



Report to: Cabinet

Date: 26th June 2008

Subject: Building Schools for the Future - Response to Consultation

Report of: Director Children and Young People's Services

Contact officer: Janet Newton 01942 486004
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Purpose / summary: To seek approval to submit a response to the DCSF consultation regarding the Management of Building Schools for the Future Waves 7 to 15.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: Not responding to the Consultation was considered but this was deemed to be inappropriate as the Council would miss the opportunity to represent its views on bringing forward Wigan's projects into an earlier Wave.

Recommendation / decision: It is recommended that Cabinet: approves the response to the Consultation as presented in this report.

Key Decision: This report does not involve a key decision. The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before 8th July 2008.

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	Detailed in the report.
Staffing:	No direct staffing implications
Policy:	Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings.
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	No.
Wards affected:	All

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

Not at this stage as it is a response to a DCSF consultation.

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

No

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution?	Yes
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Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget?	Yes
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Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	Yes / No *
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* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	X		
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	X
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
		26.06.08	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Title of document	Which meeting did it go to?	Date of meeting	Copy available from?
Consultation document is contained within the Report.			Children and Young People's Services Progress House Westwood Park Drive Wigan WN3 4HH

Proper Officer



Date

16th June 2008

1. Background

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) was launched in 2004, to support educational transformation by renewing the secondary school estate in England. BSF targets school improvement in all schools on an area by area basis, prioritised on social and educational need. It delivers significant funding to support a mixture of new building, major remodelling and refurbishment of existing buildings.

Wigan Council submitted its Expression of Interest for inclusion in the national BSF programme in December 2003. The Council was advised, that based upon the national criteria of educational and social need it would be placed in Waves 10 to 12 of the national programme i.e. investment starting in 2014 to 2016. In the summer of 2007, the Council demonstrated its commitment to BSF by entering into a joint LEP procurement with Salford City Council. At this time Wigan Council was given an indication that it could receive circ £280m if capital investment and that as a result of being ready to deliver both in terms of procurement and a well developed Education Vision may be in a position to enter the programme earlier than anticipated, i.e. Wave 7 (investment starting 2011).

A current position statement is summarised below:

Readiness to deliver

Transformational Change/Education Vision

The Children and Young People's Services Directorate has undertaken significant work with Headteachers and has a good support to proceed with reviewing existing provision in the Borough and developing a Vision for Education that will bring about a step change in education. There is clear support from partners, including PCT, colleges, Diocesan Authorities and sport, recreation and leisure providers to develop co-located facilities that will be at the heart of the communities they serve.

Wigan Council and the Schools Forum have committed funds to support the development, procurement and implementation of BSF in Wigan.

The Council is currently procuring a joint LEP with Salford City Council. It is envisaged that the partnership will be securely in place early in 2009. The Council considers it will therefore be in a position to start developing significant capital investment programmes throughout the Borough from 2009 and delivering/implementing large projects in 2011.

A major Education Conference will be held on 4th July 2008. Over 200 invitees comprising schools, partners and young people are attending. The Conference is focusing on the Vision for Children and Young People and the principles that will underpin the proposed review of

provision. The Council, its schools and partners recognise the need to address future demographic changes and deliver transformation.

2. Consultation

In April 2008, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) began a Consultation on a range of proposals for how Waves 7 to 15 of Building Schools for the Future could be managed, taking account of developments in government policy since the programme was first launched, and also lessons learned from early waves. (A copy is attached at Appendix A). The Consultation poses a number of questions focused on future criteria for prioritisation, general project size and school grouping, readiness to deliver etc.

A significant change set out in the Consultation paper is a proposal to allocate smaller initial projects of up to £100m to all authorities in Waves 7 to 15. This is a departure from the process applied to the earlier Waves of BSF where authorities received allocation for whole Waves, in Wigan Council's case this could be circa £280m.

The proposed responses to the Consultation paper are set out in Appendix B for Cabinet's consideration. The closing date for responses is 4th July 2008. It is suggested that an observation that Wigan Council could make is the benefit of maintaining the integrity of future capital allocations rather than the suggested 'piece meal' approach. Assurances regarding the proposed responses to the Consultation Paper are set out in Appendix B for Cabinet's consideration.

The Council will also lead on the preparation of a joint response on behalf of the AGMA authorities.

3. Conclusions

The Consultation offers the opportunity for Wigan Council to indicate the benefits of maintaining the integrity of future capital allocations rather than the suggested 'piece meal' approach and to demonstrate its commitment to the national programme and the excellent progress made in procuring a joint LEP.

The Management of Building Schools for the Future waves 7 to 15

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 4 July
2008

Your comments must reach us by that date.

department for
children, schools and families

THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online or offline response facility available on the Department for Children, Schools and Families e-consultation website (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations>).

The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the Department. This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies. You may request confidentiality by ticking the box provided, but you should note that neither this, nor an automatically-generated e-mail confidentiality statement, will necessarily exclude the public right of access.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Name

Organisation (if applicable)

Address:

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact Shaw Warnock on:

Telephone: 020 7925 6454
e-mail: shaw.warnock@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 01928 794888
Fax: 01928 794 311
e-mail: consultation.unit@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Please tick the box that best describes you as a respondent:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Diocesan Body	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Voluntary Aided Body
<input type="checkbox"/> School - Headteacher or other staff	<input type="checkbox"/> School Governor	<input type="checkbox"/> Representative Organisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector - Financial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector - Design	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector - Construction
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Please Specify:

Are you an authority, school, organisation or other body that is involved in BSF waves 1 to 6?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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1 Do you agree that we should have a wider set of criteria for the prioritisation of BSF waves 7 to 15?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

Wigan acknowledges the benefits of introducing wider criteria to help determine prioritisation within the national programme. Entry to the earlier Waves of BSF was not only based upon educational/social need but the capacity of Authorities to deliver large, complex capital projects at the same time as implementing transformational/structural reform.

The Authority welcomes the introduction of criteria that should enable its earlier entry into the programme in order that it can undertake major, much needed, school re-organisation, contributes to wider social regeneration, through co-located facilities developed with partners and raise attainment and aspiration.

Wigan considers that widening the prioritisation criteria should continue to be considered alongside capacity and readiness to deliver.

2 Do you agree that we use educational and social need as a tie-breaker when two projects are otherwise evenly balanced?

Yes

✓ No

Not Sure

Comments:

Wigan recognises that most, if not all, Authorities in the middle of the programme will have areas of educational and social need. It may therefore be appropriate to consider an Authority's capacity and readiness to deliver a transformational vision and structural reform alongside a very complex building programme.

Where Authorities in early/late Waves have procured a joint LEP in anticipation of BSF, prioritisation should be given to such Authorities who can demonstrate that they are in a position to proceed swiftly, deliver to programme and secure value for money.

3 How could BSF better support local plans to join-up and co-locate services for children, young people and families?

Comments:

Multi-funded, multi partnered schemes are very attractive to the community as a means of delivering a number of services from one base.

The development of co-located facilities, and/or campus accommodation is very attractive to the Authority. Wigan and its partners have already secured such facilities within the Borough. We welcome the opportunity BSF will bring to develop more of these facilities, particularly in areas of social need. The barriers to success often arise due to the complexities of different funding sources, ongoing revenue contributions, ownership etc. Wigan considers that based upon its recent experience it can maximise the opportunities available through BSF. Early discussions with all partners and consultation with communities are key to success. Wigan is currently participating in the 0 - 19 pathfinder project that is exploring the development of joined up and co-located services for children, young people, their families and the wider community. To maximise the opportunities of developing joint/co-located facilities BSF should support and make specific reference to Community Plans and Local Development Frameworks as well as underpinning the Children and Young People's Plan.

4 Do you agree that all “new” authorities should be given an opportunity to enter BSF with an initial priority project for early implementation?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

Wigan Council is keen to maintain the integrity of overall capital allocations for a Wave rather than a 'piece meal' approach. Assurance regarding such allocations would enable the Councils to deliver their education vision and most importantly secure community and parental confidence that a significant 'structural reform' of existing provision would result in a step change in educational opportunities for children and young people. A key element to securing community and parental confidence would be a Council's ability to deliver its Educational and Transformational Vision when it consults within realistic and reasonable timescales. A second key element would be delivering 'parity of esteem' and whilst Wigan Council recognises that Authorities would not be able to deliver all new schools, it would be advantageous for the Estate Strategy to deliver educational/social building improvements and improved ICT for all schools within a 3 to 5 year period of starting the programme.

Wigan Council recognises that securing the anticipated investment within a single Wave, albeit phased over a 3 to 5 year period would contribute, significantly to the wider regeneration and local economy of Council. Acknowledgement that funding had been 'ringfenced' would enable the Councils to develop lasting skills legacies with its LEP, and to include use of local labour, local businesses, apprenticeships etc.

In developing Estate Strategies that support a transformational Educational Vision and Outline Business Case, Authorities are required to develop detailed delivery programmes. This is particularly the case where major school re-organisation underpins the vision and requires a transition/decant programme. In the event that an Authority receives its funding in small packages, this may result in continuity problems for the LEP and not necessarily represent value for money. Consideration should also be given to prioritising Authorities that have been encouraged to procure joint LEPs, in anticipation of an earlier entry onto the programme.

5 Are there barriers to having neighbouring authorities work together in a joint LEP, as a condition of an early start with a smaller project. How could they be overcome?

Comments:

Wigan Council and Salford City Council are committed to working together to procure a joint LEP, which will benefit both Authorities. The Authorities have developed a Memorandum of Understanding and are currently developing a Co-operation Agreement. The two Councils are working successfully to procure a joint LEP in 2009 and consider that there are mutual benefits to this approach.

6 Are there difficulties with proposing “follow on” projects within these size guidelines? What are they and how can they be addressed?

Comments:

Wigan Council is committed to delivering a transformational agenda that involves significant 'structured reform' of existing school provision. The Council considers that securing certainty around its total funding allocation and timescales is critical in delivering such a vision. Without such certainty Authorities may be reluctant to embark upon major reviews of secondary provision. Maintaining parental, community, staff and political confidence through such challenging re-organisations will be critical to the success of delivering the required step changes in educational opportunities.

7 Is anything more needed to enable local authorities to be ready to deliver?

Comments:

An indication of the level of funding available to Authorities, through the Funding Allocation Model, would be beneficial. Certainty that BSF funding could be secured as a Single Wave, through the OBC process and subsequently delivered in phases would be of significant benefit.

8 Do you agree with a programme of rolling announcements and starts, in line with when projects are ready and funding is available? Are there any practical difficulties with this, and if so what are they?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Wigan Council would support more fluid programme starts on the basis that its overall funding allocation would be guaranteed and that the Council could work with PfS and its LEP to develop the most efficient, value for money delivery programmes, that would minimise disruption and secure community confidence.

9 Are there problems with LEPs having a wider regeneration remit than just BSF or schools?

Comments:

Wigan Council has developed a Partnering Services Specification in conjunction with its procurement partner Salford City Council. The Council is interested in developing affordable projects that are delivered to time and represent value for money. The Council is considering the wider role the LEP could play in delivering non BSF work as it recognises the benefits of having a Partner that can deliver continuous improvement over a 10 year period, consideration is being given to the delivery of all Children and Young People's Directorate funded projects, alongside the opportunities for delivering co-located services with partners such as the Primary Care Trust and Wigan Leisure Trust.

10 Are there barriers to co-locating other services for children, young people and families on school sites? If so, what are they?

Comments:

Wigan Council has a successful track record of delivering co-located facilities such as a primary school, health centre and public library. The Council is keen to work with partners to develop similar facilities through the opportunities presented by BSF and the Primary Capital Programme. Wigan is a pathfinder authority on the 0 - 19 Project that is exploring the issues of co-ordinating funding streams, both capital and revenue. The Council would be keen to continue to work with its partners, DCSF, HM Treasury, PUK and PFS to overcome the existing difficulties of managing projects with slightly different timescales, different funding schemes, ownership issues etc.

The Council is currently developing a large Sports Village in Leigh that is a multi funded/multi partnered scheme that will contribute to regeneration within the town and bring significant educational, social and leisure opportunities to a wide community.

The Council is also developing a Joint Services Centre in Wigan Town Centre as a pfi project this will see a one stop shop services from a range of partners, both statutory and voluntary including a healthy living zone, and children's library and a property shop.

Wigan Council does not consider that there are insurmountable barriers to developing co-located facilities that benefit children, young people and the wider community - have a track record of delivery in that area.

11 Are there other factors or options for the management and prioritisation of later waves of BSF which we have not considered? Have you any further specific or general points that you would like to make about the management of Building Schools for the Future?

Comments:

Wigan Council is committed to delivering BSF to deliver education and social benefits in the Borough. The Council is currently procuring a joint LEP with Salford City Council and has committed significant resource to both the procurement and ongoing delivery in advance of entry to the programme. An experienced BSF Project Director has been appointed and the Council is confident that it would be ready to deliver its programme from Wave 7 onwards. Due to this upfront investment and commitment, the Council considers it will be in a position to deliver on the basis of a Wave allocation of circa £250m, phased across 3 to 4 packages of work.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply ✓

Here at the Department for Education and Skills we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes

No

All UK national public consultations are required to conform to the following standards:

1. Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
2. Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.
3. Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
4. Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
5. Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.
6. Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.

Further information on the Code of Practice can be accessed through the Cabinet Office Website: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation-guidance/content/introduction/index.asp>

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 4 July 2008

Send by post to: Cheryl Hogarth, Schools Capital Strategy Unit, Department for Children Schools and Families, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

Send by e-mail to: BSFManagement.CONULTATION@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section:

Policy/Service Area:

Person Completing Form:

Date:

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race			Disability		
Ethnicity			Gender		
Age			Religion		
Class			Sexual Orientation		

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

Action Plan – *What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?*

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

Timescale	
Responsibility	
Comments	

Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan	
Section/Team Plan	
Other (Specify)	

Date for further review

