

**BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE**

---

**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The Purpose of the report is to update Members on progress with Darlington's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme.

**Summary**

2. The Council's bid to be brought forward in the BSF Programme to Wave 7 has been successful. Detailed work is now commencing with Partnerships for Schools, the body responsible for the allocation of all capital funding to schools, and with stakeholders in Darlington on the rebuilding or remodelling of Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield schools and the creation of a managed service for ICT, which other schools can share.

**Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that Members note the report for information

**Murray Rose,**  
**Director of Children's Services**

**Background Papers**

George McQueen: Extension 2847

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no issues arising directly from this report
Health and Well Being	New buildings will take account of up to date technologies and the designs will include work on ventilation, lighting and colour schemes conducive to a healthy working environment for pupils and staff.
Sustainability	New or refurbished buildings will make use of sustainable technologies and their impact for the carbon footprint generated by the Council will be taken into account.
Diversity	The opportunity to develop Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield schools means that all of the Authority's seven secondary schools will have had significant capital investment within the last five years and each can become a school of choice for all sections of the community in Darlington.
Wards Affected	The capital investment will have an impact on all wards in the Borough, but principally to those wards in which Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield Secondary Schools are located.
Groups Affected	Pupils in the 11-16 age range
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not propose changes to the budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The updating or replacement of secondary school buildings is consistent with the Prosperous Darlington theme: Attracting high quality, well-paid jobs to the borough, and the Aspiring Darlington theme: Providing high quality facilities that support modern approaches to education in schools and for lifelong learning.
Efficiency	The BSF programme gives impetus to pupil place planning to ensure a sufficiency rather than an oversupply of school places in the secondary sector. The programme will necessitate a review of support service delivery for facilities management. The programme also supports a re-examination of the use of buildings and land for community use. Finally, the programme provides the opportunity to use building techniques that support the 'green' agenda.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

#### Entry to Wave 7

4. Darlington was due to join the national Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme in 2013. Through liaison and discussion with officers from the DCSF and Partnerships for Schools, and with cross party support from politicians, the Council received agreement to submitting a Readiness to Deliver Statement, seeking early admission to the programme in 2010.
5. The reason for seeking early inclusion in the BSF programme was so that students attending Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield schools could enjoy the benefits of capital investment in the way that four other Darlington secondary schools have done. Improved and re-designed buildings will help the schools develop the personalised learning activities and operate the teaching styles demanded by the curriculum in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The BSF programme requires Authorities to create a Managed Service for ICT. This service will provide curriculum support as well as technical support to schools and will assist in the regular upgrading and refreshment of equipment. Finally, the BSF programme will allow the Authority to improve facilities for children registered at 'The Bridge' pupil referral unit.
6. The Council received confirmation on 30 November 2009 that Darlington had been judged ready to deliver. The Council has therefore been included in Wave 7 of the National BSF programme.

#### Factors Included in the Bid

7. Darlington's submission requested resources to allow the following:
  - (1) Replacement or refurbishment of Branksome School (with possible co-location of PRU facilities on site)
  - (2) Replacement or Refurbishment of Hurworth School (with possible co-location of a special unit to meet the needs of pupils on the Autistic Spectrum on site)
  - (3) Replacement or refurbishment of Longfield School
  - (4) ICT facilities, through the creation of a Managed Service, for all maintained secondary schools in Darlington.

Members should note that the Bidding guide lines make it clear that brand new facilities, like the Academy, cannot be included in a further request for funds.

8. When Authorities are invited to join the BSF Programme, the amount of capital resource allocated to the Authority is calculated on a formula basis. The formula is based on pupil numbers, ICT factors and school estate planning factors. Partnerships for Schools, has made it clear that the formula assumes that improvements will be made in accordance with a ratio. Their assumption is for 50% new build; 35% refurbishment and 15% redecoration. The bid presented to Partnerships for Schools totalled £57.526M. This is a fair indication of the allocation to the Council but the final figure will not be known until the acceptance of the Outline Business case for the programme.
9. The Council is expected to make a contribution to the programme in the order of 3% of the capital expenditure value. This is a feature to be factored into the Council's medium term financial plan over the financial years from 2010-2012.

10. Many Local Authorities have used BSF to make significant changes to their school estate. There is no need for any change in Darlington. Previous consultation with stakeholders and the public has confirmed the need to maintain seven secondary schools in the Borough. The schools are sited in locations which meet public demand. The bid presented to DCSF emphasized that the schools needing investment were all on sites owned by the Council and that the sites were big enough to accommodate redesign and building activities, without the need to decant pupils to another setting. The Local Authority has also provided detailed school place planning information, providing evidence to support this view.
11. The Council's bid was based on using a Framework Partnership model for procurement of services and the associated supply chain. The framework partnership model has served the Council well, as evidenced by the successful completion of St. Aidan's CE Academy. The formation of a Local Education Partnership (LEP) was not supported, as Darlington will need only one programme wave to complete the investment in its schools. Additionally, LEPs are rarely used where the total capital investment is less than £150M.

### **Progress to Date**

12. A BSF team has been formed within the Council, from officers working across the Children's Services and Community Services directorates. The BSF Team will be responsible for stakeholder consultation and project management of the programme. Internal workstream leads have been identified to complete tasks on Educational Transformation, ICT and Personalization, Extended Services, Technical and Design matters, Culture & Sport and legal, financial and procurement issues.
13. Headteachers, senior school leaders, governors and local authority officers have been involved in the National College of School Leadership's BSF Leadership programme. The NCSL have facilitated workshops over three days, raising awareness of how building design can contribute to improved teaching and learning. Workshops for a further two days are planned in March 2010, where delegates will be able to take advantage of networking with colleagues from other Authorities who are also involved in BSF developments. NCSL's workshops have also highlighted the opportunities BSF developments offer for the Extended Services agenda, with senior school leaders asked to consider how community use of premises and the co-location of services can add to life experiences for pupils, while at the same time enhancing the role of schools as community hubs.
14. Visits have been arranged for school stakeholders and local authority officers to recently completed BSF schools. A visit was made to Monkseaton High School in North Tyneside and a further visit will be made in February to a re-furbished BSF school in Sheffield. These fact-finding visits are having a strong influence on the development of design concepts for senior school leaders, before a brief is drawn up for architects and technical advisers.
15. A feasibility study has been commissioned on all three school sites, to inform thinking on the possibilities for rebuilding or remodelling. The information from the studies, coupled with identification of other Capital resources secured by the school themselves will influence the pattern of new build and refurbishment adopted by the Council in the Outline Business Case (OBC).
16. Meetings have been arranged for officers with key representatives from Partnerships for Schools in order to prepare for a Remit Meeting, which must take place with DCSF before a date for the presentation of the OBC is agreed. A pre-remit meeting is scheduled for 15 January 2010.

17. In a meeting of the 14-19 Partnership there was some interest expressed by the Colleges in joining in with ICT Managed Service arrangements. Given Darlington's relatively small size, there could be advantages in commissioning a service to meet the needs of all Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and post 16 providers in the Borough. This will be the subject of active and wide-ranging discussion during the Spring term.
18. It is anticipated that preparation and planning to reach Outline Business case will be concluded by January 2011 with detailed design work taking place thereafter. New school buildings should be ready for use from late in 2012, or early 2013.