 1996 Act by inserting a new subsection (3A) to require local authorities in England, when exercising their powers on the provision of schools in their area under that section, to do so with a view to securing diversity in the provision of schools and increasing opportunities for parental choice.
- 8.3** The Council has a statutory duty under the Childcare Acts 2006 and 2016 to secure free early years provision for eligible children in the area, as supplemented by The Childcare (Free of Charge for Working Parents) (England) Regulations 2022 as amended by The Childcare (Free of Charge for Working Parents) (England) (Amendment and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2023.
- 8.4** The Council has a general duty under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to provide a safe working environment and hence respond to condition issues, which have health and safety implications.
- 8.5** Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on the Council to secure special educational provision in accordance with a child's or young person's Education, Health and Care Plan.

## **9. Other Options**

- 9.1** When considering the expansion of a school, the Council must consider the impact on neighbouring schools and the proposed options will meet the needs of both current and future catchment area children and allow the Council to accommodate in year applicants that cannot achieve places elsewhere, creating the least impact on other schools.
- 9.2** None of the capital grants are ring-fenced and could be used for other Council priorities; however the proposals align with the Council's strategic vision, outcome and priorities and in particular that 'all our residents will have access to quality learning, training and jobs'. The proposals also ensure that the Council is compliant with its statutory obligations.

## **10. Consultation**

- 10.1** Further consultation will be required as changes to schools' status including closure, expansion, amalgamation and new schools are subject to statutory consultation processes and these will be complied with for each scheme. All proposals will be subject to other statutory processes as required, including school organisation processes for making significant changes to provision and planning processes.
- 10.2** Individual consultation on the larger schemes has been carried out appropriately and in accordance with the relevant school governance structures. Further, more extensive consultation will be carried out with Governing Bodies if the schemes contained within the report are agreed.

## **11. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 11.1** To further the strategic vision, outcome and priorities of the Council and to ensure compliance with the Council's statutory duties as highlighted throughout this report.

**Key Decision:** Yes

**If Key Decision, has 28-day notice been given?** Yes

**Exempt Information**

**Finance Officer Clearance** ....MH

**Legal Officer Clearance** ....EM .....

**CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE** (*electronic*)

Jill McGregor

To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.

## Appendix A – Proposed Capital Projects

<b>BASIC NEED CAPITAL PROGRAMME – TABLE 1</b>		<b>£m</b>
Allocation c/f from previous report (Jan '24) including 2025-26 allocation of £19.177m		<b>9.315</b>
Savings/overspend from previous schemes		<b>0.322</b>
2026-27 allocation (awaiting DfE announcement)		awaiting
<b>Total Basic Need available</b>		<b>9.637</b>
<b>School</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Estimated Cost £m</b>
<b>North Cestrian</b>	Acquisition of former Loreto Prep site and potential CPO process to support the expansion of North Cestrian School by up to 60 places per year	
<b>North Cestrian</b>	Preparation of planning application for expansion of North Cestrian School by up to 60 places per year	
<b>Total Cost of schemes</b>		
<b>Total Available</b>		<b>9.637</b>
<b>Balance Basic Need still to allocate</b>		
Developer contributions requested but not secured or received via Section 106 (Secondary provision in Altrincham)		<b>TBC</b>

<b>HIGH NEEDS (SEND) CAPITAL PROVISION PROGRAMME – TABLE 2</b>		<b>£m</b>
Allocation c/f from previous report (Jan '24)		<b>0.238</b>
Savings/overspend from previous schemes		<b>0.080</b>
2022-23 allocation - additional grant		<b>2.120</b>
2023-24 allocation - additional grant		<b>0.863</b>
2024-25 allocation		<b>1.213</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>4.514</b>
<b>School</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Estimated Cost £m</b>
<b>Brentwood School</b>	Expansion – increase from 45 places to 80 places including individual learning spaces. Additional funding for project.	<b>0.800</b>
<b>Broadoak School</b>	Creation of 25 place resourced provision	<b>2.000</b>
<b>Broomwood Primary</b>	Creation of 10 places Reception/KS1 Nurture Centre for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs	<b>0.100</b>
<b>Various Schools</b>	Expressions of interest to deliver in-house inclusion/nurture group provision	<b>0.300</b>
		<b>£m</b>
<b>Total Cost of schemes to be approved</b>		<b>3.200</b>
<b>Total Allocation Available</b>		<b>4.514</b>
<b>Balance still to allocate</b>		<b>1.314</b>

## Appendix B – Update on Previous High Needs (SEND) capital projects

### 2018 schemes

Ref No	School	Scheme	Update
2018.1	Secondary	New Autism Spectrum Condition Class (ASC) in two mainstream secondary schools for between 10 to 15 pupils per class with additional support from Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Healthy Young Minds.	Provision opened at Lostock College in September 2018.
2018.2	Egerton School	Provide a nurture class and outdoor area for year 7 and 8 pupils to aid their transition.	Provision opened in September 2018.
2018.3	Delamere School	Provision of toilets to support the needs of ambulant pupils as the geographical primary special school model takes effect.	Works completed over Summer 2018.
2018.4	Pictor Academy	Provision of hoists in both KS1 and KS2 to support the needs of non-ambulant pupils as the geographical primary special school model takes effect.	Works completed to KS1 area in 2018 Works completed to KS2 area in 2019.
2018.5	Moorlands Junior	Improvements to existing small specialist class to support social communication in designation.	Works completed over Summer / Autumn 2018.
2018.6	Delamere School	Refurbishment/enlargement of hydrotherapy pool to meet the needs of all pupils at the School.	New larger pool completed Jan 2021.

### 2018 bidding round

Ref No	Provision	Scheme	Funding request	Status
Bid 1	Wellfield Junior School	Creation of small lobby area, this can be used as quiet area to work along with improving the security of the Small Specialist Class.	£5,000	Successful.
Bid 2	Broomwood Primary School	Creation of a multi-sensory area within the pre-school.	£10,000	Successful.
Bid 3	Longford Park School	Creation of a multi-use games area.	£130,000-160,000	Partly Successful £80,000 awarded.

Bid 4	Longford Park School	Building adaptations (£15,000) and extension (£60,000).	£75,000	Partly Successful £15,000 awarded.
Bid 5	Gorse Hill Studios	Improvements to access and music provision.	£50,000	Unsuccessful.  Revised bid received Feb 2019 was successful.

### 2019 schemes

Ref No	School	Scheme	Update
2019.1	EXPRESSION OF INTERESTS REQUIRED Secondary School Planned opening in September 2020	New Autism Spectrum Condition Class (ASC) in a further mainstream secondary school for between 10 to 15 pupils per class with additional support from Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Healthy Young Minds.	Expansion to provision at Lostock College.  Works to be completed over Summer 2021.
2019.2	Egerton School	Increase provision from 56 to 65 places by Sept 2020.  Provision of mobile accommodation to support increase in pupil numbers. The additional accommodation will allow School to develop a fitness suite and further therapy suite.	Works completed Summer 2020.
2019.3	Manor Academy	Increase provision by 25 places, including a change in the sixth form age range to include a 3 <sup>rd</sup> year (age 16-19).  Redevelopment of existing Sale West Development Centre into 4 classrooms to allow multi-use of this area and support increase in pupil numbers and age range.	Works completed November 2019.

### 2021 schemes

Ref No	School	Scheme	Update
2021.1	Firs Primary School (primary mainstream)	Additional small specialist class required for 10 pupils across key stages 1 and 2 for pupils with a range of complex needs. Planned opening in September 2022.	SSC works being undertaken in conjunction with a School expansion to 3FE. Works complete.

Ref No	School	Scheme	Update
2021.2	Longford Park School (primary SEMH special school)	Additional capacity for 6-8 places to meet needs of primary age children who present with SEMH/ASC/social communication needs and behaviour that challenges.	Works complete.
2021.3	Pictor Academy (primary special school)	Individualised learning space for children who require low stimulating environment and high adult support throughout the school day.	Works completed Summer 2021.
2021.4	Delamere School (primary special school)	Reconfiguration of nursery/early years classrooms to ensure a fit for purpose learning environment for additional numbers.	Works completed Summer 2021.
2021.5	Expressions of interest invited from Trafford mainstream secondary schools	New small specialist class to meet autism spectrum / social communication needs in a mainstream secondary school for between 10 to 15 pupils per class. With additional support from Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Healthy Young Minds.  Planned opening in September 2022.	Works at Wellington School are complete.
2021.6	Expressions of interest invited from Trafford mainstream primary schools	New small specialist class required for 10 pupils across key stages 1 and 2 for pupils with a range of complex needs.  Planned opening in September 2022.	No further primary SSC progressed in 2021. There will be a further EOI round in 2022.

### 2021 bidding round

Ref No	Provision	Scheme	Funding request	Status
Bid 1	Well Green Primary	Accessibility requirements for pupil	Nil from HNPCA	Works complete Summer 2022 from other LA funding
Bid 2	Moss Park Infant	SSC - new area for pupils with EHC	10,000	Complete
Bid 3	Longford Park	sensory area	10,000	Complete
Bid 4	Pictor	outdoor area	40,000	Complete
Bid 5	Flixton Girls	Alt Prov for girls	35,000	Complete

Bid 6	Lime Tree Primary	EOI – SSC for EYFS, KS1 & KS2	Nil	Not taken forward in 2021
Bid 7	Trafford Alt Educ	Gym & sensory space	31,500	Complete
Bid 8	Springfield Primary	1:1 pod spaces	5,000	Complete
Bid 9	Lostock High	Outdoor area	35,000	Complete
Bid 10	Barton Clough Primary	WC refurb for SSC pupils	15,000	Complete
Bid 11	Lime Tree Primary	Accessibility for pupil – alterations to pathway	9,500	Complete
Bid 12	Seymour Park Primary	Outdoor area	50,000	Complete
Bid 13	Wellacre Academy	Accessibility for pupil – installation of closomat	6,930	Complete
Bid 14	Wellington	sensory garden	2,000	Complete
Bid 15	Heyes Lane Primary	Outdoor area	3,000	Complete
Bid 16	Gorse Hill Studios	Music studio	50,000	Complete
Bid 17	Wellfield Infant	EOI – increase in SSC	Nil	Not taken forward in 2021
Bid 18	Delamere	1:1 learning pod	10,800	Complete

### 2021 Emergency measures

Ref No	Provision	Scheme	Funding request	Status
	Brentwood School	Adaptation of 2 spaces to create additional capacity for increase in Year 7 cohort.	44,000	Complete
	Delamere School	Individualised learning space for child who require low stimulating environment and high adult support throughout the school day	60,000	Complete
	High Needs Services	Robots to support remote access to the classroom	16,500	Complete

### 2022 schemes

Ref No	School	Scheme	Update
2022.1	Brentwood School (secondary)	Expansion for increasing cohort size. Additional capacity for 80 places (increase from 45 additional places) to meet needs of secondary age children	Building work currently on site and due to complete September 2025

Ref No	School	Scheme	Update
2022.2	Egerton School (secondary)	Creation of new 6 <sup>th</sup> form facility	Works complete Summer 2023
2022.3	Longford Park School  (primary SEMH special school)	Further 2 classrooms to create additional capacity for 16 places to meet needs of primary age children who present with SEMH/ASC/social communication needs and behaviour that challenges	Works complete Autumn 2023
2022.4	Primary School in North	Additional small specialist class required for 20 pupils across key stages 1 and 2 for pupils with a range of complex needs.	Partner School withdrew.  Second EOI round in March 2024.
2022.5	Primary School in Central	Additional small specialist class required for 20 pupils across key stages 1 and 2 for pupils with a range of complex needs.	Partner School withdrew.  Second EOI round in March 2024.