

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

31 March 2008

### Building Schools for the Future



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## Report of the BSF Project Manager, Yvonne Edwards

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### Purpose of Report

1. To update Members about current progress and future phases of the Building Schools for the Future programmes in County Durham.

### ITCD Progress

2. The bidders are in detailed dialogue with the BSF team, DCC and the sample schools, and progressing towards Initial Bid submissions on 25/04/08 which is three weeks later than originally planned. It is anticipated that the original timescales set out in the Invitation to Continue Dialogue (ITCD) will be maintained with Financial Close being June 2009. This period has been extremely intensive necessitating holding over 200 meetings with the three consortia on different aspects of the BSF Programme, including educational transformation, financial, technical, legal, and ICT as well as fortnightly meetings with the school staff to discuss design requirements. Children and Young People's Service staff are directly involved in these meetings with a particular focus on delivering educational transformation and what that means for County Durham. The bidders are also being challenged to add value to BSF through the provision of local jobs, training for local people and using local suppliers. They are also being challenged to consider how to make community access to school facilities affordable in the local areas.
3. Of the three bidders we agreed to continue dialogue with, one bidder has dropped out. This is due to the parent company of a consortium member deciding to withdraw from the BSF market leaving a gap in capabilities for the remaining members. Of the two remaining, Inspired Spaces are making good progress but NYOP have fallen behind in a number of key areas. We have expressed our concerns to NYOP and efforts are continuing to improve dialogue and progress.
4. After submission of Initial Bids, the BSF Team, schools and others within the County Council will evaluate the bids and then enter a further period of dialogue to develop the proposals in more detail prior to selecting a preferred bidder in November 2009. At this point, public consultations will be held to display design proposals. This will be in advance of statutory consultations for planning purposes. As a part of the initial evaluation, each school has a working group involving governors, staff, and students who will also evaluate the designs against a set of already agreed indicators.

### **Sample Schools**

4. Outline designs for the three sample schools were presented by the bidders at the Interim Design Review held on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> February. Comments and feedback were provided by the review panel and audience to help the bidders develop and improve their proposals.

### **Non-Sample Schools**

5. Detailed consultation with the non-sample schools will start in September 2008. Initial survey work has been done to determine the feasibility of the Malvern Crescent site for Seaham school and negotiations with ONE North East and Easington District Council are ongoing to determine the cost of acquiring the site.

### **Durham Johnston**

6. The project remains on programme for completion in April 09. The main priority at the moment is to ensure that the main BSF ICT requirements and specification "fit" with the school infrastructure & construction.

### **Wave 6**

7. The timetable for the application for funding from the next BSF wave has been established. This commences in May with a Remit meeting and is targeted to conclude with Outline Business Case approval by DCSF and Treasury in June 09 to coincide with financial close and formation of the LEP. The exact scope of Wave 6 is still being finalised and will be confirmed next month. The Wave 6 consultation is the subject of a separate report which will be presented to Cabinet on 25 March 2008.

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