1. Strategy for Change in Stockton-on-Tees

Appendix 1

Context

1.1. The Children and Young People's Plan for Stockton-on-Tees 2006-09 sets out an agreed policy of planning for the delivery of all services for children and young people based on five geographical areas across the Borough. This submission for BSF relates to two of those Integrated Service Areas, North Stockton and Central Stockton, which together make up a single geographical area for Building Schools for the Future.

1.2. The two areas, and the schools within them, are different in nature, and our strategy for BSF will reflect those differences. Each area includes three mainstream secondary schools, and this document generally refers to them collectively as "the three northern schools" and "the three central schools."

1.3. The northern area is characterised by large areas of significant deprivation in social housing estates, separated by an isolated area of affluence that includes an independent school. Deprivation in these communities is illustrated by the level of entitlement to free school meals in the mainstream schools (37.8% in total) and the number of pupils with special educational needs (34.5%, of whom 6.3% have statements). Around 500 secondary pupils resident in the north are able to access schools outside this area. This leaves the three schools in the north with very local catchment areas and an intake that cannot be called truly comprehensive. All three schools are relatively small (520 to 810 pupils), and located some distance apart on the fringe of their communities. One of them includes a 40-place unit for pupils with physical disabilities. This northern area also includes two special schools, one of them taking pupils from 11 to 19. There is access to post-16 provision, although not directly within the northern area, and staying-on rates here are below average for the Borough.

1.4. Central Stockton also includes some areas of great deprivation, but there are larger areas of affluence. Entitlement to free school meals across the three central schools totals 16.1%, while 18% of pupils are recorded as having special educational needs (1.7% with statements). The schools include one Catholic and one Church of England Voluntary Aided School. The third, a community school, is the largest 11-16 school in the Borough. In total these three schools draw about 500 pupils from the areas around the three northern schools. The central schools are located quite close together and within easy reach of post-16 provision.

What is good about present secondary provision in Stockton?

Diverse schools with strong community links

1.5. The six mainstream schools all have different and complementary specialisms in technology, maths & ICT, sport, modern foreign languages, humanities, and visual/performing arts (aspiring but not yet designated). There are four community schools, one Church of England VA and one Roman Catholic VA. Schools vary in size from 520 to 1310 with the smaller schools generally located in the more disadvantaged areas. One mainstream school includes a special unit for pupils with physical disabilities. Abbey Hill Special School and Technology College (recently awarded autism accreditation by the National Autistic Society) is the lead school in a Leading Edge Collaborative with the local secondary and two primary schools, and is federated with Westlands School in the south of the Borough. The three northern schools draw the majority of their pupils from their immediate area and have very strong links with these deprived communities. In these areas the local school is often the first port of call for families in need or distress. The two denominational schools serve defined faith communities. All three central schools include an above-average proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Pupil Attainment and Achievement

1.6. Four of the six schools perform in line with national average standards – or above them – at KS3 and KS4. This includes two of the northern schools which have made very significant progress in recent years. Pupil attainment at two schools is below average, but Contextual Value Added scores show that their pupils achieve well compared to those in similar schools elsewhere.

Collaboration

1.7. The three northern schools have a history of shared training initiatives as part of an Education Action Zone. Their governing bodies have now agreed to pursue formal collaboration, focused initially on dealing with challenging behaviour. They all use other providers to broaden their 14-16 curriculum offer, sometimes sharing transport. All are part of a developing Extended School Cluster which forms an Integrated Service Area for delivering children's services.

What are the challenges facing secondary education in Stockton?

Raising attainment

1.8. In spite of very significant progress over time, pupil attainment at two schools remains below national averages (although in line with schools in similar circumstances). There are areas of weakness in specific subject areas (including in the core subjects of maths and English) at different schools.

Improving behaviour and attendance

1.9. Attendance figures of around 90% are below national averages at several schools, while the rate of permanent exclusions is above average.

Falling rolls

1.10. Only two of the six schools have more than 900 pupils, and total pupil numbers are projected to fall below 4,000 in the next ten years. The consequential loss of funding is likely to create staffing problems and affect the curriculum offer at all schools. This may appear to threaten the future viability of one or more schools.

Improving the curriculum offer

1.11. The introduction of fourteen diploma strands in addition to the core curriculum will challenge all these schools, particularly the smallest. Flexibility in curriculum provision is also an essential element in personalised learning and in engaging the disengaged.

Increasing participation in post-16 education and training

1.12. Staying-on rates are below average in the northern schools, where access may be an issue. The Authority will seek to improve participation and achievement post-16 in collaboration with the local LSC, colleges and training providers.

Provision for special needs

1.13. Most of these schools receive an above-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, whether with statements or without. Engaging them more fully is a key challenge.

Delivering integrated services

1.14. Many people in these communities do not have access to (or do not take up) opportunities for education and culture, health and social care, training or employment advice. Improving access to local provision is at the centre of our plans for integrated service delivery based on geographical areas.

How will our BSF strategy address these challenges?

1.15.   Consultation meetings with secondary headteachers and college principals have demonstrated a consensus in support of the following principles:

- The importance of partnerships – schools and colleges working together to share resources, ensure complementary provision and reduce duplication.
- Schools serving the needs of their particular communities – whether defined by geographical area, by faith group, or by special needs.
- Enhancing diversity and promoting choice – building on the existing range of specialisms.
- Integrated service provision – schools as a gateway to services beyond education, in line with Every Child Matters.
- Inclusion – the best possible provision for all appropriate to individual need.
- Schools of appropriate size for their local communities.
- Innovation – forward-looking in building design and curriculum provision, maximising the potential of new technologies.

1.16.   The following paragraphs reflect these principles and the wider objectives of the Council and its partners.

Collaboration

1.17.   The three northern schools developed collaborative models as part of an Education Action Zone and are now working closely together at governing body level to share expertise in their specialisms and to widen the curriculum offer at 14-16. It is the view that large schools are inappropriate for these deprived communities. Pupils there need easy access to local learning centres, small in size, linked by ICT to provide a personalised learning experience.   With the experience of two successful City Learning Centres located in the Borough, Stockton is well placed to develop new models of networked local learning centres appropriate to the needs of these disadvantaged communities.

1.18.   A collegiate approach is at the heart of the Expression of Interest submitted for Stockton's 14-19 Partnership. Building on the effective collaboration that enabled Stockton-on-Tees to be in the first wave of 14-19 Pathfinders, the Collegiate encompasses all secondary schools, two sixth form colleges, the FE college, local LSC, training providers, universities, Connexions, Aim Higher, Excellence in Cities and employers. Building on the specialisms of the schools and colleges (including a Centre of Vocational Excellence for Performing Arts) and the needs of the local economy, the Partnership has identified five specialised diploma strands for early introduction at different centres in Stockton. A varied menu of post-16 options easily accessible to all will be a key element in our strategy to raise participation and achievement.

Integrated service areas

1.19.   Stockton-on-Tees moved quickly to appoint a Corporate Director for Children, Education and Social Care in 2005, followed by a Head of Strategy for Children and Young People (a post jointly funded by North Tees Primary Care Trust). The Borough has been divided into five geographical Integrated Service Areas with the intention that the majority of services for children, young people and families will be commissioned, delivered and managed within each area. This will include multi-disciplinary teams located within the Integrated Service Areas to provide early intervention and support. Schools will be at the heart of this strategy, not just in delivering education and extended school activity, but also in signposting services that can be accessed on other sites in the area. This function is particularly important in the more deprived communities, and both the Council and the Children's Trust Board place a high priority on maintaining secondary schools within those communities.

Personalised learning

1.20.   The strategy for personalised learning in Stockton-on-Tees has five components:
- Assessment for learning
- Effective teaching and learning
- Curriculum entitlement and choice
- Organising schools for personalised learning
- Learning beyond the classroom.

1.21.   All of these will impact on our BSF strategy as we aim to help schools organise their staff and buildings to support greater curriculum choice within the school day, and study support outside it. Through BSF we will look to create flexible learning environments that can adapt to different teaching and learning styles with learning groups of different sizes. Building design and layout will need to support increased use of new technologies as set out in our e-learning strategy.

School organisation

1.22.   Pupil numbers across this group of schools are projected to decline by 1,000 over the next ten years before beginning to rise again. Present patterns of parental preference suggest that the northern schools may be more severely affected than those in the centre, but parents' perceptions of individual schools may change in response to published attainment data. It will clearly be necessary to examine options for changing the number, size or location of schools. This will include considering the possibility of an academy. Full consultation with parents, school staff and governors will take place when options have been identified and appraised. The Authority will seek to ensure that any proposals for change are consistent with parents' preferences, with integrated service delivery and with the Council's regeneration programme.

1.23.   Large-scale regeneration is under way on brownfield sites close to Stockton town centre and along the north bank of the River Tees. When completed, these projects will create up to 2,000 new homes as well as new commercial outlets and employment opportunities. The Council and its partners on the Local Strategic Partnership *Renaissance* believe that Building Schools for the Future will help to ensure the success of these ambitious schemes as renewed school provision attracts new residents and businesses to these areas. As part of this strategy we would aim to integrate BSF developments with improvements to primary school provision under the Primary Capital Programme.

Inclusion and special needs

1.24.   A recent review of provision for pupils with complex needs produced a development strategy that aims to create world class local, integrated services for children with complex needs, with delivery centred upon schools as the hub of provision. This will involve the co-ordination of services delivered across the four special schools, linked to the PRUs and mainstream schools, and integrated with health care and social care provision. There is an urgent need to improve year-round residential provision and facilities for respite care, and also to rationalise day provision so that pupils are taught in the setting most appropriate to their needs. One priority project is to enlarge Abbey Hill School so that a greater number of pupils with learning difficulty or autistic spectrum disorder may benefit from the excellent provision at this accredited school. Abbey Hill has recently federated with Westlands School in Thornaby, and this expansion would allow governors to rationalise provision across the two centres.

Innovation

1.25.   The Authority has an ambitious e-learning strategy encompassing the full continuum from early years to post-16 and beyond into lifelong learning. We are committed to transforming teaching and learning through ICT and fully embedding ICT and e-Learning across the curriculum to offer learners:

- more flexible, safer learning;
- more choice, more enjoyment and fun;
- more personalised learning;
- e-Learning available beyond the working day;
- more challenge and support.

1.26.   We recognise the limitations imposed on teaching and learning by the design and layout of traditional school buildings.   We aim in the future to provide educational establishments that offer flexible community learning environments, with multipurpose, modular spaces. Driven by the requirements of teaching and learning, these dynamic spaces will be able to change to meet diverse requirements. Children in the future will not learn in boxes designed for groups of thirty. Their teacher may be in a different building or in a different country. At different times their "classroom" may be in a school, a library, a workplace or their own home: a virtual school, but real learning. We see this as the way to engage the disengaged, to raise aspirations and attainment, to maximise the potential of all our young people in Stockton-on-Tees.

1.27.   The Stockton-on-Tees strategy for Building Schools for the Future is at an early stage of development, and the Council acknowledges that much further work needs to be done in consultation with stakeholders and partners. Our first priority in this process will be to complete the ongoing work on the education elements of a Strategy for Change (i.e. teaching and learning, ICT developments, 14-19 curriculum, workforce remodelling). This will then feed into our estate strategy and integrated service area strategy, including carrying out option appraisals to identify potential school organisation proposals and specific building projects. We envisage that by summer 2007 a complete draft Strategy for Change will be available for general consultation.

2. BSF Estate Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees

Diversity of provision and parental preference

2.1. The three mainstream schools in the northern area (Bishopsgarth, Blakeston, and The Norton) are all 11-16 community schools. Their diversity lies in their complementary specialisms: sport, humanities, and maths &ICT. Bishopsgarth includes a special unit for pupils with physical disabilities. Abbey Hill Special School offers 11-19 provision.

2.2. The three schools in the central area also have diverse specialisms: technology, languages, and performing arts (not yet designated). There is one community school (Grangefield), one Catholic VA (Our Lady & St Bede's) and one Church of England VA (Ian Ramsey). They draw pupils from a wide area, due to the distribution of faith communities and also to parental preference. All are 11-16, but are in close proximity to a sixth form college.

Demographic trends

2.3. Total pupil numbers for the six schools are projected to decline from almost 5,000 to around 4,000 in ten years before starting to rise again. All six schools are likely to be affected by falling rolls. Empty places in the central schools may be taken up by residents in the northern area. Two schools are projected to fall below 500 pupils within two years. Significant housing development is planned in these areas, but the long-term viability of the northern schools must be in question unless patterns of parental preference change.

Community and regeneration factors

2.4. The three northern schools serve highly deprived communities and are very active in developing out of school activities for children, parents and the wider community. The Council sees retaining school buildings in these areas as essential as bases for integrated service provision for hard to reach communities. Improved educational facilities will be consistent with the aims of large-scale regeneration programmes in this area.

Asset Management Plan priorities

2.5. Condition and suitability data indicate a need for complete replacement of The Norton (built 1964) and Blakeston (1960) buildings. Grangefield (1945) and Our Lady & St Bede's (1964) are sound buildings but unsuitable in terms of room size or DDA compliance. Major remodelling is needed here. Ian Ramsey (1960 and 1963) and Bishopsgarth (1970) have sound blocks needing only refurbishment but at least one block at each school requires replacement with new build. All sites are large enough to accommodate new building. The site of The Norton School suffers from poor road access. Other access arrangements or any other site options in the same area will be examined.

2.6. Abbey Hill Special School and Technology College (1991 and 2005) needs only refurbishment, but its federated partner Westlands needs major remodelling to fit its intended role as a specialist centre for BESD with 52-week residential accommodation. King Edwin residential special school was renovated in 2002 but needs further refurbishment in places. The Bishopton Centre PRU (1970) is in poor condition.

Options for change under BSF

2.7. The three central schools are likely to be retained at a similar size on their present sites, renewed by BSF as indicated above. Options for the northern schools will be considered during the 2006-07 school year. Initial meetings have already taken place with headteachers, college principals and staff from the local LSC. When all options have been identified and appraised, a full programme of consultation will take place involving school governing bodies, parents, children and young people.

BSF Headline Strategic Vision for ICT in Stockton-on-Tees

2.8.　　Our vision is of Stockton as a vibrant e-learning community, encompassing the full continuum of learning from early years to post-16 and beyond into lifelong learning. The vision is underpinned by an ambitious strategy, jointly planned and collaboratively delivered, drawing on the full range of skills, knowledge and expertise that exists in Stockton schools, colleges, the local authority and external partners. Recognising that e-learning is constantly evolving, our strategy embraces the new, and ensures that development and support go hand in hand.

2.9.　　We are committed to transforming teaching and learning, developing management information systems to support the Every Child Matters agenda, and contributing fully and proactively to the Children's Information Sharing agenda. Stockton-on-Tees intends ICT to be a key enabler of change, allowing significant improvements in the key areas highlighted in the DfES 'Harnessing Technology' document. This will include:

2.10.　　Improving outcomes for children and young people through personalised learning environments, shared ideas, more exciting lessons and online help for professionals. Enabling teachers and lecturers to create, adapt, re-use and share resources by giving them common access to rich, subject-related e-learning resources.

2.11.　　Developing the Internet as a key delivery channel for learners by providing online information and services covering all education institutions and settings, courses, qualifications and flexible learning opportunities for children, young people and their parents.

2.12.　　Blending current technologies and maximising the opportunities offered by newly emerging ICT developments. Creating multipurpose, modular spaces driven by the requirements of teaching and learning, capable of changing to meet diverse requirements.

2.13.　　Building an open, accessible system, with more information and services online for parents and carers, children, young people, adult learners and employers; and more cross-organisation collaboration to improve personalised support and choice. Achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness, with online research, access to shared ideas and lesson plans, improved systems and processes in children's services, shared procurement and easier administration. Support subject-based collaboration via online networks.

2.14.　　Promoting and embedding a culture of equality and diversity in the provision of all ICT resources and opportunities. Engaging 'hard to reach' learners, with special needs support, more motivating ways of learning, and more choice about how to learn.

2.15.　　Developing and maintaining an integrated high-speed network for learning, teaching, assessment, research and administrative functions within the sector. Providing the basis for efficient data transfer and data sharing between central government and educational institutions, the authority and learners. Ensuring practitioners have appropriate access to relevant and timely information by fully engaging in national initiatives such as eCAF and the Information Sharing Index. Ensuring every learner has appropriate access to technology, regardless of time and location via the effective use of emerging secure remote access and mobile working technologies.

2.16.　　Engaging staff in all aspects of the process and adopting of clear, effective training and technical support resources to underpin all ICT developments.

3. Commitment to the BSF model in Stockton-on-Tees

Corporate Management Team

3.1.　　The Authority's Corporate Management Team has received updates on the national BSF programme at intervals since July 2004. Following receipt of the Readiness to Deliver letter from DfES, a special CMT meeting was convened on 4 August 2006 to consider a detailed report on the requirements for the submission. At a further meeting in September, the following statement was agreed:

"The Corporate Management Team of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council understands these features integral to the national programme of Building Schools for the Future:
- in general, funding for new-build schools is likely to be through PFI, and refurbishment is likely to be funded by grant or supported borrowing, as determined in each case by DfES and Partnerships for Schools;
- a Local Education Partnership will be the default delivery vehicle for BSF;
- the local BSF programme will include an integrated managed ICT service.

"CMT will recommend to Cabinet that a letter confirming the Authority's commitment to accept these features of BSF should be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive and submitted to DfES and Partnerships for Schools."

Cabinet

3.2.　　The Cabinet of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council considered a draft Readiness to Deliver Submission at a meeting on 5 October 2006. The following recommendations were agreed:
- that the draft Readiness to Deliver document be submitted on behalf of the Authority to DfES and Partnerships for Schools on 13 October 2006;
- that a letter confirming the Authority's commitment in principle to accept the national BSF funding and procurement model be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive and attached to the Readiness to Deliver submission.

4. BSF Project Management Arrangements for Stockton-on-Tees

Commitment of Elected Members

4.1.   With the agreement of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet, elected member representation on the Project Board will be the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

Project Management in Stockton-on-Tees

4.2.   Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has adopted an approach to the management of all major projects based on the PRINCE2 process. Officers in relevant posts are routinely trained in project management, and through the Council's intranet can access guidance manuals and templates for every stage of the process.

Project Board

4.3.   The Board will consist of these members:

Name	Role/Organisation
George Garlick	Chief Executive
Jenny Haworth	Deputy Chief Executive
Ann Baxter	Corporate Director for Children, Education and Social Care
Julie Danks	Corporate Director of Resources
Neil Schneider	Corporate Director for Development & Neighbourhood Services
David Bond	Director of Law and Democracy
Coun. Alex Cunningham	Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
Malcolm Stephenson	Senior ICT adviser
Yet to be appointed	Design Champion
Chair of secondary heads and principals' group. *School governor to be appointed.*	School Representatives
Contact to be advised	Partnerships for Schools

4.4.   The first six names on this list make up the Council's Corporate Management Team. Building Schools for the Future is seen very much as a corporate project aiming to complement the Council's extensive regeneration programme.

4.5.   The Board will meet at monthly intervals beginning in January 2007.

Project Sponsor

4.6.   The Project Sponsor will be Ann Baxter, Corporate Director for Children, Education and Social Care.

Project Director

4.7.   The Project Director will be Peter Seller, Head of Strategy for Children and Young People.

4.8.   The Project Director will report to monthly meetings of the Project Board and send monthly reports to Partnerships for Schools. Regular reports will also be made to stakeholder bodies including the Schools Forum and Children's Trust Board.

4.9.   The Project Director will be responsible for overall control of project resources.

Project Team

4.10. The Project Team will consist of the following members:

Name	Role/Organisation
Peter Seller	Head of Strategy for Children and Young People, CESC
Sally Walton	Senior Adviser, secondary education, CESC
Ian Thompson	Head of Regeneration, DNS
Ken Richardson	Assets and Facilities Manager, CESC
Garry Cummings	Finance Manager
David Bowstead	ICT Development Manager, CESC
Jill Douglas	Principal Solicitor
Eric Jewitt	Extended Schools Strategy Manager, CESC
Gordon Mallory	Architectural Manager, DNS
Vince Rutland	PR and Communications Manager
Yet to be appointed	Human Resources
Jim Bell	Risk and Insurance Manager
John Hegarty	Planning and Policy Development Officer, CESC

4.11. In this table CESC means that the named officer is based in the Authority's Children, Education and Social Care service grouping, while DNS stands for Development and Neighbourhood Services. Officers without these descriptors are part of the corporate structure, working across both service groupings.

4.12. The Project Team will meet at weekly intervals beginning in January 2007.

4.13. The core team will be supplemented at different points by other officers of the Council for specialist support in areas such as Sure Start, Special Educational Needs, Planning, Transportation, and Land & Property.

4.14. External adviser support will be engaged when the place of Stockton Group 2 in the national programme is confirmed.

Project Manager

4.15. The Project Manager will be John Hegarty.

4.16. The Project Manager, in consultation with the Project Director, will be responsible for drafting the Project Implementation Document for the approval of the Project Board, using the template provided by Partnerships for Schools. This will include:
- project objectives, scope, deliverables and constraints;
- project organisation structure;
- communications plan;
- project planning, reporting, and approvals;
- budget profile;
- risk management arrangements.

4.17. The Project Manager will maintain a Project Plan using Microsoft Project.

5. BSF Support Network in Stockton-on-Tees

5.1.   The Corporate Management Team of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has considered the range of work streams likely to be involved in managing the local BSF project, the capacity of existing officers to undertake this work, and the need to engage external adviser support. Heads of Service have been asked to carry out a detailed assessment of current capacity based on the Scope of Services information in the seven BSF Frameworks published by Partnerships for Schools. The following is an interim report, as this work is not yet completed.

5.2.   The Authority has identified existing officers to provide advice and support in these areas:
Education strategy
- Head of School Effectiveness
- Senior Secondary Adviser (member of BSF Project Team)
- Managers of two City Learning Centres
- Specialist Learning Support Manager
- Behaviour Learning Service Manager

Integrated service provision
- Sure Start Manager
- Principal Manager, Children and Families (Social Care)
- Partnership Development Manager
- Extended Schools Strategy Manager (member of BSF Project Team)

Project management
- BSF Project Manager (member of BSF Project Team)

Communications
- Head of Policy, Performance and Communications
- Corporate PR and Communications Manager (member of BSF Project Team)

5.3.   The Project Team will also include:
- a Principal Solicitor
- ICT Strategy Manager
- Finance Manager,
- Architectural Manager
- Assets & Facilities Manager.

5.4.   A need for specialist external support has been identified in these areas:
- Legal
- Technical
- Finance
- ICT.

5.5.   The Corporate Management Team has recommended to Cabinet that resources to fund advice and support be made available from 1 April 2007. When the place of Stockton-on-Tees in the national BSF programme is confirmed, the Authority will hold competitions to select and appoint external advisers in accordance with the BSF Frameworks.

6. Corporate capacity in Stockton-on-Tees

6.1.   Stockton-on-Tees was created as a unitary authority in April 1996. In the decade since then the Authority has successfully implemented a wide range of strategic investment projects. Six new school buildings have been completed (with two more in design or procurement); a major town-centre commercial development (two more planned), and two large-scale housing regeneration projects are under way. A few of these are described below.

Education projects

- Ingleby Barwick Community Campus. A 600-place Church of England Secondary School, a 210-place community primary school with 39-place nursery, and a community library designed, constructed, financed and operated under a PFI contract. Constructed with a capital value of £10.7m, the project was completed on schedule in August 2003.

- Stockton and Teesside City Learning Centres. Two CLCs designed and constructed under a partnering arrangement with a regional construction company. The buildings feature innovative design and ICT installations including cyber-cafés and flexible conference spaces. Both were completed on schedule in 2002 and within a total budget of £2.4m.

- Ingleby Mill Primary School. A 630-place primary school with 39-place nursery (in integrated foundation unit) designed in-house and constructed under a partnering arrangement with a regional company in 2005. Construction cost of £4.7m with associated infrastructure costs of £2.3m.

- New Hardwick primary school. New premises for a 210-place community primary school with 26-place nursery within a £13m major housing regeneration project in an area of very high deprivation. Currently in procurement with a £4m budget and expected to open during 2008.

- New primary school in Roseworth. A new 420-place primary school with 39-place nursery to replace two existing schools in an area of high deprivation. Currently at design stage, expected to open September 2008.

Regeneration and infrastructure projects

- Wellington Square shopping centre
  The £43m Wellington Square shopping development was a partnership between the Borough Council and the Wellington Square Development Company. Opened in 2001, it provides 17,380 m^2 of retail space, with 45 new shop units, and a 800 space car park. Major retailers include Marks & Spencer, Debenhams, River Island, W H Smith, HMV, Teesside's first H&M, Top Shop, Allsport, Superdrug and Café Nero.

- Northshore
  Currently finalising the development agreements with a private-sector partner for a £280m development of the Tees North Shore in partnership with Tees Valley Regeneration. The scheme includes 66,000 m^2 of office space, academic facilities, 480 apartments and family housing, parking, riverside development and a new footbridge to Teesdale.

- Mandale and Hardwick housing schemes
  The Council is currently delivering two large-scale housing regeneration projects in the borough on the Mandale and Hardwick Estates. Both schemes are being delivered in partnership with private developers, housing associations and local stakeholders. The schemes will see the demolition of over 1000 unpopular and unsustainable homes with

new homes for sale and rent constructed on the cleared sites. To date over 650 properties have been demolished and over 140 households have moved into a new homes at Mandale. The wider benefits of the schemes include training and employment opportunities for local young people, improvements to the wider infrastructure such as highways, improved open space and play provision and the construction of a replacement school at Hardwick.

- South Stockton Link Road
  Local Transport Plan funding was secured in 1999 to construct South Stockton Link. The objectives of the scheme were to reduce congestion by providing a third access to Ingleby Barwick, Europe's largest housing estate, remove through traffic between Stockton town centre and the national trunk road network. The road opened to traffic 12 months ahead of the planned programme and the predicted outturn is within 0.3% of the 1999 budget.

Corporate capacity

6.2.   Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council maintains a multi-discipline Property Development Division including 10 Architectural staff, 8 Building Surveyors, 5 Quantity Surveyors, Electrical and Mechanical Engineers together with Energy Management, responsive Maintenance Inspectors, Asbestos Survey team and Clerk of Works. In-house staff are supported through a framework agreement with W S Atkins for the supply of Architectural, Quantity Surveying, Building Surveying, Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering Services. This arrangement commenced in 2003 for an initial 3 year period and will be extended for an additional 2 years. Engineering services are procured through a similar partnering arrangement with Arups for Structural Engineering, Geotechnical Engineering, Highway Engineering and Environmental Engineering (including Traffic and environmental impact analysis).

6.3.   The Property Development Division handles approximately £30million of capital and revenue work per year. The division has ISO9001 accreditation through Lloyds Register Quality Assurance, Investors in People status, and Beacon status for Rethinking Construction.

Corporate procurement strategy

6.4.   Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council developed a Procurement Strategy in response to the Byatt Report, subsequently updated to address the National Procurement Strategy for local government 2003. The strategy includes a set of principles and objectives for improving procurement and is supported both by the Member Champion, the Deputy Leader and senior management champion, the Corporate Director of Resources.

Lessons learned

6.5.   Generally the authority has found that small/medium sized contracts are better value for money if the traditional tendering route is used while major contracts can be either partnered as tender but still embracing partnering concepts in terms of communication, co-operation and respect.

7. Key stakeholder commitment and consultation arrangements

General consultation
7.1.   This submission reflects the following local plans and strategies, among others:
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Secondary school strategy
- School Organisation Plan
- Education Asset Management Plan Statement of Priorities
- 14-19 Strategy
- Extended schools/integrated service area strategy
- ICT and e-learning strategy
- Review of provision for children with complex needs
- Corporate regeneration strategy.

7.2.   These were developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholder groups and organisations including:
- Stockton-on-Tees Secondary Heads and Principals Association
  - Chair: Mr D Youldon, Northfield School 01642 557373
- Tees Valley Learning and Skills Council
  - Local officer: Ms V Goodrum 01642 743186
- Stockton-on-Tees Children's Trust Board
  - Chair: Councillor A Cunningham 01642 527825
- the Local Strategic Partnership *Renaissance* and its four area boards
- School governing bodies
- Four Diocesan Directors of Education
- Stockton Residents and Community Groups Association and other voluntary organisations
- North Tees Primary Care Trust and other health authorities
- Cleveland Police, youth justice and probation services.

Specific consultation on BSF strategy
7.3.   A series of meetings took place in June, July and September this year with secondary headteachers, college principals and representatives of the local LSC to agree the principles on which our Strategy for Change should be developed. This will be done in three stages, in consultation with relevant stakeholders:
- September to December 2006 - completing ongoing work on the education elements of BSF (i.e. teaching and learning, ICT, 14-19 curriculum, workforce remodelling). Regular meetings are scheduled with secondary heads and principals, diocesan directors, extended school cluster groups, local LSC.
- January to April 2007 – developing the estate strategy and integrated service area strategy, including option appraisals to identify preferred and alternative school organisation proposals for general consultation. Stakeholder meetings as above plus Schools Asset Management Group, PCT, school governing bodies and staff, community and voluntary organisations and DfES.
- May to October 2007 – general consultation on Strategy for Change including specific school organisation proposals. Young people, parents and carers, staff unions and the general public will be added to the stakeholder lists above.

Communications
7.4.   BSF-specific areas will be created on the Council's website and intranet and updated at regular intervals. Media announcements will be made, and enquiries handled, by the Council's communications and PR team.

8. Risk Management in Stockton-on-Tees

Corporate approach to Risk Management

8.1.   It is essential that the risks to achieving the Council's objectives are identified and managed in order to create an environment without surprises, provide improved services to the community and achieve better value for money without significantly increasing workloads.

8.2.   The Council's approach aims to embed risk management within existing processes and reviews rather than treating it as a separate function. It also aims to support a culture of continuous improvement and development, with appetite for risk-taking at all levels supported by well thought through decision making. The strategy is periodically reviewed to ensure that it reflects the business needs of the authority, remains challenging and responsive to Government direction and requirements.

8.3.   A comprehensive range of policy and support documentation is in use across the authority to help achieve consistency of identification and treatment across the whole organisation. These include a Guide to the Identification and Assessment of Strategic Risk, a Risk Identification & Assessment pro-forma linked to a scoring mechanism and risk ranking criteria, advice on Categories of Risk, and Risk Implications guidelines for use in Cabinet Reports. There is also a formal Statement on the Council's Risk Management Policy with Defined Roles and Responsibilities for elected members and officers.

8.4.   Each service area within the authority has completed a risk profile. This information is moderated in line with the corporate approach.   The Council's Risk Management Team provide ongoing support to Service Grouping Management Teams to advance progress. Regular one-day Managing Risk and Opportunity training courses are held for managers as part of the authority's Basic Core Management Skills Programme. Risk Management awareness information is also included in elected members' Induction Training sessions and facilitated workshops.

8.5.   A Risk Management Forum Group has been established to communicate, promote and monitor the Council's approach to risk management within all aspects of its own business and shared working arrangements with external bodies. The forum is tasked with sharing advice and providing guidance to Service Groupings on risk management, reviewing key strategic risks and the effectiveness of controls, and maintaining the Council's risk register. Service Groupings report progress to the Risk Management Forum Group at quarterly intervals. This information feeds into the Corporate Risk Register and is reported to the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) and to Cabinet via the Audit Committee.

8.6.   Risk Management is included in the Council's Procurement Strategy and in project management and partnership working arrangements to ensure that risk is managed at every stage of the process.

8.7.   Annual reviews of the authority's risk management services by the Audit Commission have produced positive feedback. Progress made within the area of risk management contributed to the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment rating which improved from good to excellent between 2002 and 2004 and was assessed as 4 stars – Improving well in 2005.

Identifying risks associated with Building Schools for the Future

8.8.   A preliminary exercise has identified the following areas of risk associated with BSF:

Project planning and management
- Identifying/recruiting/retaining appropriately skilled people
- Securing sufficient resources
- Securing approvals of project plan, outline business case, OJEU notice
- Meeting national criteria and deadlines

Consultation and stakeholder involvement
- Participation of headteachers, governing bodies, colleges, dioceses
- Views of parents, school staff, students
- Commitment of elected members and partner organisations
- Time constraints

National policy issues
- Academies
- Diversity and parental choice
- 14-19 curriculum provision
- Use of external consultants
- Managed ICT service
- Local Education Partnership
- Changes to school funding arrangements

Local priorities/issues
- Change in the political balance of the Council
- Impact on other Council programmes
- Integrated service areas/community needs
- Environmental impact/ transport issues
- Demographics
- Availability of sites/playing field issues

Procurement and implementation
- Statutory processes around changes to school organisation
- Affordability
- Design issues
- OJEU procurement process
- Insufficient or inadequate bids
- Legal/contractual issues
- Cost inflation
- Failure of Local Education Partnership

Managing these and other risks

8.9.   Under the guidance of the Authority's Risk and Insurance Manager (a member of the proposed BSF Project Team) a full risk assessment process will be undertaken. All predicted risks will be identified and assessed based on a combination of their likelihood of occurring and the impact if they do, to enable prioritisation for action on the most important strategic issues. An action plan and risk register will be maintained and reviewed at monthly intervals.