

Research Note on Conservative plans for ‘New Academies’

- from Jim Knight MP, Minister for Schools and Learners

- **Proposals would take £4.5bn from secondary school rebuilding programme**
- **Local authorities in later waves of Building Schools for the Future would be hit hardest**

The Conservatives are proposing to create 220,000 additional secondary school places in ‘New Academies’. This resurrects their 2005 Manifesto proposal to deliberately encourage additional new schools to be built with no regard to replacing weak or underperforming schools – creating excess places at huge extra cost, while neglecting pupils in failing or underperforming schools.

The capital cost of their proposal is £4.55bn according to their own policy document ‘Raising the bar and closing the gap’¹. They have said this is to be funded from the current £45bn ‘Building Schools for the Future’ (BSF) programme to rebuild or refurbish all secondary schools in England.

BSF is planned in a series of waves of local authorities, the first of which entered the programme in 2003, with funding available from 2004-05. The last wave is due to begin in 2017, with funding available in 2019-20.

The Conservatives propose to pay for their new 220,000 places by diverting 15 per cent of the total funds allocated to BSF over a period of over nine years from 2008-09. During this time two thirds of all secondary schools are currently scheduled for rebuilding or refurbishment at a cost of £30.33bn. Any of the secondary school rebuilding projects in this period could be put in jeopardy by Conservative plans to divert these funds.

- **More than one in seven secondary school rebuilding and refurbishment projects from 2008-09 would not go ahead under the Conservative proposals.**
- **The proposal puts at risk two thirds of all secondary school rebuilding and refurbishment projects across England until they confirm where the axe will fall.**

¹ Downloadable at:

<http://www.conservatives.com/getfile.cfm?file=Newopportunityproof&ref=GENERALFILE/3585&type=pdf>

The Conservatives have said they will honour existing commitments within BSF when they start their 'New Academies' programme. The impact would thus be concentrated on at least the 76 local authorities which are in BSF waves 7 onwards and are not yet engaged with BSF.²

- **The 76 affected local authorities would lose an average of £60m each, with larger authorities losing more.**
- **This is equivalent to three complete secondary school rebuilds that would not go ahead in each local area under the Conservative proposals.³**
- **These local authorities contain a total of over 1,700 maintained secondary schools, with 1.7 million pupils on roll.⁴**

The individual local authorities in BSF waves 7 onwards, plus their current numbers of maintained secondary schools and pupils on roll, are detailed in the ***table overleaf***. The average local authority in BSF waves 7 onwards has 23 secondary schools and just over 22,000 pupils.⁵

It is not yet possible to know the timing or scale of the impact on individual local authorities at this stage, because firm BSF allocations have not yet been made beyond the current CSR period. However, the impact is likely to be related to the size of the secondary school pupil population and could go wider than these 76 authorities - authorities that have already received BSF investment but are due to receive additional funds later in the programme could also be affected.

² However, other authorities which are in both earlier and later waves of BSF could also be affected.

³ Based on the Conservatives' own assumptions of £20,000 capital spend per pupil and 1000 pupils in each school.

⁴ Includes community schools, voluntary controlled schools, foundation schools and voluntary aided schools; excludes academies and city technology colleges

⁵ The averages are 22.7 and 22,500 respectively.

Local Authority	Maintained secondary schools⁶	Maintained pupils on roll⁷
Barnet	19	19,500
Bath & NE Somerset	13	12,500
Bexley	16	18,500
Bolton	17	19,500
Bracknell Forest	6	6,000
Brent	13	16,500
Brighton and Hove	9	12,000
Bromley	17	22,000
Buckinghamshire	34	35,000
Bury	14	12,000
Calderdale	15	15,500
Cheshire	42	45,500
Cornwall	31	33,000
Croydon	20	18,000
Cumbria	42	35,500
Darlington	6	5,500
Devon	37	43,500
Dorset	34	30,500
Dudley	22	21,000
East Riding of Yorkshire	18	23,000
East Sussex	27	28,500
Enfield	17	22000
Gloucestershire	42	39,500
Hampshire	71	72,500
Harrow	10	9,000
Havering	18	16,500
Herefordshire	14	10,500
Hounslow	14	16,500
Isle of Wight	21	12,000
Kingston upon Thames	10	9,500

⁶ Includes community schools, voluntary controlled schools, foundation schools and voluntary aided schools; excludes academies and city technology colleges

⁷ To nearest 500; includes community schools, voluntary controlled schools, foundation schools and voluntary aided schools; excludes academies and city technology colleges

Leicestershire	54	47,000
Lincolnshire	63	48,500
Medway	19	20,500
Merton	6	7,000
Milton Keynes	12	15,000
Norfolk	52	47,000
North Somerset	10	13,000
North Tyneside	15	13,500
North Yorkshire	47	42,000
Northamptonshire	39	45,500
Northumberland	58	30,000
Oxfordshire	33	37,000
Peterborough	10	9,000
Plymouth	17	18,500
Reading	6	5,500
Redbridge	17	20,500
Richmond upon Thames	8	7,000
Rotherham	16	20,500
Rutland	3	2,500
Sefton	21	20,000
Shropshire	22	18,000
Slough	11	9,000
South Gloucestershire	15	17,000
Southampton	14	11,500
Southend-on-Sea	12	11,000
Staffordshire	68	60,000
Stockport	13	16,000
Surrey	53	59,500
Sutton	14	16,000
Swindon	10	11,000
Thurrock	9	8,000
Torbay	8	9,000
Trafford	18	16,500
Wakefield	18	22,500
Walsall	18	21,000
Warrington	12	14,000
Warwickshire	36	34,000

West Berkshire	10	12,000
West Sussex	40	46,000
Wigan	20	20,500
Wiltshire	29	29,500
Windsor and Maidenhead	13	10,000
Wirral	22	24,000
Wokingham	9	11,000
Worcestershire	46	33,000
York	10	9,000