
SECONDARY SCHOOLS STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Chris McEwan,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval for the draft Strategy for Change report which each local authority must produce and have approved by Partnerships for Schools before there can be any release of Building Schools for the Future money.

Summary

2. Through the Building Schools for the Future programme, Darlington local authority is seeking to bring forward its capital allocation to rebuild, remodel and refurbish the three secondary schools which have not yet benefited from significant capital investment. The formula funding is programmed to be given to Darlington from 2013 but the local authority has submitted an expression of interest for immediate or early release of the funding.
3. In order to secure the funding the local authority must set out a Strategy for Change which describes how it would use the funding to transform teaching, learning, the place of schools in their communities and the delivery of locality based services. The Strategy for Change submitted to Cabinet here is necessarily an iterative document and the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) may request that changes be made up to the release of funding. The Strategy for Change will be considered by Partnerships for Schools (PFS), the agency responsible for managing DCSF school capital schemes.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
 - (a) Approve the draft Strategy for Change for submission to Partnerships for Schools (PFS);
 - (b) Approve the delegation to the Director of Children's Services (in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Children's Services and Resources) the power to agree amendments to the Strategy with PFS; and

- (c) Require further reports on significant changes to this Strategy and on the final business case to be brought to a future meeting for Cabinet approval.

Reasons

- 5. To secure early release of significant capital funding to support improvements to the Secondary School sector.

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

Background Papers

Partnerships for Schools - Building Schools for the Future Readiness to Deliver Guidance for Local Authorities in BSF Waves 7 and beyond.

Murray Rose: Extension 2099

S17 Crime and Disorder	Delivery of transformational teaching and learning would be expected to reduce the number of young people who become disengaged from education and training.
Health and Well Being	The Building Schools for the Future programme is designed to promote emotional health and well being through increased pupil involvement and increased personalisation
Sustainability	All work undertaken will be designed and constructed with the highest regard to sustainability and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources.
Diversity	The Building Schools for the Future programme aims to provide 7 equally high performing schools in state of the art facilities, enabling greater choice for parents.
Wards Affected	All Wards will be affected by the transformational proposals being put forward to improve education and learning.
Groups Affected	The majority of people living and working in Darlington will be positively affected by the proposed improvements. These include pupils, parents, Governors, School Staff, Members, and the wider Community.
Budget and Policy Framework	The budget for the proposed projects will be developed within the financial framework provided by the Building Schools for the Future programme. This report does not recommend a change to the Council policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision due to the amount of funding Members are requested to release, and also because it affects all schools in the Borough.
Urgent Decision	For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	If the Council is successful in entering the Building Schools for the Future programme it will provide the opportunity to complete all the required building work to the Secondary School estate across the Borough and to offer improved facilities to students and the wider community.
Efficiency	The Strategy for Change is designed to create sustainable school environments with whole life costs built into all planning and preparation work.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

6. The Strategy for Change (attached at **Appendix A**) includes all of the necessary information required by PfS should we be successful in our Expression of Interest in bringing forward funding from Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Wave 13 to the present.
7. The Strategy for Change includes information previously prioritised by Cabinet through the Sustainable Community Strategy, such as a commitment to try to secure enough funding to replace Hurworth, Branksome and Longfield or to carry out significant new build combined with remodelling; in order to deliver high quality learning environments.
8. If we are successful in gaining BSF funding then we would aim to complete as many of the works as possible from those identified below. If the available funding pot does not provide for all desired works, then a process of prioritisation will be undertaken.
 - (a) 3 new schools at Hurworth, Longfield and Branksome. If we get less money than desired there will be significant new build and remodelling at each.
 - (b) A managed ICT contract for all secondary schools.
 - (c) Each secondary school to have increased community facilities and the delivery of integrated, preventative services.
 - (d) Consult on reducing Branksome's capacity to 750 (from current 900) but make no other changes to school sizes.
 - (e) Expand the influence of Hurworth by developing Maths and ICT facilities there for use by all schools and by developing a training base.
 - (f) Expand the influence of Carmel by expanding engineering facilities for use by all schools through Diploma delivery.
 - (g) Move the Key Stage 4 Engagement Centre from McMullen House to a new build on a school site. Consultation for this would be required.
 - (h) Work in partnership with private, voluntary and community sector organisations to identify innovative ways to deliver some diplomas for the 14-19 age group.
 - (i) The Strategy for Change proposes no change in school governance but includes reference to all of the schools in the Borough working collaboratively to deliver the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan. The family of schools already includes those with governance arrangements other than being community schools and this diversity of arrangements is welcomed. Schools have agreed an approach identified as 'schools@onedarlington' through which to deliver shared priorities and on this basis the governance of schools is less important than the commitment to the family of schools and the collaborative approach.

- (j) Community facilities and a base for locally accessible support services and specialist construction facilities at Branksome.
 - (k) Sports Hall and associated facilities at Longfield – all with community use.
9. Some of the works identified above would also rely on other capital funding allocations which have been bid for but for which the results are not yet known. All capital grants received for the secondary schools would be dealt with as a single pot in order to demonstrate the coherence of planning required by PfS.
 10. The report needs to demonstrate the link between aspirations of the Sustainable Community Strategy, regeneration issues, the development of integrated children's services and community cohesion, as well as how teaching and learning will be improved. The BSF programme is not just about buildings, although it is a major capital investment. It is about transforming teaching, learning, aspiration, opportunity and progression and should therefore link to broader strategic and corporate priorities.
 11. A requirement of BSF is that there is a locally established project board which manages the whole project. The role, remit and membership of this Board is set out in Section 3.5 of the Strategy for Change.

Outcome of Consultation

12. Consultation has been carried out with all secondary school Headteachers and with all partners on the 14-19 Trust, including post 16 providers, the Learning and Skills Council and training providers. In addition, a well attended conference for partners and stakeholders was held in July 2008 which generated much of the content of the report.
13. A further stakeholder event was held in March 2009 and this focussed on the contributions to the programme which could be made by a very broad set of partners.
14. Secondary schools have made significant contributions to the Strategy for Change prior to this draft being presented to Cabinet and will continue to work with the Strategy once approved.
15. In order to release the capital funding, Partnerships for Schools will need to ensure that key strategic partners are in agreement with the approaches proposed locally. Key strategic partners include Government Office, the Office of the Schools Commissioner and both Dioceses. They have each had opportunities to comment on the draft prior to it being presented to Cabinet and any comments made have been incorporated into the draft.