

Building schools for the future

Strategy for Change

Guidance for Local Authorities in BSF Wave 4

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Building Schools for the Future

Strategy for Change

Introduction

This Guidance

1. This Building Schools for the Future (BSF) guidance is for local authorities entering the programme from wave 4 onwards. It replaces both the Education Vision and Strategic Business Case guidance documents in use by projects in waves 1 to 3.
2. The rationale for replacing the previous Education Vision and Strategic Business Case stages of BSF planning with a Strategy for Change is as follows:
 - to ensure that building plans are determined by local educational priorities;
 - to ensure that these priorities remain at the forefront throughout the planning process;
 - to reduce the burdens on local authorities;
 - to reduce the scope for slippage in the pre-procurement stages of BSF;
 - to secure Ministerial review of local authorities' proposals at a much earlier stage than before; and
 - to ensure that they are sufficiently radical and robust.
3. **The Strategy for Change (SfC) is the first formal component of the BSF approvals process.** It is designed to capture both the local authority's strategy for 11-19 education and the requirements that strategy places upon the physical school estate. In addition, to secure coherent capital investment to support the 14-19 reforms, it formally extends BSF and the SfC development to include all settings in which young people learn, including Further Education (FE). Please see p.5 for an overview of the pre-procurement approval processes of BSF.
4. Local authorities can only submit their Outline Business Cases for BSF investment once they have received formal Departmental approval of their SfC.
5. Local authorities should take their indicative funding letter from Partnerships for Schools (PfS) as the basis for their plans, and refer to the *Funding Guidance for BSF Projects* (available at www.bsf.gov.uk) for an understanding of the funding principles. Updated guidance on 'Improved joined-up planning and funding', reflecting the Further Education White Paper commitment to an integrated capital strategy for 14-19 reform is also available on the BSF website.

Context

6. The White Paper '*Higher Standards, Better Schools for All*' challenges schools and local authorities to ensure educational opportunities are provided around the needs of each child and parent/carer.

7. Diversity of provision within a dynamic secondary system is the principal challenge laid down for local authorities in the White Paper. Local authorities are required to develop their new role as commissioners rather than providers of education services; to become the champions of pupils and parents with a duty to 'promote choice, diversity and fair access'.

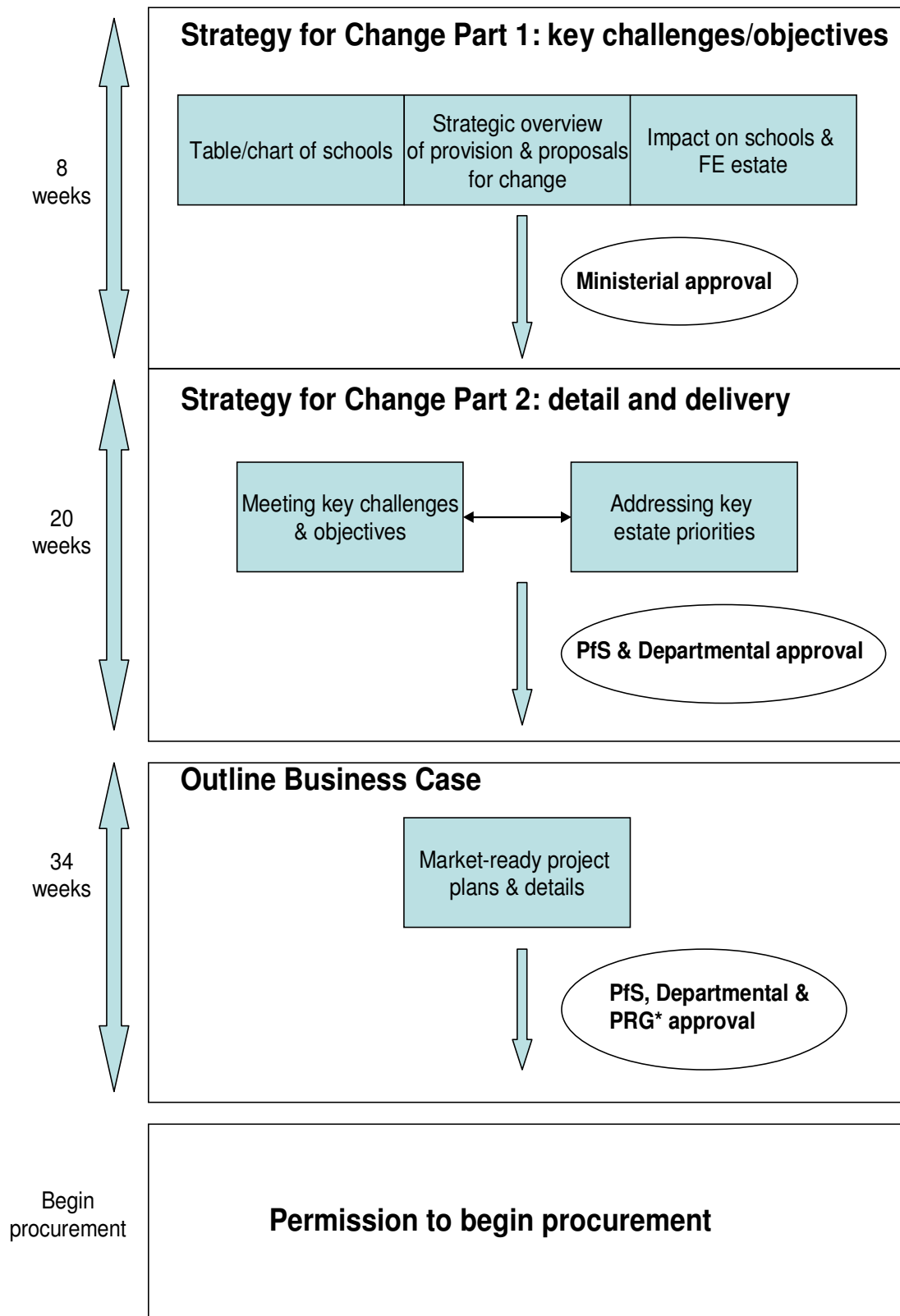
8. *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* sets out the national framework for local change programmes to build services around improving outcomes for children and young people. This will be achieved through children's trusts which will bring together all services for children and young people in an area. These arrangements are underpinned by the Children Act 2004 in the 'Duty to Co-operate'.

9. The unprecedented levels of capital investment available to local authorities and schools through BSF have a crucial role in supporting this reform agenda, and in transforming standards in our schools. Local authorities must ensure that schools can transform the learning experience of pupils and achieve a step change in educational outcomes for children and other learners. As authorities plan their BSF strategy with schools they will be seeking to secure:

- a transformed school estate fit for the 21st century;
- high quality teaching and learning for all;
- increased diversity of provision to meet parental choice and secure improved educational outcomes for all young people - including Academies where appropriate;
- schools relevant and accessible to local communities; and
- extensive local collaboration and parental involvement.

10. The recent White Paper, *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances* remitted local authorities, in line with their strategic leadership role in delivering 14-19 reform, to ensure that their SfC is fully comprehensive in setting out the local facilities required to deliver the 14-19 entitlement, including the contribution of FE providers. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) should be fully involved in developing the SfC and will ensure that its investment plans are informed by and consistent with the local SfC. The LSC will direct capital funding to implement the FE component of the 14-19 vision developed in each authority. This will mean that, for the first time, there is a fully integrated capital strategy which will deliver facilities for 14-19 years olds across schools and the FE system.

Pre-Procurement BSF Stages



*Treasury-chaired Project Review Group

11. BSF is a national programme, delivering transformation locally. All the partners – local authorities, the Department, PfS and 4ps – are there to ensure that young people gain maximum benefit from BSF investment. The programme acts as a mechanism to deliver change and improve outcomes across the board. Effective change management is the key to successful implementation.

The Remit for Change

12. As part of its normal duties the Department holds information on the performance of local authorities and schools. This information is in the public domain. It will be used to set local authorities scheduled for BSF investment a 'Remit for Change' - high level, strategic objectives for each authority to meet with the aid of BSF investment – just as it is used to inform the 'Annual Priorities' conversation with authorities. The aim is to provide authorities with locally specific objectives and challenges that reflect their circumstances, rather than a set of generic requirements. The Department will give this remit to local authorities shortly after they join the programme and share it with PfS, who will assist and challenge local authorities to ensure their BSF proposals will deliver their remit for change.

13. The remit will show where Ministerial and Departmental expectations will be focussed. Its content may include:

- strategic objectives - eg; school organisation, diversity of provision, providing choice and fair access;
- targets for school improvement;
- improvements to provision and outcomes as they relate to particular policy areas – eg. 14–19, school underperformance, inclusion, SEN, extended schools; and
- delivery capacity and leadership expectations.

The Strategy for Change

14. The SfC ties together local education and estate strategies – thus encouraging the local authority to focus simultaneously on the two principal elements of the BSF programme.

15. The SfC must capture:

- how Ministerial expectations set out in the Remit for Change will be met;
- the key objectives of local education and corporate strategies;
- what requirements these objectives place on the school and FE estate and how BSF and LSC investment will meet those requirements; and

- the change management plans to support implementation and delivery.
16. The SfC has two parts:

Part 1 is the **Key Challenges and Objectives** section of the SfC. This will show the scope of the authority's BSF transformation plan. It is the 'what is to be done' component.

Part 2 is the **Detail and Delivery** section of the SfC. It will add contextual, qualitative and quantitative information to Part 1, showing how the authority intends to achieve its objectives. It is the 'how it will be done' component.

17. The content required for Part 1 and Part 2 is outlined in the following pages.

Advice, Support and Challenge

18. Advice, support and challenge will be available to help local authorities prepare their SfC from PfS Education & Planning Advisers. Local authorities will also be assigned a Project Adviser from the Schools Capital team at the Department. In addition, procurement support is available from 4ps, local government's project procurement specialists.

Local Authorities in Earlier Waves

19. Some local authorities with a large school estate appear in more than one wave. Authorities with projects in Waves 1, 2 and 3 have prepared an Education Vision and Strategic Business Case (SBC) to secure approval for BSF investment.

20. Those authorities eligible to appear in a subsequent wave should fully revise their existing Education Visions and SBCs to meet the requirements of the SfC. They will also receive a 'Remit for Change' for any later projects and be provided with support and guidance from PfS and the Department in developing their Strategy for Change.

The requirements for Part 1 and Part 2 of The Strategy for Change are outlined in detail in the following pages.

Strategy for Change

Part 1

Key Challenges and Objectives

21. In Part 1, local authorities should set out the high-level components of their SfC, confirming that local plans address the issues highlighted in their Remit for Change – and have been the subject of consultation with the LSC and other key delivery partners. It is the ‘what needs to be done’ section of the SfC. This should not simply be a regurgitation of existing plans, but should specify how the local BSF proposals will address both the remit and locally agreed priorities.

22. Ministers will be interested to see how far authorities’ thinking and planning has been influenced by the Education White Paper *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All*. In particular:

- the clarity of response to Departmental and Ministerial expectations as expressed in their Remit for Change;
- the extent to which the Every Child Matters agenda is being addressed through and supported by BSF plans;
- plans for greater diversity and choice of schools (including Academies); and
- the value added to school level provision, outcomes and community access by BSF capital funding.

Content

23. Part 1 should be between eight and twelve pages in length and have three sections as shown on p.5.

(i) A map/table/chart to show each school in the authority in this wave of investment stating what type the school is now and what type of school it will be after BSF investment – except of course where this will be determined by competition.

(ii) A strategic overview of existing school and further education (FE) provision and proposals for change.

(iii) Proposals for the school and FE estate.

The content requirement for each of these sections is detailed in paragraphs 24-27.

Chart of Each School in the Wave

24. For every school in the wave the map/table/chart should show:
- the characteristics and profile of the school now and how that will change after BSF capital investment.
 - current achievement data and future targets;
 - current Ofsted (or equivalent locally determined) categorisations of success or failure;
 - Key Stage 2-3 and 3-4 value added data;
 - whether there are plans to expand, federate or close the school, open as an academy, open a sixth form or develop a new school;
 - what extended services the school will offer;
 - the school's present and future governance arrangements; and
 - the social and economic profile of the community served by the school.

If an authority wishes to propose a different group of schools from those included in its original BSF Expression of Interest it must submit a formal request to do so to the Department as soon as possible, setting out the rationale. Such requests must be submitted prior to completing Part 1 of the SfC. Any revised groupings which do not prioritise educational and social need will not be accepted.

The authority should discuss with the LSC how best to reflect the characteristics of local FE provision and its role in delivering the 14-19 entitlement.

A Strategic Overview of School Provision

25. In the second section of Part 1 the authority should briefly answer the following key strategic questions.
- (i) Where is the authority now in terms of educational outcomes, diversity of provision, fair access and choice?
 - (ii) What *added value* will BSF investment provide to local educational outcomes – within and beyond the school day?
 - (iii) How does the authority propose to ensure choice, diversity and access for all parents and pupils in its schools? Eg. engaging with new external partners, developing greater competition in provision, providing greater community access to school facilities, etc.
 - (iv) How will the authority ensure robust challenge to schools including strategies for early intervention in the case of underperforming or

failing schools?

- (v) How will the authority deliver personalised learning to ensure that every pupil is fully stretched and can access a broad curriculum that best suits their needs and talents?
- (vi) How will the authority ensure the effective delivery of the 14-19 entitlement in partnership with area LSC teams and local FE providers?
- (vii) To what extent is the authority ensuring effective integration of education and other services through Every Child Matters?
- (viii) How does the authority propose to champion the needs of all pupils, including those with SEN?
- (ix) What change management strategies are in place to achieve the authority's BSF vision (including Continuous Professional Development and Workforce Reform in schools)?

Proposals for the School and FE Estate

26. In the final section of Part 1 the authority should capture the improvements proposed to the school and FE estate to deliver the SfC. The core information needed is the number of schools in the wave, their size, locations and proposed BSF capital spend. Information should also be included, following discussion with the LSC, on the investment required in the FE estate to support 14-19 reform. Much of the detail will already have been captured in the map/table/chart of every school in the wave.

27. Bearing in mind the need for iterations, this section should cover:

- key priorities for the school estate in terms of location, size and cost including a summary rationale for prioritisation of school projects, and, where relevant, how they relate to complementary FE proposals;
- project governance and management arrangements for school projects;
- an overview of pupil place requirements and planning projections consistent with DfES requirements and the LSC's revenue funding predictions;
- the headline strategic vision for ICT;
- headline KPIs for the local authority around diversity, choice, access and links into the Every Child Matters agenda; and
- existing and planned consultations, in particular, mechanisms to draw school-level development planning and the engagement of FE providers into the BSF process.

Approval of Part 1 of the Strategy for Change

28. Once the Remit for Change has been set, PfS will lead in providing the local authority with the advice, support and challenge needed to prepare the local SfC. Additional support and guidance will be available from DfES Project Advisers, 4ps (the local authority partners in project delivery) and the Office of the Schools Commissioner.

29. Once PfS are able to endorse the document, it will be submitted to the Department for final approval. After Departmental scrutiny, and prior to Ministerial approval, the authority will be invited to make a formal presentation to senior officials from the Department and PfS. Ministers may wish to attend. Unless serious and significant concerns arise at the meeting Part 1 of the SfC will be submitted to Ministers for approval.

30. Once Ministerial approval of Part 1 has been secured the local authority can proceed to develop Part 2 of the Strategy for Change. If the document is not approved, the authority will be given clear guidance as to which areas require further development in order to secure approval before work on Part 2 can begin.