

**NORTHAMPTON ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESAN  
TRUSTEE**

**SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS**

OFFICE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, CATECHESIS AND  
SCHOOLS

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\* This appears as a separate document on the website.

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# Chapter 1

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

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### 1. THE BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Diocesan Trustee has a responsibility for all buildings in its ownership. It must therefore ensure that it is aware and approves of all works carried out on those buildings and that all regulations are complied with. It does this by using a number of firms of appointed professionals with expertise in these matters.
- 1.2 The Diocese bankrolls school building projects i.e. it makes all payments and ensures that all grant claims are made. It must therefore be certain that all projects are properly approved by the DfE before any payments are made or contracted for. It also needs to be clear from the outset how projects will be funded, how the 10% governors' liability will be met and what source of funding has been identified for any non-grant aided amounts.

As regards additional costs, regulations state that they must all be approved before the work is commenced. We do not want to be in a situation where work over and above the approval has been carried out and there is no indication as to who is going to pay for it. Professionals and schools must therefore *not* agree to additional costs from contractors until approval is sought and received from both the Diocese (on a **new**, revised project request form) *and* the DfE where appropriate.

In the case of major projects it is important that we receive regular reports from the professionals on the progress of the scheme and that potential overspends are identified and addressed as early as possible.

- 1.3 A system is in place whereby:
- Schools are asked to submit projects for approval, and need to indicate where requested projects appear on their Asset Management Plans in terms of conditions, suitability or sufficiency.
  - Approval meetings are held on a regular basis (at least quarterly). This enables the Diocese to plan spending on projects over the
- 1.4 Emergencies are dealt with as and when they arise. Please note that DfE emergency cover often comes at least in part from existing funding streams such as Devolved Formula Capital or LCVAP.

## 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 DIOCESAN TRUSTEE

As the legal owner of the premises the Trustee has a duty under Charity Law to ensure premises are properly maintained. The Trustee is the name employer for ALL contracts for school building projects.

#### a) **NORES**

- **First contact point** for schools planning or needing assistance with projects
- Assesses each project in terms of educational value
- Key role in managing the overall delivery of capital spend to all schools in the diocese
- Liaises with LAs regarding priorities for expenditure of LCVAP funding and bidding for major projects
- Liaises with Finance Office over availability of funds
- Responsible for initial approval
- Oversees consultants' performance in conjunction with Finance Office

#### b) **Finance Office**

- Manages diocesan cash flow
- Liaises with DfE, LAs and professionals over grant spent and recovery
- Liaises with schools over source of non grant-aided monies and 10% governors' contribution
- Liaises with NORES over availability of funds and progress of projects
- Pays all certificates and invoices for building projects
- Oversees consultants performance in conjunction with NORES
- Assists schools with DfE year-end returns if needed.

### 2.2 GOVERNORS

- Liable for capital work, i.e. existing buildings, perimeter walls and fences, playgrounds, furniture, fixture and fittings including ICT infrastructure and equipment, and other capital items
- Responsible for planning and implementing repairs and maintenance to the school premises.
- Legal responsibility to ensure that ALL work, whether internal and external, complies with all current building and fire regulations and that the professionals working on their site are covered by appropriate indemnity insurance.
- Duty to ensure diocesan approval is obtained before any capital work is undertaken.

- Governors are liable for capital expenditure relating to school premises (other than playing fields and buildings used in connection with playing fields) although most of this expenditure attracts DCSF grant up to 90%

### **2.3 DCSF**

- Provides funding for projects.
- Responsible for approving of all projects other than solely DFC and non grant-aided projects BEFORE work commences.
- Requires year-end returns for DFC usage (see copy in Appendix to this chapter). A number of schools each year are selected to provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure. The Finance Office will provide assistance.

### **2.4 LOCAL AUTHORITY**

- Responsible for playing fields and building on those fields
- Responsible for distributing LCVAP allocations and targeting available funds to tackle areas of need identified by Asset Management Plans
- Co-ordinates major capital bids.

### **2.5 ARCHITECT/LEADPROFESSIONAL**

- Designs and co-ordinates major schemes interpreting DCSF and other guidelines and regulations
- Normally acts as project manager and arranges the appointment of other professionals.

### **2.6 EDUCATION BUILDING CONSULTANT/CLIENT REPRESENTATIVE**

- Liaises closely with Diocese.
- Agrees fee structure for consultants
- Agrees consultants' terms of appointments
- Manages consultants
- Reviews performance of existing consultants
- Links as appropriate between Diocese and DfE/LA in preparing bids for funding
- Provides information to complete forms at various stages of grant recovery
- Co-ordinates grant recovery and maximises funding

## 2.7 SURVEYORS

- **Quantity surveyors** provide cost advice and preparation of Bills of Quantities/contracts on larger schemes
- **Building surveyors** provide advice and project management for smaller projects.

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# Chapter 2

## THE PROCESS

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### 1. PLANNING A BUILDING PROJECT OVER £ 2,000 INCL. FEES & VAT

- 1.1 Identify a potential project in line with your asset management plan or other specific need.
- 1.2 Discuss this project with the relevant professional(s) and obtain estimate. The school's asbestos log should be consulted at this stage and appropriate undertakings provided in writing.
- 1.3 At this stage discuss issues with NORES:
- *How will the project be funded?*
  - *What source(s) of grant should be sought?*  
(if applicable, confirm availability of formula capital Diocesan Finance Office)
  - *Who will pay any unfunded amounts?*
  - *Who will pay the 10% governors' liability?*  
NB: it is the responsibility of Governors to identify the source of their 10% contribution before asking for diocesan approval for a scheme.
  - *Will professionals be required, and to what extent?*  
NB: professionals must be consulted for any project requiring consent, planning permission etc, and for all projects with a build cost in excess of £ 10,000

### 2. SEEKING DIOCESAN APPROVAL

The school now needs to complete the Diocesan **School Project Request Form** (see Appendix or separate document on the NORES website) and send it to NORES for approval as a useful educational project. NORES then sends the form to the Finance Office for assessment of financial issues/viability and endorsement if appropriate before formal approval by the Trustees. The form is then returned to the school.

NB: In *all* cases the form must be signed by the Chair of Governors.

### **3. PREPARING FOR THE PROJECT**

- 3.1 School governors may nominate their own professional for works up to £ 50,000 gross. However, proof of the professional's qualification and professional indemnity insurance must be sent in writing to the Finance Office prior to any approval being granted.
- 3.2 All necessary approvals must be obtained by the lead professional before work commences. DfE approval is necessary for all projects except those funded solely from DFC and non grant-aided schemes. Other approvals to be sought include Building Regulations approval, planning permission, and pre-tender Health & Safety enquiry documents.
- 3.3 At all stages Health and Safety issues are addressed by the lead professional and the planning supervisor where appointed.
- 3.4 A minimum of three quotations should be obtained.
- 3.5 Inform the Diocese of tenders. All contracts MUST be with the Diocese.
- 3.6 When all necessary approvals have been received the Finance Office will check tenders match with approvals, update cash flow forecasts and give approval to commence work.
- 3.7 Contractor confirms PI Insurance/tax certificates/public liability insurance/recent accounts and references. Copies are kept by the school.
- 3.8 When a start date has been agreed the project is notified to diocesan insurers with contract work insurance premium if applicable. (This is required for all projects over £ 10,000 gross).
- 3.9 For all schemes with a build cost value in excess of £ 10,000 the DfE requires at final cost stage that the scheme should be signed off by a professional consultant.

#### **4. IMPLEMENTING THE SCHEME**

- 5.1 Works commence.
- 5.2 Interim certificates/invoices are received and paid by the Diocese and interim claims are made by the Diocesan Finance Office or the professional.
- 5.3 Works are completed and certificated as such.
- 5.4 All defects are remedied and any retention released.
- 5.5 Guarantees are received and final claims are made.
- 5.6 The Health and Safety file is completed and sent to the school.
- 5.7 When DfE approval for future maintenance is received all parties are notified of completion.
- 5.8 The Diocese welcomes written feedback relating to all aspects of building projects. This should be sent to NORES with evidence if relevant, with a copy to the Finance Office.