

Committee(s): Education Board	Dated: 20/05/2021
Subject: City of London Academies – Annual capital allocations	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3 & 4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
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Summary

This report is to inform the Education Board of the annual capital allocation available to City of London sponsored academies from the Department for Education, and the process by which the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) allocations this funding to the individual academies within the trust.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Department for Education (DfE) allocates funding each year to help maintain and improve the condition of school buildings and grounds. In any given financial year CoLAT can access funding through School Condition Allocations (SCA). To receive direct SCA, multi-academy trusts must meet both eligibility criteria, these being:
 - a. the trust must have had 5 or more open schools at the start of September 2020
 - b. those open schools (or their predecessor schools) must have had at least 3,000 pupils counted in the spring 2020 census or the 2019 to 2020 individualised learner record (ILR)

2. The amount of capital funding is published annually by the DfE, along with information on eligibility and how the funding is calculated. Guidance is also issued on the purpose of the fund, what it can be spent on and over what time period.
3. The DfE also published guidance on good estate management. This sets out the policies, processes and documents that schools, local authorities, academy trusts and other responsible bodies should consider when managing their estates effectively.

Current Position

4. SCA funding from the DfE is for the purpose of maintaining and improving the estate so that children can learn in a safe environment. Investment must prioritise keeping academy buildings and grounds safe and in good working order by tackling poor building condition, building compliance, health and safety issues and energy efficiency. The funding aims to address issues with significant consequences that revenue or devolved formula capital funding cannot meet.
5. CoLAT's allocations of funding to its academes in future years will be informed by the Trust asset management plan. This is under development and will consolidate the asset management plans for each of the ten academies. Presently, CoLAT has a process in place for each academy to bid for a share of the 2020-21 allocation against five priorities, which must be spent in full by the end of March 2022 otherwise the funding may be clawed back by the DfE. These bids are assessed by an assessment panel of COLAT senior leadership team members.
6. The total 2020-21 School Condition Allocation for COLAT is £893,024. The bids received for the 2021-2022 financial year totalled £1,171,433.
7. **Appendix A** attached to this report outlines the categories by which CoLAT academies were asked to categorise each project to bid for funding, and **Appendix B (Non-public)** shows details of the bids received.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – This delivers on the following strategic objectives of the CoLC:

- a. to contribute to the outcomes within the CoLC's Corporate Plan to 'Promote effective progression through fulfilling education and employment', and 'to contribute to a flourishing society' as its aim.
- b. the CoLC Education Strategy for pupils in the CoLC's family of schools to have access to transformative education, enabling them to achieve their potential, flourish and thrive.
- c. the Department of Community and Children's Services Business Plan's priority objective 'Potential', which states: "People of all ages can achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning", with the outcome to be achieved by "Delivering an outstanding education offer through the CoLC's family of schools."

Financial implications - All free schools are funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, with any 'new' academies joining CoLAT requiring 'new' Supplementary Funding Agreements falling under the CoLAT Master Funding Agreement(s). There is no direct financial liability to the CoLC in respect to the CoLAT sponsored academies, which is a separate legal entity (being a charitable company limited by guarantee). However, the CoLC remains accountable to the DfE as sponsor for the on-going successful operation of CoLAT and the delivery of high-quality education at each of the academies sponsored by the CoLC, and this will be of strategic importance to the CoLC

Resource implications - None

Legal implications - None

Risk implications - None

Equalities implications – None

Climate implications - None

Security implications - None

Conclusion

8. CoLAT receives annual capital funding from the DfE to maintain its capital assets. CoLAT's allocations of funding to its academies in future years will be informed by the Trust asset management plan. This is under development and will consolidate the asset management plans for each of the ten academies. Presently, CoLAT has a process in place for each academy to bid for a share of the 2020-21 allocation against five priorities,
9. The academy development programme through the CoLC's sponsorship of CoLAT continues to be an ambitious expansion of the City's support for education consistent with the CoLC's commitment in its Education Strategy. These ambitions remain consistent with those of CoLAT and are being successfully progressed as noted in this report. The board will note the potential risks to the capital builds and broader issue of reducing need for school places in future years

Appendices

- Appendix A - CoLAT Capital Bids Assessment categories
- Appendix B - CoLAT capital bids outcome (**non-public**)

Background Papers

DfE School capital funding <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-capital-funding>

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