INSPIRE LEARNING:
A WORLD CLASS DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

Report by Interim Director of Children & Young People, Chief Financial Officer

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

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1   PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1   **This report presents an overview of the implications of Scottish Borders Council's intent to create a world-class digital learning environment across the Scottish Borders that will reduce inequality and improve academic performance amongst our young people.**

1.2   The report seeks approval by Council Members to ensure the necessary capital and revenue funding provisions are made within the 2019/20 financial planning process and seeks to secure a mandate to proceed with this ground-breaking and ambitious programme that will inspire learning, teaching and success Scottish Borders-wide.

1.3   It is intended that the Digital Learning Transformation Programme will contribute significantly to the delivery of a range of strategic Council and Children and Young People Directorate objectives through factors including improving retention of teaching staff, reducing staff turnover, enabling a virtual learning environment, better connecting students with the wider school community and greatly improving connections between school leavers and local business.

1.4   The financial model summarised within the report has been costed over an 11 year period (the remaining duration of the existing Scottish Borders Council contract with CGI) and is fully inclusive of all known component elements required. In particular, the proposed programme covers:

- All training and professional development over the life of the programme
- Full support to deliver the business change
- All supporting infrastructure subject to full site survey (on which assumptions have been made for the purposes of the model)
- The ability to deliver an iPad into the hands of every child from P6 to S6 and 1:5 ratio for P1 to P5
- A programme of maintenance through periodic refresh

1.5   Options for the required Capital and Revenue financial provisions are laid out separately in the draft Financial Plans of the Council's Administration and Opposition parties.

1.6   The financial model has been regularly and rigorously re-modelled and since the inception of the initiative, a significant reduction in the overall projected cost of the programme of around £8.2m has been achieved through robust scrutiny, challenge and renegotiation with CGI, Apple and XMA reducing the total additional cost of ownership from £24.000m to £15.760m and a total net additional cost to the Council of £11.119m over the life of the project, including all borrowing costs.

2   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   It is recommended that Council:-

(a)   Notes the report and in particular, the financial implications of the proposed Digital Learning Transformation Programme;

(b)   Considers the required revenue and capital funding provisions as part of the 2019/20 Financial Plan;

(c)   Approves the Inspire Learning Transformation Programme enabling its formal initiation and delivery within the proposed timescales.

3 BACKGROUND

Digital Learning

3.1 National guidelines from Scottish Government have placed digital at the heart of the learning process. Viewed as a way to enhance learning, it is now the responsibility of every Scottish teacher to effectively embed digital tools in learning. Whilst digital tools are used in education settings across the world, each setting, including the Scottish Borders, has its own unique challenges and targets, and as such, technology must be used in a flexible way in order to progress towards achieving these targets.

3.2 "Digital learning" is any instructional practice that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student's learning experience. Additionally, digital learning can be used to provide professional learning opportunities for teachers, to reduce teacher workload, improve marking and feedback to the child and the wider school community and importantly, to provide personalised learning experiences for students.

3.3 Digital Learning is a term that refers to the means and method by which learning is delivered and accessed by all. It refers to the digital tools used to enable or manage learning in education. This may mean resources, hardware, software, storage, systems and support and include components such as:

- A mobile digital learning device
- A network that will support every student having a device for learning
- A flexible Audio Visual solution in all learning spaces
- Classroom Management software
- Education software to support learning
- Coding and Programming tools – software and hardware
- Creation of a safe, online learning environment
- Support for Teachers to deepen experience, grow confidence and recognise new skills attainment.

Mobile Digital Learning Devices in Schools

3.4 For each component, there are a number of options in terms of how it may be provided. Fundamental to the Council's Digital Learning Strategy will be a mobile digital learning device or tablet and similarly, there are a range of tablet technology options such as iOS, Android and Microsoft Windows devices. A mobile digital learning device is a great way to create and experience digital textbooks, capable of enhancing text and making content more interactive with images, video and audio. They are also an effective tool in engaging students in reading to improve literacy, support them with creative ways of producing content and help deepen their understanding and research skills.

3.5 There are many applications ("Apps") available for every stage of the education process. These include literacy, numeracy, STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills and a wide range of built-in accessibility features to broaden access to learning for all

students.

3.6   A Tablet provides students with access to web resources at their fingertips, making it easy for them to research information for school projects, class work and homework. It also facilitates the completion of tasks and enables them to digitally hand-in homework assignments, to receive meaningful and timely feedback from teachers and to even join classes remotely. It can also give users access to a wide variety of interactive applications that often take a different approach to learning. This different approach can make learning easier for some students. Lots of websites are designed for tablet use and have been optimised for this type of interactive technology. They provide features which can be used in the classroom to encourage collaboration and computational thinking. Students can find tablet technology intuitive and engaging in the learning process.

3.7   Many school children use touch screen based platforms such as tablets, game consoles and smartphones and already have a good knowledge of the technology. Many already have a tablet at home. For others, school is the only place where they can access this kind of technology. When a student takes a tablet device home as part of a school deployment often the wider school community of family can benefit from access to the tools it provides.

4   OPTION IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

Vision

4.1   National guidelines from Scottish Government have placed digital at the heart of the learning process, with four objectives:

- Develop the skills and confidence of educators in the appropriate and effective use of digital technology to support learning and teaching
- Improve access to digital technology for all learners
- Ensure that digital technology is a central consideration in all areas of curriculum and assessment delivery
- Empower leaders of change to drive innovation and investment in digital technology for teaching and learning

4.2   There are a number of fundamental components to the vision of a Digital Learning Transformation Programme for the Scottish Borders. These have been identified as being:

- Creating a fast, reliable WiFi network in every Borders school and internet access for every young person.
- Flexible audio visual learning spaces in our schools through equipping every classroom with a wireless, efficient technology solution
- Providing every teacher in SBC with a mobile digital learning device, case and keyboard
- Providing all secondary school students with a mobile digital learning device for use wherever it makes the learning experience better
- Providing every P6 and P7 student with a mobile digital learning device for use wherever it makes the learning experience better
- Supplying mobile digital learning devices into P1-5 for use wherever it

makes the learning experience better
- Classroom management software and education software to support learning in and out-with our schools
- Enabling and supporting the development of more advanced, high level coding skills in our secondary schools
- Planning a sustainable project that allows student devices to be refreshed before end-of-life
- Providing our teachers with top quality, accredited professional digital learning opportunities and support to develop their experience
- Providing a fully managed service support (device and application support / training and curricular guidance) for the whole digital learning environment in order that teachers and other key stakeholders do not need to worry about the technology but instead maximise its potential through focus on teaching and learning
- Promoting Digital Leaders programmes in schools across SBC

Objectives

4.3   In order to evaluate the potential options for the Scottish Borders, a number of objectives against which options can be evaluated have been identified:

- Technological Objectives
  - Ability to connect learning across teachers, pupils, school and home
  - Robustness and reliability
  - Flexibility and control – ability to share and to control the learning environment
  - Security and Safety
  - Support to teachers during implementation and development of their digital teaching skills

- Educational and Corporate Objectives
  - Extent to which options provide the best possible learning and teaching environments for all children and young people
  - Evidence of ability to support the achievement of Excellence through raising Attainment
  - Demonstrable Teacher investment – identifying teachers for accreditation to build capacity in SBC and deliver professional development for teachers which in turn will attract and retain teachers in the Scottish Borders
  - Developing the young workforce, promoting employability and giving all children positive destinations when leaving school
  - Alignment with the Scottish Government Strategy for Education and Children and Young People's Strategy for Digital Learning and Teaching – specific provisions that include improving WiFi network, mobile technology to enhance learning and greater access to educational resources
  - Support to Achieving Equity: Ensuring that every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap and providing vulnerable children with the support they need to achieve, attain and feel included
  - Ability to monitoring and track curriculum progress potentially linking to SEEMIS, the standard Education management

information nationally
- Opportunity to engage local businesses and involve them in the work of the school

- Cost
  - Overall cost
  - Unit cost of mobile digital learning device
  - Cost of managed service

- Implementation and Management
  - Ability to implement within specified timescale by 2019/20 academic year for secondary and 2020/2021 for primary
  - The requirement for a managed service across the programme including key pre-requisites such as a helpdesk, "how to" support, training and digital championing

Preferred Option

4.4 The Digital Learning Transformation Programme has yet to be initialised although a summary option appraisal was undertaken in order to identify the most cost-effective option on which the Council could base its considerations. A number of the options identified could deliver many of the required outcomes sought by the Council in implementing its Digital Learning Transformation Strategy. Having evaluated the options available however, what is clear is that there is only one option that delivers a solution that meets all of the above defined objectives.

4.5 The roll out of Apple iPads, on an iOS operating platform, within the Scottish Borders has been identified as the clear preferred option for the delivery of the world-class Digital Learning environment that Scottish Borders Council seeks to provide in its schools: Inspire Learning. There are many detailed reasons for this clear preference but in summary, the reasons underpinning this decision are:

Cost	The negotiated unit cost of the Apple iPad device is substantially lower than any available alternatives. This is partly as a result of the efficiencies drawn from the XMA framework. Significant efficiencies have been secured by rigorous negotiation on all aspects of the proposed programme in conjunction with all partners including CGI, who have presented a saving against the existing contract rate-card of £1.5m in total for the managed service element.
Teacher Development and Support	The opportunities presented by the Apple solution, when considered against other options, are believed to be of greater benefit in respect of Teacher Development through the availability of Apple Teacher, Apple Professional Learning, etc. Generally, the Apple training package is considered to be superior to supporting alternative options. The Apple solution is also the only one identified that gives full digital control in the classroom to the teacher.
Coverage and	The Apple solution is the only solution that is fully cross-compatible. What this means is that it is only

Flexibility	through the Apple solution that not only are all the principle Apple Apps and digital textbooks, curriculum teaching materials and Apple Classroom available, but that all other potential requirements such as MS Office, GLOW and GSuite are compatible also.
iPad-specific Features	The iPad is the mobile learning device that offers the widest suite of features required for a fully inclusive digital learning environment. These features include exclusive offline capability, assistive technology for sense-impaired pupils and privacy and security.
Availability of (Positive) Evidence	The Apple solution, of all the potential options available, is the solution for which there is the greatest volume of evidence over the delivery of targeted outcomes to date. Whilst the use of digital learning tools globally has evolved in recent years, it remains used only by the minority. The majority of evidence gathered to date indicates that the Apple platform is the one through which most success has been achieved. This is further elaborated in 4.6-4.8.
A single solution	The Apple option is championed by CGI, the Council's long-term information technology partner who are already working with other public-sector organisations to implement similar, if not exactly the same, type of programme. As such, it is the only option which delivers one single, holistic solution that completely fits the expressed vision of Scottish Borders Council outlined in 4.1 above.
Already Established Relationship	When Scottish Borders Council established its long-term IT partnership with CGI, a key driver was to create the platform from which it could realise maximum efficiency and performance over the period of the partnership. This is exactly the type of opportunity for which the partnership was created.
Timescale	The Council has defined a timescale for the programme that will see the first and largest tranche of rollout commencing in 2019. In order to deliver on this timescale, it is only through the already-established partnership arrangements for IT management and procurement that this commitment can be achieved.

The Evidence

4.6 Apple Classroom has already been rolled out across schools in the UK and globally, including the US and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Italy and the UAE. Results to date are well documented with strong fundamental evidence that in all cases:

- Academic Performance has consistently improved
- Engagement and motivation of students has increased
- Cost savings and improved efficiency have been achieved

4.7   Where rolled out, the device given to students is perceived by many to be a physical manifestation of society's investment in young people's learning. To date, the use of iPads with Apple Classroom appears to have transformed the way students learn within a richer learning environment focussed on the individual learning needs of students. The evidence in support of this gathered so far across these key areas indicates:

Academic Performance

• Increased attainment and improved examination results
• Growth in all year levels
• Sustained improvements in maths, English, physics and chemistry
• Sustained improvement in reading comprehension, spelling and grammar
• Improvement in literacy outcomes
• Improved personal learning
• Enhanced teaching
• Greater reflective thinking
• Teaching which more closely aligns to personal student skill sets
• Increase in the number of students pursuing higher education, with a particular increase in those choosing STEM related subjects
• Enhanced thinking and communication skills
• Strong support to the delivery of key performance indicator "Employability and Creativity"

Engagement

• Students are more motivated and engaged in learning. Creating, exploring and learning in new ways has ensured they stay engaged.
• More students are engaged in research and critical thinking skills needed for the 21st Century
• Fewer disciplinary problems and exclusions
• Decreased absence rates
• Greater creativity and collaboration and free exchange of ideas
• Better connection of young people with their classmates
• Students relish the opportunity to demonstrate their learning
• Young people feel comfortable with iPad technology
• Students are able to go deeper into the lesson and expand learning from the classroom

Efficiency

• Reduced frustration with outdated traditional technology
• Reduced IT support requirement
• Elimination of technology solutions that don't reflect or support the needs of a digital society
• New more fit-for-purpose learning materials
• Reductions in the need for the current level of IT refresh, consumables, textbooks, hardware peripherals and printing & paper costs and the associated time across schools to process purchase and accounting

4.8   On a more local level, there are a number of outstanding schools in the UK with similar environments to the Scottish Borders including:

- Tynecastle High School (winner of Scottish Education Awards for Digital Learning 2018)
- The Steven Perse Foundation School, Cambridge (UKs highest performing school 2016)
- Essa Academy, Bolton (multilingual school rated outstanding by OFSTED)

In addition, a large-scale project of a similar nature has just begun across Glasgow City Council.

Benefits of the CGI Fully Managed Service

4.9   The proposed solution by CGI is borne out of a strong partnership between the Council and CGI and also with XMA in which further investment has been made over the last three years. Using the CGI outsource contract to deliver the Digital Learning Transformation Programme, SBC will benefit from a simplified procurement process, greatly reducing time and cost. Our current contract provides value for money procured under CGI's Public Sector IT outsource contract. This was put in place to ensure the exact benefits this programme offers i.e. maximising efficiency, seamlessness of implementation / management and ensuring the solution exactly meets identified need, can and actually will be accrued within the ambitious and challenging timeframe the Council has set.

4.10   The table below sets out a summary of the expected benefits that will be accrued from putting a managed service with CGI in place for the Digital Learning programme:

Educational Benefits	Technological Benefits
Improvement of staff confidence in using technology allowing them to focus on teaching and learning	A single helpdesk support number
Improvement of the student experience through a reliable and balanced network performance	Support from in-school Digital leaders
Central deployment, mobile device management (MDM) and management of device / daily activities will be undertaken by Digital Learning Team removing burden of technical workload / setup away from teachers	24 hours a day / 7 days a week availability of a managed network

Caching of servers in order to optimise bandwidth and provide a more consistent end user experience	Ability to closely monitor network capacity and performance in order to optimise the Digital Learning environment going forward
Enhanced security at network and device level through managed iPad build, promoting flexibility at teacher level	A formal Continuous Improvement process throughout contract period
The mobile digital environment will provide Business Intelligence capability to promote better decision making at both a school and local authority level	Adoption of ITIL (formerly Information Technology Infrastructure Library) industry standardised processes

4.11   Scottish Borders Council will also benefit from all planning, communication and documentation created as part of the current Glasgow City Council programme thus maximising efficiency, within a context of ensuring that only the most appropriate and best-fit solution is implemented within the Scottish Borders.

5   IMPLEMENTATION, MANAGEMENT AND COST MODEL

Proposed Plan

5.1   The intention for rollout of the implementation and refresh is simple in its concept. All supporting infrastructure will be put in place aligned to the rollout of the mobile digital learning devices on the basis summarised below:

From:
- April 2019 – rollout to Secondary School teachers
- August 2019 – rollout to all S1 – S6 pupils
- April 2020 – rollout to all P6 and P7 teachers
- August 2020 – rollout to P6-P7 and new S1 pupils

Whilst these are targeted dates, a number of factors will determine the exact date of rollout over the period of implementation but the draft plan stated above can be graphically demonstrated as:

ID	Task Name
41	Project Initiation Document
46	Gate 1: Management Plan Review
60	Build Connected Learning Digital Solution
61	Easter Holidays 2019
62	School WiFi Surveys
66	Secondary School Installations
81	MDM/iPad Build
90	Integration Test
96	School Deployment Documentation
97	Develop School Deployment Templates
111	Service Implementation
116	Connected Learning Processes
131	Acceptance Test/Pilot (location to be confirmed)
142	User Acceptance Test (at pilot Secondary School)
151	Phase 1 - Secondary Schools Rollout
152	Secondary School Teachers Rollout
156	Secondary School Teachers Rollout Pilot
162	Summer Holidays 2019
173	Full Secondary School Teachers Rollout
177	Secondary Schools Pupils Rollout
179	Secondary Schools Pupils Rollout Pilot
186	Easter Holidays 2020
187	Full Secondary School Pupils Rollout
191	Phase 2 Rollout
194	Summer Holidays 2020
195	Secondary School 2020 Intake Rollout
202	Primary Schools Rollout
209	Primary School Installations (3 teams) - see notes
213	Primary School Teachers Rollout
221	Christmas Break 2020
222	Primary School Pupils yrs 1-7 Rollout

5.2 Refresh will occur after year 4, where all teacher and pupil iPads will be replaced. Each year, a new P6 tranche will come as pupils progress up through Primary School. Going forward, all existing iPads will be refreshed when the pupil enters S3.

5.3 As pupils leave school at S4-S6, their devices will be recycled back into P1 to P5 until they are 4 years old. By way of example, 1,200 devices are forecast to come out of S4-S6 at end of year 1 with 3 years' life left in them and can be put into P5 if desired on a 1:5 ratio followed by 1,100 with 2 years left a year later, and then a further 800 with 1 year life left in the year after again.

5.4 Set up and initial training is both comprehensive and straightforward. This is explained more fully below.

Impact on and Outcomes for Teachers and Pedagogy

Training and Professional Development

5.5 When initiated, the proposed implementation plan will commence with the rollout of iPads to all secondary school teachers. This will happen 4 months before rollout is made to any pupils in order to give teachers time to get to know their iPad and to undertake the required professional development and training. A similar principle will apply a year later in relation to the rollout to primary schools.

5.6 Professional learning is critical to not only delivering in full the benefits of the transformation programme but to ensure that teachers feel rewarded by the investment in their professional capabilities and role. Continually investing in professional learning will provide a safeguard that enthusiasm for the programme is consistently sustained going forward.

5.7 This professional training will clearly have to be pitched at ensuring that

all teachers, regardless of current digital skills, are appropriately upskilled digitally to the required level of being able to fully add value in the classroom. Differentiation of how training needs across teachers are met therefore will be fundamental to ensuring a general level of digital literacy is achieved. This will take place through a number of media that will be agreed within a Support Plan and will include formal CGI / Apple-enabled Induction training, drop-in clinics, additional support sessions, training guidance and access to reference materials.

5.8   Such an approach is fully consistent with the Leadership provisions within the Council's Digital Strategy and a planned and phased approach to develop and improve Teachers learning and confidence is paramount to its delivery. By doing so, it is hoped that here in the Scottish Borders many of our teaching staff and the schools in which they work will be recognised going forward formally by achieving Apple Distinguished Educator and Apple Distinguished Schools status respectively.

5.9   Informal survey of a cross-section of teaching staff in the Scottish Borders indicated that assurances over the provision of professional development, coupled to alleviating concerns over the Wi-Fi capability across the school estate were the two most important components of ensuring the successful delivery of the programme and its outcomes. By taking the approach summarised above, in addition to the full site survey planned prior to embarking on the rollout at each school in the Scottish Borders, these two critical areas of assurance required by our teaching staff can be given at the outset of the transformation programme.

5.10   On 29 January 2019, Head-teachers from Scottish Borders Schools were invited to attend a demonstration, workshop and plenary discussion in the proposed programme that will transform education, teaching and learning across the region. The response from this key stakeholder group has been overwhelming and by way of evidence in support of this conclusion, a number of comments extracted from verbal and written correspondence from those in attendance is detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

        In the Classroom

5.11   The Council's Corporate Management Team were introduced to how the digital tools might actually operate in the classroom at a number of demonstrations during the Autumn of 2018, either here in the Scottish Borders or on-site elsewhere. In terms of how it will enable teachers specifically, this introduction demonstrated a range of features including:

- How the teacher will maintain control of what each individual pupil does
- How the teacher can personalise the learning of each individual pupil, increasing pace, engagement and motivation when required
- How flexibility can be increased through e.g. the ability to teach remotely – this could increase availability of subjects to pupils as well, change our approach to Home Tuition or even provide a more flexible and efficient way of managing the impact of staff absence
- The potential for improved and more efficient workflow of teachers through aspects such as interactive and real-time feedback, mark-up and voice recording, etc ameliorating the need for traditional 'marking' time – Apple claim that research indicates that up to 4

hours a week of teacher time can be saved if more flexible feedback media such as recorded voice is used instead of traditional review marking and written feedback
- The potential for collaboration, presentation and innovation amongst pupils and teachers alike
- The extent of the wealth of learning materials available to teachers, the majority of which is free-to-use

Summary of Financial Model and Total Cost and Financing Options

5.12   The total cost of the Digital Learning Transformation Programme has been costed over the remaining 11 years of the Council's contract with CGI although a small proportion of financing latter years' capital costs extend beyond the life of the project by up to 2 years. Due to a number of factors including economic developments, expected advances in technology, unknown demographic projections beyond this period and the potential evolution of the school estate during this time, this is the most appropriate timeframe for the programme to be lifed.

5.13   Given the embryonic nature of the Inspire Learning programme currently, a number of variable factors, including the basis of how the Council will finance the programme and the exact borrowing and financing costs, remains a factor. To inform the overall decision as to whether the programme should proceed however, a financial model has been constructed in order to assess its financial feasibility. This model has been thoroughly tested and remodelled numerous times and since work exploring the feasibility of the programme commenced during the summer of 2018, a significant reduction in the overall cost of the programme of has been achieved through a rigorous process of scrutiny, challenge and renegotiation with CGI, Apple and XMA. This has reduced the total cost of by over £8m.

5.14   At the time of preparing this report, the total cost of the implementation and ongoing managed service over the life of the programme is forecast to be £15.760m. This is known as the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) and consists of a mix of revenue and capital investment. This is a final negotiated position with CGI and other key stakeholders as contained in the formal proposal released to the Council. It is believed to demonstrate considerable value to the Council when compared to the existing contract rate-card and previously costed financial models. It's main components are:

	£m
Mobile Learning Devices incl. Spare Devices	7.226
Other Equipment, Deployment and Documentation	1.967
Project Implementation Resource	1.645
CGI Managed Service	4.922
	15.760

5.15   Long-term investment of almost £16m, regardless of the substantial cost reductions already negotiated, the timescale it is made over or the financing and accounting mechanism used, is clearly significant. In annual terms, the current forecast total cost of ownership over the life of the

programme is projected to be:

Total Cost of Ownership			
Financial Year	£m	Financial Year	£m
2018/19	0.000	2024/25	1.703
2019/20	3.550	2025/26	1.154
2020/21	1.437	2026/27	1.463
2021/22	0.882	2027/28	1.048
2022/23	1.809	2028/29	1.041
2023/24	1.485	2029/30	0.188
Total			15.760

5.16 Given the nature of the programme, there is an obvious front-loading of the total cost as the necessary devices and infrastructure are purchased and rolled out, although as the table above details, no costs will be incurred in the current financial year.

5.17 In terms of financing, there are a range of options available but in general terms, there is both a revenue and capital financial requirement that is split close to a '1/3 to 2/3' basis over the life of the programme. Within these financial parameters, there are a number of component variables such as capital investment, revenue funding including from existing budgets and from where there may be a reduction in current spend levels such as in the IT refresh or managed service budgets. An indicative provision has been made within the draft 2019/20 Administration and Opposition Financial Plans accordingly. Depending on which options are ultimately preferred, there will be an impact on the overall cost in terms of the unit costs of equipment and other components. The actual profiled gross revenue requirement per annum is summarised below:

Revenue			
Financial Year	£m	Financial Year	£m
2018/19	0.000	2024/25	0.531
2019/20	0.503	2025/26	0.527
2020/21	0.520	2026/27	0.530
2021/22	0.527	2027/28	0.419
2022/23	0.599	2028/29	0.412
2023/24	0.571	2029/30	0.188
Total			5.327

5.18 The profiled annual capital requirement of the current revised financial model is detailed below:

Capital			
Financial Year	£m	Financial Year	£m
2018/19	0.000	2024/25	1.172
2019/20	3.047	2025/26	0.627
2020/21	0.917	2026/27	0.933
2021/22	0.355	2027/28	0.629
2022/23	1.210	2028/29	0.629
2023/24	0.914	2029/30	0.000
Total			10.433

5.19   To finance 10-year capital spend of £10.433m contained in the draft Financial Plan, £10.784m of debt repayment and servicing costs will be incurred from revenue over the life of the programme in total.

Potential Financial Benefits

5.20   In terms of cost mitigation, there are potential efficiencies that may be delivered as a result of the Transformation Programme. Further analysis of the contract specification, costs schedules and future options is required before such potential savings can be quantified in full but in IT budgetary terms are likely to fall in three main areas:

- The reduced requirement for refresh of existing Scottish Borders schools' IT equipment that will be replaced by the new equipment rolled out as part of the Transformation Programme;
- A reduction in / elimination of the existing Schools' RM Managed Service contract
- There are currently 4,000 IT devices across the school estate. These are the devices that SBC corporately must refresh and maintain. An associated reduction of 1,300 devices due to the Digital Learning Transformation Programme would result in a reduction in service charge costs.

5.21   Beyond IT, as per the evidence gathered where similar programmes have already been rolled out, there is likely to be a reduction in the requirement for physical learning materials, printing and photocopying, consumables. Other staffing-related areas of potential saving that may be realisable attributable to digital learning transformation relate to secondary schools library services and home tuition. Additionally, there are further peripheral areas of current expenditure that could be positively impacted by the proposed Digital Learning Transformation Programme such as software purchase by schools or relating to technology-assisted learning within Children and Families Social Work.

5.22   In total, by year 4, £0.450m of annual recurring efficiency savings are forecast to be delivered as a direct result of the programme.

5.23   These savings figures above remain indicative however and until the exact impact of Inspire Learning is evaluated, cannot be guaranteed. The savings have been identified as part of this report however, in order to provide an indication of the type and level of financial benefit accruable,

othe financial cost model.

Potential Financial Benefits / Efficiencies when fully implemented	£m
Reduction in existing refresh requirement by	(0.150)
RM Managed Service reduction	(0.026)
Device refresh reduction	(0.052)
Learning materials, administration, etc	(0.100)
Other staffing-related service cost reductions	(0.122)
Annual Savings when fully implemented	(0.450)

5.24   If estimated savings are deducted from the total cost model, an indicative net cost of the Programme, over its life, would be in the region of £11.119m therefore summarised as:

	£m
Total Cost of Ownership	15.760
Efficiencies on Existing Spend	(4.641)
Net Cost of Ownership	11.119

Required Budget Provision

5.25   As per the draft 2019/20 Financial Plan, £10.433m of capital investment is required over the next 10 years. The cost of repaying and servicing borrowing to fund this investment has been factored into the revenue requirement.

5.26   A revenue provision has been made into the draft Administration and Opposition revenue Financial Plans for 2019/20. The Administration's 5-year plan has a provision accordingly which includes all direct revenue costs net of forecast efficiency savings (within Children & Young People) and debt repayment and servicing charges (within Finance) and is forecast to be:

Financial Year	£m
2018/19	0
2019/20	818
2020/21	1,087
2021/22	1,090
2022/23	1,311
2023/24	1,315

6   IMPLICATIONS

6.1   Financial

There are clearly considerable financial implications of the proposed Digital Learning Transformation Programme. How Scottish Borders Council ultimately finances the capital investment and revenue expenditure requirements of the programme should it agree to proceed requires further determination also. The projected total revenue and capital costs of the Programme, aligned to the draft Financial Plan proposals of the Council's Administration are laid out in section 5 above.

6.2   Risk and Mitigations

There is both financial and non-financial risk inherent within the overall proposed Digital Learning Transformation Programme. Whilst significantly refined over the Autumn / Winter of 2018/2019 from initial estimates, the projected cost of the programme remains based on the skeleton bid stage only currently. Full Due Diligence over the school estate infrastructure relative to need e.g. WiFi access points will require undertaking before a final contract specification can be developed.

In non-Financial terms there are a number of risks also covering obvious factors such as slippage, the potential impacts on schools, teachers and pupils and their level of attainment and engagement.

Again however, the report is simply an overview of the proposed strategic intent and likely outcomes, with indicative costs and projected financial / non-financial benefits in order to seek a mandate to progress to the next stage of formally initialising the Programme and make the required revenue and capital financial plan provisions.

6.3   Equalities

An initial Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal. As the report outlines, a key objective of the proposed Transformation Programme is to support the achievement of equity amongst all pupils in the Scottish Borders and sustained improvement in attainment and engagement.

6.4   Acting Sustainably

There are no currently identified specific impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.5   Carbon Management

There are no significant adverse effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report. This proposal has the potential to reduce travel costs for staff and pupils.

6.6 **Rural Proofing**

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

6.7 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Council's Corporate Management Team has been consulted at regular intervals during the feasibility stage of the programme and all comments and directions have been incorporated into this final report which the Management Team has approved. Members of all political groups have been consulted during this initial stage and both the ruling Administration group and the Opposition group have proposals contained within their draft Financial Plans to embark on the delivery of this exciting and ambitious programme.

7.2 Head-teachers across the Scottish Borders have also been consulted on the proposals and their feedback is attached in Appendix 1.

Approved by

Name

David Robertson   Chief Financial Officer

Stuart Easingwood   Interim Service Director – Children and Young People

Author(s)

Name	
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Background Papers:

Previous Minute Reference:

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Paul McMenamin can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.