

## **Preferred bidder selected for £1.1 billion schools redevelopment contract**

THE LARGEST single investment ever in Barnsley education continues to make excellent progress as the council today (Wednesday, 19 November) announced the preferred bidder for its £1.1 billion Building Schools for the Future programme.

The announcement is a further major step towards the launch of a new partnership between the Council, Barnsley Partnership for Learning and Partnerships for Schools (PfS) to deliver the council's flagship educational transformation programme

The Council has notified all parties who the preferred bidder is and is now proceeding to the next stage of the formal procurement process

The Barnsley BSF programme will enable the Council to:

- replace all of its 13 secondary schools with 9 completely new build Advanced Learning Centres (ALCs)
- replace fully 1 of its 2 special schools, along with
- half of its other special school, with the remainder being brought up to modern standards

The programme will deliver cutting edge design and ICT solutions in 3 phases with all of the ALCs planned to be built and open by 2011/12:

- Edward Sheerien/Royston, Penistone Grammar, Dearne High, Darton, Kirk Balk;
- Priory/Willowgarth, Springwell, Greenacre;
- Foulstone/Wombwell, St Michael's Catholic and CE High, Holgate/Kingstone.

The Barnsley BSF programme is designed to ensure a step change in provision in Barnsley that will include:

- state of the art physical and virtual facilities for Barnsley's secondary and special pupils, adult learners, teachers, support staff and others that will facilitate leading edge teaching/learning
- flexible learning spaces along with greatly enhanced ICT provision including better access to data and resources and a wider spread of portable devices
- modern learning resources, social facilities, circulation and social spaces, and vastly improved sports and leisure facilities

The Barnsley programme is unique across the country involving as it does the replacement of all of the Borough's secondary schools estate with 9 new build Advanced

Learning Centres, combined with the considerably improved special school estate and the provision of an integrated managed ICT service

Cllr Linda Burgess, Cabinet Spokesperson for Children, Young People and Families said "I am delighted to see this very important milestone taking place as we move towards providing not only all our secondary and special school youngsters but also the community with exciting, innovative and inspiring learning centres and resources

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity that the Council is fully committed to and I am looking forward to the superb benefits that this programme will bring for pupils for years to come, as well as their teachers, school staff, parents and local communities, and as a result, Barnsley as a whole"

Edna Sutton, Executive Director for Children, Young People and Families said "This is an extremely exciting time for Barnsley's schools and community and we are delighted to be working with BPfL as we begin to develop what will be fantastic teaching and learning facilities and resources

The Barnsley BSF programme is truly transformational and will greatly benefit everyone in the borough for generations to come,"

Stephen Beechey, speaking on behalf of Barnsley Partnership for Learning, said: "This education transformation programme is at the heart of regenerating Barnsley's communities and we are extremely excited to be a partner in delivering this life changing commitment. BPfL is dedicated to building long term strategic partnerships and has enjoyed building a strong working relationship with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council throughout the bid process."

Tim Byles, Chief Executive of Partnerships for Schools – the government agency responsible for the BSF programme said: "We congratulate Barnsley on reaching this important milestone in their BFS project. It is good news for the progress of the BSF programme nationally and even better news for the learners and communities in the borough. The investment in new and improved buildings, facilities and technology will have an enormous impact on the education and life chances of every young person in the local area, and I look forward to watching the progress of Barnsley's BSF scheme."

ENDS

Notes for Editors

1. Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is the largest single schools capital investment programme for over 50 years. The aim is to rebuild or renew England's state secondary schools estate during the lifetime of the programme.
2. Partnerships for Schools (Pfs) is the delivery organisation for Building Schools for the Future. Pfs was established in April 2004 as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), and is operated and funded under a joint venture between DCSF (formerly DfES) and Partnerships UK.
3. Barnsley Partnership for Learning is a joint venture between Laing O'Rourke and John Laing

