North Lanarkshire Council
Report

Policy and Strategy Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

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School Estate: Strategic Capital Update

From James McKinstry, Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

E-mail McKinstryJ@northlan.gov.uk **Telephone** Via Teams

Executive Summary

This report outlines the progress and associated commentary for two key areas within the school estate, both of which are key components of the Strategic Asset Review and Investment Strategy (SARIS):

The Town and Community Hub Programme – one of the council's flagship programmes, which provides new bespoke community assets. Each of these new hubs is arguably the largest single infrastructure investment that will be made within the community they serve.

The existing school estate – which still forms the majority of our overall school estate, experiences challenges around the condition of the buildings, the suitability of the buildings, and how we will manage excess capacity in the school estate over the coming decades.

The report provides examples and updates for each of these two key themes, providing an overview of the work, and associated rationale for the investments being made, and the difference this makes to the local communities within which they are situated.

It is concluded that the strategy remains effective, but that the level of funding available changes the priorities – high levels of funding facilitate more new hubs, lower levels of funding facilitate targeted investment in the existing estate. As an example - £50m investment could create one new large community hub, or multi-million-pound targeted improvements in a number of existing schools (with potential to use them as hubs).

Different types (and scale) of projects produce different economic and operational benefits and, as such, a blended approach linked to the available finance is both the current and future way forward.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee:

(1) Acknowledge the progress, and strategy linked to the Town and Community Hub Programme and associated projects, providing multi-million investment within local communities

(2) Acknowledge the more targeted investment in the existing school estate -delivered via the general capital fund, around areas of capacity, condition, and suitability.

(3) Recognise that a report will be submitted to the Policy and Strategy Committee, in Cycle One 2026, to report on the way forward in relation to the Ravenscraig Community Hub.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	All ambition statements
Programme of Work	Transforming Places

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1. Background

New approach to the school estate – strategy adopted March 2020

1.1 In March 2020, as part of the "One Place – One Plan" presentation - which outlined key strategies and programmes to deliver the ambition within The Plan for North Lanarkshire - Policy and Strategy Committee approved the Guiding Principles and Prioritisation Matrix to inform the newly created Town and Community Hub Programme.

1.2 In March 2021, £236m was allocated to the Hub Programme as part of the Strategic Capital Investment Programme, 2021 – 2026. This funding was primarily for "legacy" type projects to be delivered through this new hub programme.

1.3 In September 2021, as part of "The Place, The Vision – Update" report, the Policy and Strategy Committee were provided with a list of the "A1" priority projects – these being the highest scoring projects, for new build, based on the prioritisation matrix agreed in March 2020.

1.4 In September 2022, Policy and Strategy Committee agreed to prioritise Chryston High Extension for LEIP funding from Scottish Government, along with the new Gartcosh Community Hub. The council was successful in obtaining LEIP funding for the Chryston High extension, but not the Gartcosh Community Hub project, which is being delivered via council capital funding.

Shift in financial outlook – following the global pandemic and world events

1.5 Also at the September 2022 Policy and Strategy Committee, members were presented with a report on the "impact of inflationary pressures" – which outlined the significant inflationary challenges aligned to large scale capital projects, and the pressure this placed on existing projects within the hub programme.

1.6 In March 2023, a report titled "Abronhill Community Hub" (but which presented updates on various projects) was presented to Policy and Strategy Committee, advising that, due to increased costs across "legacy" and "capacity" projects, not all projects within the programme could be brought forward at this time.

Medium term change in strategy to react to financial outlook

1.7 In December 2023, a report on "Strategic Asset Review and Investment Strategy (SARIS)" was presented to Policy and Strategy Committee, reacting to the changing financial landscape and increased construction costs. This report argued that whilst

the strategy of 'centring community assets around the school estate' maintained valid, the financial outlook made it more difficult to deliver this through "new assets" alone and made the argument for adapting the existing estate to deliver the 'community hub' elements for local communities as part of the strategy.

1.8 In March 2024, an updated "Strategic Capital Investment Programme 2024 – 2029" was presented to Policy and Strategy Committee. This updated funding package included £250m for investment in the Town and Community Hub Programme. Whilst this was primarily for the completion of already planned projects, there was money included for consideration of new hubs in Glenboig (capacity), Abronhill (policy), and Ravenscraig (eventually capacity, currently policy).

Financial allocation for condition of existing buildings

1.9 In September 2024, the "SARIS: Update Report" was presented to the Policy and Strategy Committee, providing an overview of the 'condition' of the school estate – a key core fact when assessing the adequacy of buildings. This report recommended that tests of change and targeted investment projects be brought forward if funding became available.

1.10 In March 2025, at the Policy and Strategy Committee, a "Strategic Capital Investment Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29" paper was presented and improved. Within that report, there was an additional £30m for targeted investment in the condition of the existing school estate.

2. Report

Replacing schools in North Lanarkshire since 1996

2.1 North Lanarkshire Council has a clear track record of replacing schools. Since the creation of North Lanarkshire Council, in April 1996, over one third of the school estate has been replaced. However, as outlined in the SARIS update report in September 2024, and below, there is still a significant amount of the school estate 'pre-1996'.

2.2 In November 2025, Orbiston Community Hub opened, replacing two schools, early years provision, and an outdated community centre, with an all-electric, reduced carbon, 21st century community asset for this community in Bellshill. This replaced two 1950s schools within the estate.

2.3 Early in 2026, St Kevin's Community Hub will open, to ensure adequate provision for the growing population in the Bargeddie area, facilitating housing growth within this local community.

2.4 Further projects in Gartcosh, Sikeside (St Stephen's) and Chryston will be completed towards the end of 2026 and into 2027.

Creating bespoke new assets: The hub programme

2.5 The Town and Community Hub Programme, as a strategy, has three elements through which it is delivered:

2.5.1 *(1) Identify the priority projects:*

The prioritisation matrix, as approved in March 2020, is used to identify which projects would be delivered, in which order, should funding not be an issue. However, it is clear

funding is and always will be an issue. Not all schools can be replaced at once – indeed, with the current infrastructure costs for a new build, the size and scale of our larger schools – a budget of £250m may only deliver one or two "town hub" sized projects, or five to six "community hub" sized projects in a five-year period. As outlined in previous reports, the increased costs of delivering infrastructure projects both nationally and internationally, has reduced the number of projects we can deliver with available funding. The prioritisation matrix still accurately reflects the order of projects.

2.5.2 *(2) Design and build the new asset to meet the needs of the community*

The guiding principles, also approved in March 2020, outline the process of deciding which facilities will be required in the hub. Each hub is unique, with some offering similar facilities to that of a traditional school (i.e. no daytime community provision). This has caused some confusion – but a key guiding principle is to "maximise the services on offer", which is there to ensure we complement rather than compete with other public and third sector organisations operating within the local area.

2.5.3 *(3) Introduce the 'leadership and operating model' for the hub*

The Leadership and Operating Model team work with the schools and the local community to make best use of the new hub both during the day, and outwith the school day. A good example of this is the new St Kevin's hub which will open in early 2026. There will be no "daytime provision" for the community within this hub as a community room is already available within the existing joint campus. "Daytime users" are signposted to these facilities for day bookings. The hub is primarily for the use of the school during the day, but provides additional, and alternative spaces for the community outwith the school day. The operating model for each hub will therefore be unique to the community it serves.

"Core Facts" – National assessment of our school assets

2.6 All councils must submit annual returns to Scottish Government on "core facts" which all have national guidance attached to the assessment and recording of information. The sections below look at these aspects from within the 'core facts' groupings that all councils must assess and report on:

- The *sufficiency* of the school estate – also known as '*utilisation*', this measures how 'full' or 'efficient' schools are through recording the number of spaces (for pupils) being used compared with the number of spaces available in any given school.
- The *condition* of the school estate – which focusses on the fabric of the building, "wind and watertight" etc.
- The *suitability* of the school estate – how conducive the building is to modern day learning and teaching, looking at environmental factors such as natural daylight, outdoor spaces, etc.

The core fact data assists officers target investment through the general capital plan, approved by committee.

New hubs and the '*core facts*'

2.7 Understandably, new build community hubs, with schools at the core, score well for *condition* – they are new buildings. Equally, they score well for *suitability*, as they have been designed to meet the needs of learners in the modern setting. Finally, roll projections are examined when looking at the number of pupil spaces required, and

therefore the number of classrooms should match the longer-term needs of the local population, thus matching the *sufficiency/utilisation* factor.

New hubs: meeting the needs of housing growth

2.8 Within the current hub programme, there are clear examples where hubs have been brought forward to ensure capacity can match demand, matching the *sufficiency/utilisation* factor. In other words, ensure there are enough spaces for the growing population, which is almost always because of housing growth in the area. Examples of these include:

2.8.1 **Chryston Community Hub** – which is more than double the capacity of the previous school, and which now also accommodates a new health clinic for this growing population. The previous Chryston Primary School required use of temporary modular units over years to accommodate the growing population. The new hub has adequate space for the increased population. The increased population is as a result of significant new housing in this area - however the school population is anticipated to decline over the coming decades. This has been factored into the design of the new hub, providing an opportunity to 'decouple' a wing of the school, whilst allowing this space to be repurposed for the needs of the local community at that time, once the school no longer requires the space.

2.8.2 **Gartcosh Community Hub** – Similar to the Chryston Community Hub, the housing growth in this area necessitated the replacement of the existing school – as the existing school site could not be adapted to adequately meet the needs of the growing population. This hub will also include a new community hall, to replace the existing older asset within this local community – providing modern and bespoke spaces for this growing population.

2.8.3 **St Kevin's Community Hub** – This hub was brought forward to ensure that housing, proposed through the last local development plan, could be accommodated whilst ensuring there were enough spaces for the growing school populations. The existing joint campus in the area provided an opportunity to adapt this to become a single, larger school for the Bargeddie Primary School population, with the St Kevin's school community moving to a new facility, thus providing adequate spaces at both schools. This approach will be replicated at Glenboig, to suit that growing population.

2.8.4 **Riverbank & St Stephen's Community Hubs** – These hubs were initially expected to be a joint campus but again, to facilitate the demands for new housing land within this local area, through the local development plan, the schools were separated into two community hubs, with the Riverbank Community Hub now in operation and the St Stephen's Community Hub in construction. These hubs, through separation, ensure there is adequate school provision for all the proposed new housing, along with the existing and established communities within this local area.

New hubs: Prioritisation of projects

2.9 As outlined in the SARIS reports presented to previous Policy and Strategy Committees, there are three reasons for bringing forward new hubs:

- Legacy – the hub project has been brought forward from a previous capital programme and there is an expectation within both the council and the wider community that the project should be completed.
- Capacity – the projects listed in section 2.8 above, all demonstrate this type of project, which are brought forward to meet anticipated demand within local

areas, generally to ensure that housing growth, through the local development plan, can be accommodated.

- Policy – projects which do not necessarily meet the capacity criteria but which would benefit the local community through 'place making' which is a key theme within The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the associated Transforming Places programme of work.

2.10 When demands are placed on budget allocations and projects must be prioritised, there is a clear recognition that capacity related projects must take priority due to the needs of local communities. There will continue to be projects like these brought forward, as local development plans are renewed and refreshed, and housing growth is promoted. It is the responsibility of the teams across the council to ensure that there is a need (through both planning and education terms), there is available finance to support the inclusion of housing growth within the plan, and importantly, there is a solution (land) in place or identified to accommodate the building of a new hub.

New Hubs: Projects at pre-delivery stage

2.11 Within the current capital programme, as discussed in section 1.8 above, there is funding provided to progress three projects at Glenboig, Abronhill, and Ravenscraig. Each of these projects is being brought forward for different reasons, and link in with the three types of projects, outlined in section 2.9 above, in different ways.

2.11.1 **Glenboig Community Hub** is a capacity related project. Like neighbouring communities in Gartcosh and Chryston, Glenboig is experiencing housing growth. The projects were brought forward in line with projected housebuilding in the area. Chryston houses were delivered first, and therefore the hub was delivered first. The housing land audit indicated that housing in Gartcosh would be brought forward faster than in Glenboig, and therefore the Gartcosh Community Hub was prioritised ahead of the Glenboig hub in the previous capital programme. This project is now at the stage where housebuilding is progressing and a new hub is required. Feasibility studies have been concluded for this project and a procurement route is being worked through.

2.11.2 **Abronhill Community Hub** is a policy related project. This project was identified in a previous capital plan, and statutory consultations and discussions with the local community around this plan took place. This is primarily a "place making" project, providing new school and wider hub provisions on the old Abronhill High School site, within the centre and 'the heart' of this local community. As it was included within a previous capital plan it is argued to be a legacy project – as the council and wider community expect it to be delivered. NHS Lanarkshire were previously involved in this project and the previous designs included a 'health zone' within the hub. This project was deferred from the previous capital programme due to increased costs within other priority projects. When revisited, NHS Lanarkshire were no longer in a position to commit to the project which affected aspects of the design, including site access and is therefore being reassessed. Procurement routes and timescales for this project are being reviewed at present.

2.11.3 **Ravenscraig Community Hub** is a policy related project. As outlined in the Capital Investment Programme report – in March 2023 to Policy and Strategy Committee, projects are subject to a review ahead of being brought forward. A review around this project is being concluded and will be brought to the Policy and Strategy Committee in a cycle one of 2026, detailing the next stages in relation to this project.

2.11.4 **Ravenscraig Community Hub**: Previous Update

At the Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2024, within the RAAC report presented, it was agreed “that a future cultural offering will be fully considered as part of the proposed Ravenscraig Hub”. It was also indicated within that report, that output from design studies would be brought to committee in Cycle two of 2025. This report was not presented at that time. It was deemed prudent to await the outcome of the review linked to the wider hub proposals, including the discussions with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) around the proposed demolition of the existing concert hall.

2.11.5 **Ravenscraig Community Hub:** Discussions with HES

Ahead of submitting an application for Listed Building Consent (LBC) to allow the building’s demolition, the council has been working with consultants, Pick Everard, to prepare feasibility and cost reports. These reports are intended to demonstrate the conservation deficit as part of the justification for demolition. In developing these, the consultants have assessed the entire structure, not just the RAAC elements, to determine the scope of works required to bring the building back into viable use.

At the same time, conservation consultants, MAST, have been preparing a conservation report to support the LBC application and provide a reasoned case for demolition. At the time of writing, this report was expected to be finalised ahead of a scheduled meeting with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) on 26 November.

Following that meeting, the intention is to submit the LBC application early in the new year. While the determination timescale will largely depend on HES, an update is anticipated ahead of P&S Committee in Quarter 1, 2026.

2.11.6 **Ravenscraig Community Hub:** Report to Policy and Strategy Committee

It is important that the assessment considers the options for both the existing school estate, as well as the desire for new learning and cultural offerings. It is important that HES are provided with the information to consider the LBC outlined above, ahead of any decision the council may make. It is therefore expected that committee will be provided with an update at P&S Committee in Quarter 1, 2026.

Existing School Estate – Condition *Core Fact*

2.12 “Condition” is one of the three core facts published at a national level annually. Each local authority uses a national “workbook” to assess each individual element of the school building, as set out in the Core Fact guidance, to establish the score for each ‘block’ and thereafter each ‘school’.

2.13 The condition assessment allows for an elemental breakdown of each block, identifying where improvements could be made through investment. At a national level, each school is provided with a ‘condition rating’ based on the score from the workbook assessment. Each school should be assessed every five years, with a ‘rolling programme’ of our school estate across the five years. Each year, all condition ratings are published at a national level.

2.14 Each school is given a rating, based on the assessment score, and each rating has a letter, and a descriptor to indicate the condition of each school. A rating of “A” is classed as “good”; a rating of “B” is classed as "satisfactory”; a rating of “C” is classed as "poor”; and a rating of “D” is classed as "bad”.

2.15 Scotland’s Learning Estate Strategy (LES), and the associated Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP), use the condition core fact as a key indicator for investment decisions within the school estate at a national level, and looks to target investment into schools in C (Poor) or D (Bad) condition. Indeed, within the LES, it

states that "*The Scottish Government's overarching school estate policy is that "no child should have to learn in a school that is in poor or bad condition*".

Existing school estate: Condition related capital investment

2.16 Within the Strategic Capital Investment Report, presented to Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2025, £30m was allocated to improve the condition of the existing school estate. This funding is being targeted towards schools which have an overall rating of C (Poor). In broad terms, officers have worked to identify up to ten schools which, through targeted investment, have their rating improved from the current C (Poor) rating through targeting specific elements such as roof, walls and windows, etc. Below is the list of schools being assessed for potential targeted investment.

Berryhill Primary School	Kilsyth Primary School
Chapelside Primary School	St Barbara's Primary School
Christ the King Primary School	St Mary's Primary School, Coatbridge
Condorrat Primary School	St Mary's Primary School, Cleland
Corpus Christi Primary School	St Thomas' Primary School

Table 2.16 – School identified for condition investment assessment

2.17 It is recognised that targeted investment will not yield the same level of results as that of a new build in any of these existing establishments, but demonstrates that targeted investment within the existing estate, provides enhancements to the fabric of these buildings. It is further recognised that the £30m is a finite sum, and there is a likelihood that not all 10 schools will receive investment to improve their condition rating. It is important to recognise that "up to" 10 schools will be invested in, and that because a school is identified for assessment does not mean it will receive investment.

2.18 It is evident that the existing funding will not upgrade all of the existing C (Poor) rated schools within our school asset portfolio. What it will do, is evidence the difference such investment can make, in the hope that it will lead to more capital funding to manage the estate proactively, through targeted, evidence led investment, which ensures our estate is to a standard the council looks to provide for all our young people.

Existing School Estate – Sufficiency / Utilisation *Core Fact*

2.19 The sufficiency/utilisation of the school estate looks to create an optimal balance between the number of spaces available in any given school, and the number of spaces needed. A 'middle ground' is optimal in this regard, as we do not want our schools to be 'too empty' nor 'too full'.

2.20 Where a school is projected to become 'too full' measures can be put in place to react to this change. In most cases, where the projections show that this will be temporary, temporary accommodation can be provided (such as modular classrooms) which provide additional capacity. Where the increase is expected to be long term, it is more appropriate to consider an extension to the school. Where the extension would not adequately meet the needs of the school, or where there is not enough space on the school grounds to create the required accommodation without significant negative impact on the outdoor space – a new build is considered.

2.21 Examples of capacity related project are outlined at section 2.8 above. These schools were examples where new builds were required. Within the general capital

programme, there is a “sustainable estate” theme which provides increased capacity through the other means – with examples in recent years being:

- Modular classrooms at Auchinloch PS, Taylor HS, Glencairn PS, Brannock HS
- Internal adaptations to create four classrooms at St Barbara’s PS
- Two class extension at All Saints PS

2.22 In terms of sufficiency/utilisation, the council has provided adequate levels of funding to closely match demand – where the requirement has been to increase capacity.

2.23 The SARIS Report, presented to Policy and Strategy in December 2023, outlined that the demographic shift in our population over the coming decades will require less spaces in schools – with the expectation that the “too empty” issue will become prevalent.

2.24 As outlined with section 1.7 above, and within the SARIS report, it was argued that whilst the strategy of ‘centring community assets around the school estate’ remained valid, the financial outlook made it more difficult to deliver this through “new assets” alone and made the argument for adapting the existing estate to deliver the ‘community hub’ elements for local communities.

2.25 The short to medium term strategy, as outlined within that report, made a case for future funding to be provided to convert existing spaces, within schools with excess capacity, to meet the different needs of the wider community. In the main, this will be informed through the Leadership and Operating Model, which also reports through the Policy and Strategy Committee, with updates provided to committee in December 2024, June 2025, and December 2025.

2.26 The latest capital funding release, in March 2025, provided £30m funding to look to improve the condition of the estate. This has provided an opportunity to assess ‘tests of change’ through project delivery. Future funding has not yet been made available for the same ‘test of change’ opportunity within the Sufficiency/Utilisation theme, testing the removal of spaces with “too empty” schools, and repurposing spaces for other uses.

2.27 Whilst having “too much space” is clearly not as pressing as having “too little space” in a school, it will slowly create a less efficient school estate year on year and potentially hinder further reduction in the overall council asset portfolio (by closing smaller older buildings and moving these services into ‘hubs’) – thus continuing the pressure on maintaining existing older assets with the limited revenue maintenance budget.

2.28 Therefore, whilst a less acute issue at present, officers will continue to make the case for investment in this area, to ‘test the change’ of adapting schools within our communities, which have excess capacity, to better meet the needs of the local community through a reduced, but more efficient and balanced asset portfolio.

Existing School Estate – Suitability *Core Fact*

2.29 Whilst the condition core fact looks at the fabric of the building, the suitability core fact looks at the functional aspects of the building and how conducive it is to modern learning and teaching. As outlined in sections above, a new build can provide bespoke spaces which clearly meet current needs of the learners – bright spaces, separate dining/sports provision, wide spacious activity areas, and interesting outdoor spaces.

2.30 Suitability is perhaps the hardest of the core facts to improve within the existing estate. This is not surprising – it is clear when a school does not have enough space for the

pupils (sufficiency/utilisation), or when a roof is leaking and in need of replacement. With limited funding, it is also hard to justify building an extension onto a school, simply to create a dining room which is separate from the sports hall.

2.31 That said, there has been targeted investment within this area over the last few capital programmes. One specific area of targeted investment has been through the conversion of red ash/blaes pitches within the school estate, as outlined below.

2.32 Red blaes pitches, a staple part of the PE diet in the 1970s and 80s have long since become less than ideal for use as outdoor PE spaces. The school estate in this regard has three tiers of outdoor sports provision: top-tier (synthetic pitch provision), mid-tier (grass / forest school provision), bottom-tier (red blaes pitches). Those with red blaes pitches have had less available outdoor spaces to use as a result.

2.33 Like the cost of new build schools, the cost of synthetic pitch provision has increased dramatically over the last few years – with a full-size synthetic pitch costing in the region of £1m to deliver. Additionally, there is a significant level of maintenance (and associated cost) to keep these facilities at an adequate level, and the surface should be replaced every 10 years or so. It is accepted that these facilities are well used by the local community and are in demand, but are centred on one sport, and do not always generate income to match expenditure.

2.34 Therefore, the council has adopted an alternative strategy in relation to the upgrade of the red blaes pitches in school grounds. The council has chosen to create Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) in these spaces. This is for two reasons:

- MUGAs offer access to a larger number of sports within a much smaller footprint
- These areas are much more hard wearing, more cost efficient to deliver (around £200k per project at a primary school site), and require less maintenance.

Existing School Estate: Suitability *Core Fact*
'Free to use' multi-sports provision for the school and wider community

2.35 The first MUGA created within this programme was at St Maurice's High School in Cumbernauld. This project created a 200m running track, a full "NBA" sized basketball court and a multi ball sports area, along with a 9-a-side grass football pitch. This facility was commended by both Scottish and British Athletics, with a visit from both organisations, who believed it to be the first of its kind in the UK. This facility is open to the public outwith the school day, free of charge.

2.36 Other MUGAs that have subsequently been brought forward have adopted a similar approach. The project team work with the school, active schools co-ordinators, and the local stakeholders to understand the preferred sports in the area and the MUGA is designed to accommodate these sports. All of the MUGAs provided to date provide community access outwith the school day using a double gate system: School gate is unlocked and opened during the school day – with the community gate locked and inaccessible. Outwith the school day the reverse is true – school gate locked and inaccessible with the community gate opened for use by the wider community.

2.37 The red blaes pitches are predominantly within the north area of North Lanarkshire, presumably due to when the schools were constructed, and the suitability of these surfaces at that time. There were 19 schools identified as having red blaes pitches which have been prioritised based on: availability of community access, and levels of deprivation.

2.38 To date, nine schools have had or are in the process of having these spaces upgraded: St Maurice's HS, Woodlands PS, Kilsyth PS, Ravenswood PS, St Aidan's PS, St Mary's (Cumbernauld) PS, St Barbara's PS, and St Helen's PS have all been completed. Westfield PS is under construction, and discussions have started with Eastfield PS around bringing forward a project at this establishment.

2.39 Whilst this is good progress, there has not been sufficient funding provided to date, which would enable upgrades at all 19 schools. Further funding, to bring all schools up to a minimum of "mid-tier" would be a significant milestone for the council.

2.40 It is accepted that there are limitations to how the suitability of schools can be upgraded and enhanced. However, as demonstrated through the MUGA programme to date, the enhancement and subsequent improved suitability of outdoor sports facilities - for both the school and the wider community, can be achieved through targeted investment when funding is made available.

Next steps

2.41 It is clear there has been much progress to date, linked into the SARIS strategy, mainly around the school estate and replacing schools with schools, and latterly through replacing schools with community hubs. The focus has had to change, with a need to consolidate assets into a better, more efficient community offering. The data clearly shows that the ages and stages of our population has and will continue to shift, and our strategy must be flexible enough to accommodate any such shift.

2.42 In addition to new build projects, the council must continue to look to adapt the existing school estate where existing excess capacity is available, prioritising areas of deprivation first, to deliver an enhanced community offering. These "tests of change" will help define and refine what solutions are required in the medium to long term:

- Where it is appropriate to create new bespoke hubs (i.e. prioritise capacity related demand projects).
- Where it is appropriate to transform existing spaces to provide a better balance of facilities and services within buildings which are subsequently in better condition.
- Where it is appropriate to rationalise and 'fold in' the offerings, providing leisure, cultural, and outreach 'hub' offerings around the existing school estate.

2.43 As outlined throughout this report, the strategy remains strong – building the solutions around the school estate. However, the pace at which the Council can reduce, rationalise and transform the assets for our communities will be directly in proportion to the level of capital funding available.

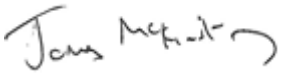
2.44 As outlined in the SARIS Update report in September 2024, reliance on external capital funding is now a significant risk and the more the Council can generate its own capital growth to insulate itself against the uncertainty of external funding will significantly reduce this risk and would allow the council to better plan and accelerate the transition of our wider estate.

3. Measures of success

3.1 Continued investment and improvements in the school estate.

4. Supporting documentation

No supporting documents.



James McKinstry
Chief Officer - Assets and Procurement

5. Impacts

5.1	**Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty** Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes ☐ No ☐
5.2	**Financial impact** Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes ☒ No ☐ If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes ☒ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? All projects are delivered within the overall scope of the councils capital programme, whilst we also forward plan for potential future projects and associated funding.
5.3	**HR policy impact** Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4	**Legal impact** Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5	**Data protection impact** Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes ☐ No ☐
5.6	**Technology / Digital impact**

Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Improvement in the core fact data for our assets can contribute to improving carbon emissions.

5.8 Communications impact

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes	☐	No	☐	