

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee  
Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2008

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**BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION**

**THE WELLINGTON COLLEGE ACADEMY -  
BUILDING DESIGN UPDATE**

**Introduction**

1. The Wellington College Academy is being procured through the Academy National Framework which consists of a well defined process broken down into a number of discrete stages. At the last update to the Scrutiny Committee, Stage 0: the Expression of Interest had been approved and the project team was working on Stage 1: Outline Business Case. The following progress has been made since the last update. It should be noted that the sponsor has recently decided to change the Academy name to "*The Wellington College Academy*".

**Stage 1: Outline Business Case**

2. The submission of the Outline Business Case (OBC) was delayed from March 2008 until June 2008 due to protracted negotiations with Partnerships for Schools (PfS) for the funding of '*abnormal*' costs (site specific costs) that had been identified to make the scheme affordable. A number of detailed surveys and site investigations had been undertaken in order to identify and justify the level of abnormal costs to the project.
3. Although this delayed the start of the next stage, it was essential that the maximum level of funding possible for the project was achieved, as any unidentified or unfunded costs that arise during the project fall to the local authority to fund. Efforts have resulted in over £400,000 of additional funding for the project to cover site specific issues which would otherwise have put the local authority at risk or reduced the overall quality of the new school.
4. Approval of the OBC was granted by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in July. Funding of £32.11 million has been secured for the project to construct the Academy, Boarding and Combined Cadet Force facilities. In addition a capital grant of £640,000 has also been secured from Kennet District Council to provide an all-weather sports pitch for the school and community use.

**Stage 2: Invitation to Tender**

5. In line with the Academy National Framework operated by PfS, all six of the framework design and build contractors (bidders) were approached to submit an expression of interest for the scheme. Three bidders responded, of which two were selected to enter into a design competition after a thorough interview and evaluation process.
6. The two successful bidders selected for the design competition are Kier Construction and Balfour Beatty. Both have teamed up with renowned architectural practices to design their Academy submission. Kier are working with BDP and Balfour Beatty with

Penoyre and Prasad. Both teams of architects specialise in education projects and have independently produced exemplar design schemes for DCSF.

7. A design team consisting of representatives from Wellington College, Wiltshire County Council, The Wellington College Academy and the Technical Advisors have been working closely with the two bidders since September to develop the two competing designs for the Academy.
8. The final bids are due to be submitted at the end of November 2008 and a detailed cost and technical evaluation shall be undertaken on both schemes. This is planned to take between six and eight weeks and it is anticipated a decision on the preferred bidder will be announced in January 2009.

### **Stage 3: Final Business Case**

9. The final business case is programmed to start in January 2009 following the announcement of the preferred bidder. This stage is planned to take up to nine months and will include finalising the detailed design, obtaining planning permission for the scheme and confirming the affordability of the scheme for final submission and approval. Once approved, the appointment of the design and build contractor can be formalised and construction can begin.

### **Stage 4: Construction & Handover**

10. With the delay to submission of the OBC, the project is currently running three months behind the original programme. However, Contractors are working within their bids to identify alternative construction methods, ways of working and alternative phasing of the project to identify how to bring forward the delivery of the Academy.
11. The construction phase is currently planned to commence in September 2008 following approval of the FBC. Target dates for handover of the Academy buildings currently stand as follows:

New Academy Buildings	March 2011
Combined Cadet Force	March 2011
Boarding Accommodation	March 2012

### **Other Information**

12. Although the submission of the OBC was delayed, the OBC was considered very robust by DCFS and resulted in a shorter than normal approval of the scheme.
13. Following approval of the OBC, the County Council and sponsor have been invited to enter The Wellington College Academy into the Excellence in BSF Awards 2008 under the category of 'Best BSF Academy'. The application has been submitted and the results are awaited.

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