

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

**EXECUTIVE MEETING
8th DECEMBER 2003**

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS & LIBRARIES

NAME OF WARD(S)
ALL

REPORT TITLE: INVESTING TO RAISE STANDARDS – BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs the Executive of the Government's plans to introduce Building Schools for the Future (BSF). Building Schools for the Future is a major initiative aimed at transforming the infrastructure of schools, mainly in the secondary sector, to contribute to raising standards in education. The BSF initiative will allocate resources that can be used with effect from 2005/06 by Authorities that meet the criteria.
- 1.2 The report seeks Members' approval for officers to develop Brent Council's proposals as set out herein. It also seeks approval for the recommendations set out in Paragraph 2.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is recommended to :

- 2.1 Welcome the Government's proposals for this major Investment initiative;
- 2.2 Agree to the approach, set out in Paragraphs 6.10 to 6.12, to developing the LEA's response to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme noting that the the DfES will announce by 31 March 2004 which year Brent is likely to benefit from the BSF initiative;

- 2.3 Agree to the broad framework, set out in Paragraph 6.13, for “The Expression of Interest for Brent’s Building Schools for the Future” due to be submitted to the DfES by 19 December 2003;
- 2.4 Agree, in the period leading up to the BSF funds coming on stream, to the approach to re-prioritising the deployment of available capital resources as set out in Paragraphs 6.18 to 6.19;
- 2.5 Agree therefore to reviewing its prioritisation (Executive, 16 December 2002) of the Hut removals programme in line with Paragraphs 6.20 to 6.25.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The effective development of the BSF Programme will have resource implications for the Council, although as this report is concerned with the preparation of the bid, there are no financial implications in agreeing its recommendations.
- 3.2 Professional fees will need to be incurred in developing BSF proposals between December 2003 and March 2004. It is considered that these costs may be contained within the overall level of capital resources available to Education, Arts and Libraries.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In order effectively to support the development and implementation of the BSF programme, there will be the need to engage additional technical and project management support, the details of which will be brought before Members in due course, once the initial bid is submitted.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The procurement of services and/or works will need to comply with Standing Orders and European Union (EU) rules.
- 5.2 As set out at paragraph 6.8 of this report it is anticipated that a framework agreement will be concluded between the National Joint Venture Company “Partnership for Schools” (PfS) and a number of Service Providers. It is anticipated that these Framework agreements will be tendered and awarded in accordance with EU rules.
- 5.3 In such circumstances LEAs and/or schools will be able to procure services and works under the framework which having been tendered in accordance with the EU rules would mean the procurement of services and work by the LEA would not necessarily require further tendering.

- 5.4 Prior to the LEA entering into any framework arrangements the appropriate authority will have to be obtained in accordance with standing Orders. The Core Team will need to liaise with Legal Services at an early stage in developing proposals to ensure that both Standing Orders and EU rules are taken into account.
- 5.5 In the event that there is no framework agreement, the requirement at 5.1 would have to be satisfied in respect of each procurement exercise.

6.0 DETAIL

Background

- 6.1 In February 2003 the Government began consultation on a new approach to capital investment in schools – Building Schools for the Future (BSF). The approach is intended to shift the emphasis away from allocating capital for tackling urgent repair needs, to fundamental schools renewal so that all secondary schools have “facilities of 21st Century standard” within 10 to 15 years starting from 2005-2006.
- 6.2 The Government anticipates that an additional c£5.1bn will be available for investment from 2005/06 for BSF. As the programme is rolled out, the DfES will continue with the existing routes for capital allocations.
- 6.3 Given the size of the programme, the Government intends to roll LEAs into the programme by “Waves” with Wave 1 LEAs or Groups in 2005/06.
- 6.4 Investment will be targeted in larger sums, in areas not necessarily within LEA area boundaries. Logical groups of schools may straddle LEA boundaries and therefore it may make sense for LEAs concerned and interested to work together to develop appropriate projects/packages. This approach reflects a strategy aimed at raising standards nationally. Although there is no proposal that Brent LEA submit a bid incorporating joint proposals with other LEAs, it will work co-operatively with Barnet, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster LEAs in the best interests of Brent pupils and those of the neighbouring LEAs.
- 6.5 The programme aims also to encourage better collaboration with other funders to create community assets in school buildings.
- 6.6 Starting in year 1 [Wave 1, with schemes starting in 2005/06 (New Start schemes)] will be LEAs (or Groups of LEAs) where the following criteria are met - standards of achievement are particularly low (using the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C between 2000 to 2002 as a comparator) and levels of deprivation (measured by the percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals as a comparator against the National average) are high. A third criterion is that in those LEAs, the school estate must be in poor condition and LEAs need to be able to deliver an ambitious programme. The DfES advise that it is unlikely therefore that in Year 1 of the programme, more than 15 to 20 areas will benefit.

- 6.7 In order for LEAs to be eligible to participate in the BSF programme, they are expected to have carried out options appraisals demonstrating the building needs contained in the LEAs' Asset Management Plans. The delivery plans are expected to be well developed and local partners are expected to be committed to the LEAs' plans for raising standards.
- 6.8 The Government is keen to ensure that LEAs have capacity to deliver the ambitious programme and will be looking for evidence of such capacity. The DfES will be setting a number of delivery vehicles nationally to help deliver the programme – it is anticipated that a National Joint Venture Company, Partnership for Schools (PfS), will lead on procurement and talk to the building industry and related financial markets to ensure that there is capacity in the industry to deliver the programme; it is also anticipated that PfS will enter into national framework agreements with a number of suitable service providers. PfS may also become the first point of contact for discussions on the balance between PFI “funding” and traditional capital “funding”; Local Education Partnerships (LEPs) will offer a mechanism to conduct local procurement. LEPs may not be necessary where LEAs have effective Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) operating. LEPs could also steer the projects at local level. In the interim, the Government has procured exemplar school building designs that are high quality, able to be procured and constructed efficiently so as to deliver on time and on cost, allowing for designs to develop specific needs of local school communities.
- 6.9 The DfES have indicated that the criteria to be applied to prioritise BSF bids will mean that Brent will not be able to bid for the first wave of BSF starting in 2005/06. In fact, at the time of drafting this report, 45 LEAs have given an indication that they would wish to bid. The DfES will be approving 15 schemes and certainly no more than 20 for a Wave 1, 2005/06 start.

Brent Council's Response and Approach to the BSF Programme

- 6.10 Brent LEA does not meet all the criteria for a Wave 1 LEA mainly for the following reasons:
- Although the percentage of children, in secondary schools, in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) is at the top 1/3 of LEAs (at a provisional figure of 23%), nationally, the LEA is at a national average in the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A* - C at GCSE level.
 - Its vision of the secondary education service needs to be re-visited and re-articulated. As part of this process, the contribution that new and improved buildings would make to the process of raising levels of achievement needs to be developed.
- 6.11 In this context, the Director of Education, Arts and Libraries, in consultation with the Lead Member for Education, Arts and Libraries, considered that Brent should not waste resources to assemble a BSF bid for Wave 1 [2005/06 New Start] and that instead it should concentrate its effort on developing proposals for Wave 2 [2006/07 New Start].

6.12 This approach requires an Expression of Interest to be submitted to the DfES by 19 December 2003 and a formal announcement by the DfES, by 31 March 2004, which Wave Brent will be in. At that point further detail may need to be provided to the DfES.

6.13 The Director of Education, Arts and Libraries, at the time of drafting this report, is in the process of developing the framework for developing the Expression of Interest which includes the following parameters:

- Corporate Aims and Vision
- EAL Aims and Vision setting out the LEA's Strategic Education Plans
- Scoping data for each school/group of schools
- The balance between supply of and demand for secondary school places and their distribution within the Borough as well as information on pupil numbers at each school
- Project type – by new build, refurbishment/remodelling, minor refurbishment and no change – and phasing information
- Confidence levels (in being able to deliver the project types)
- Pupil data by Standards (2000 to 2002) and Indices of Deprivation as measured by FSM (2002)

In the process, the following will be considered in aiming for a fuller consultation with stakeholders leading upto March 2004:

- Elements of a vision for secondary schools in Brent and the building needs (to help deliver that vision) that must be addressed. This vision will address, among others, the following themes - Curricular Aims, Specialist Schools, Extended Schools (Community Use, Schools as Resources for Communities) , co-location of appropriate and relevant civic services
- Characteristics of buildings for the Future – buildings that are directly conducive to raising educational standards, buildings that enable zonal or modular access to resources for the school community during the school day and the local community outside the school day, well supported by ICT. The net effect is that buildings are better used, more flexible and more cost effective to access
- Partnerships
- Capacity to Deliver

6.14 The LEA will also set out a project development and delivery process consisting of a Core Team (Lead Officer, A Project Manager, Corporate Property, Headteacher Representatives) reporting to a wider Steering group or Project Board with Member level representation.

6.15 Subject to the Executive's views, it is recommended that a group of officers finalises the Expression of Interest, within the parameters set out above, in consultation with Headteacher representatives and that the Director of Education be authorised to submit that Expression of Interest by 19 December 2003.

- 6.16 In order to continue with the process of assembling the building blocks or modules required to increase the chances of a successful bid, a “brainstorm workshop” is planned for early January 2004. Headteachers of secondary schools will be asked to attend with appropriate Governors; representatives of the Primary Headteachers and Special Schools will also be asked to attend; they may bring with them other colleagues as may be appropriate. Other key LEA and Council officers, partners and stakeholders will also be invited.
- 6.17 Attachment 1 sets out a Timetable for the main stages (focusing on the Expression of Interest and preparatory work for the full submission) together with an illustrative task list so as to enable Executive to sample the potential scope of BSF.

Impact of the Advent of BSF On Deployment of Capital Resources

- 6.18 In the context of BSF, and recognising that BSF is primarily a vehicle for delivering infrastructure improvements in the secondary sector the Council is recommended to review its capital investment strategy in EAL so as to ensure that investment in school buildings have a more permanent impact on primary schools, Special Schools, Nursery schools and other EAL buildings without ignoring immediate and Health and Safety urgent needs in the secondary schools.
- 6.19 Therefore, subject to the Executive’s approval, Officers in EAL have begun the review of the deployment of capital resources currently available. An early result of that review is that the Executive is requested to review its decision of 16th December 2002 in respect of the prioritisation for a hut removal programme as set out in Attachment 2 which is based on the number of pupils being educated in huts and taking little or no account of the condition of the huts . The result of this review is that gross budget of £1,179,500 previously allocated to John Kelly Girls School Hut removal programme becomes freed up for the Executive to re-allocate, net of professional fees.

Criteria for Reallocating The Resources to Other Hut Removals

- 6.20 In reviewing the possible means to re-allocate the resources, officers propose that all secondary schools, who are likely to benefit from the BSF programme, be excluded from receiving any allocation for hut removals; it is also proposed to not prioritise any huts not used as a full time class base; that thereafter funds are allocated based on a matrix of the priority list agreed by the Executive in December 2002 and listed in Attachment 2 (based on the number of pupils being educated in huted accommodation) and condition information based on a recent survey commissioned by the LEA of huted accommodation in the Borough schools. The matrix is attached as Attachment 3.
- 6.21 A Weighted Priority Rating has been calculated as a measure that reflects the percentage of pupils being educated in poor huted accommodation. A number of sites surveyed had huts with differential rates of life expectancy. Where this is the case, huts with the lowest life expectancy, have been used to rank the school in a priority list.

- 6.22 Members are reminded that capital funding liabilities in respect of Voluntary Aided (VA) schools changed in April 2002 with the governors/aided bodies responsible for virtually all capital investment at VA schools. Nevertheless, VA Schools are also ranked according to the calculated Weighted Priority Rating. In partnership with the Diocesan Boards and other VA Authorities, funding submissions will be made to the DfES for funds designed to support Capital schemes in the VA sector under the LEA Controlled Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP).
- 6.23 The result of this review, and against the matrix set out in Attachment 3, leads officers to recommend the following priority list for addressing accommodation shortfalls and replacing temporary teaching accommodation :

Priority	School	Comments
1	Wembley Manor Infant	Packaging with Junior School to be considered
2	Mount Stewart Infant	Shared site with the Junior school to be taken into account in preparing the scheme
3	Our Lady of Lourdes	LCVAP Capital Submission
4	Uxendon Manor Primary	
5	Preston Park Primary	
6	Wembley Manor Junior	Packaging with the Infant School to be considered
7	Lyon Park Infant	
8	Byron Court Primary	
9	Northview Primary	To be reviewed as part of re-surveys

- 6.24 In preparing schemes to be implemented it may be necessary to package schemes so that not only economies of scale are secured but also disruption to teaching and learning to a school community is minimised. Thus for example, hut removals will not take place at Wembley Manor Infant School without considering the removal of huts at Wembley Manor Junior School.
- 6.25 The LEA has put in a separate bid for the renewal of accommodation at Wembley Manor under the Government's Targeted Capital Fund programme. It is proposed to remove these schools from the above list should the LEA be successful.

7.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following papers were used in the compilation of this report:-

- i) Notes of various BSF seminars
- ii) Building Schools for the Future : Guidance for Local Education Authorities (July 2003)
- iii) Survey reports

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact :

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ATTACHMENT 1

BSF FIRST STAGE TIMETABLE: APPROVAL AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

October	BSF Consultation With Representative Headteachers
October	DMT Consider Submission of Expression of Interest and Bid – A Broad Approach Director gets authority to submit bid. Views canvassed from lead Member
November	Secondary Headteachers Workshop (Now Briefing to Headteachers Group about the approach). Identifying and developing the key strands.
November	Briefings to DMT and Lead Member on progress. Consultation with stakeholders.
November	Meeting with Trade Unions (JCC?) to release ideas and canvas views. Meet with VA Bodies.
December	First Report to the Executive – Approve a Draft Strategy for the Expression of Interest
December	Submit Expression of Interest to the DfES (19 Dec 2003)
January/February 04	Report to School Organisation Committee (if supply and demand of places are affected) – refine draft strategic plan following Cabinet/Executive approval.
January 04	Brainstorm Workshop – Setting up a BSF Board?
January/March 04	Options and Appraisals, Reports to DMT and Lead Member – update on progress Develop the submission further in consultation with Headteachers, VA Bodies, Corporate Colleagues and in close liaison with Ward Members.
March 04	DfES decide which wave Brent will be in and further detailed work to be considered (31 March 2004).
April 04	Review of work plan, developing a Project Plan and Project Outcomes over the following 12 months.

Interim Draft Task List	
Gather information on plans from schools, analyse state of buildings site possibilities including phasing	
Brief Key EAL Staff	
Consult Health authority on their strategic needs in light of Green paper	
Brief Planning and Policy Unit	
Set Up Project Board	
Identify Lead Officers for BSF Strands	
Consult Diocesan Education Boards and Other VA Bodies	
Views of neighbouring LEAs – Face to face and Correspondence : Exchange of data and Intelligence	
Seek views of NWLC/LSC	
Consider Corporate Partnerships – context of Regeneration and Other Major Developments.	
Steer from Lead Member(s) – Meeting Policy Objectives? PFI Route for New Build? Affordability and Impact on Council tax	
Partnerships / Stakeholding Meetings – Heads etc	
Involvement of EiC	
Draft strategic statement	
Statement to include:	
Vision for Secondary Education	
Key Issues facing the LEA and Schools	
Summary of consultation to date	
Demographics	
Draft strategic plans	
Prepare data etc	
Agree phasing of plan – can't do all schools at once	
Submit bid	

Excerpt from Priority List for Addressing Capacity Shortfalls and Replacing Temporary Teaching Accommodation Agreed at Executive Committee 16th December 2002.

PRIORITY	SCHOOL
1	John Kelly Girls'
2	Wembley Manor Junior
3	Copland *
4	Uxendon Manor
5	Preston Park
6	Wembley Manor Infants
7	Mount Stewart Infants
8	Mount Stewart Juniors
9	Preston Manor
10	Oliver Goldsmith
11	Oakington Manor
12	Byron Court
13	Alperton
14	Donnington
15	John Kelly Boys'
16	Roe Green Infants

N.B. :

- * Copland School is currently pursuing a re-development option with a private developer. Capital investment at this school to be put on hold, therefore, until the outcome of this development is known