



partnerships for schools

This case study looks at Peterborough City Council's bidders' day for the PFS National Framework panel members in Peterborough.

The objective of the event was to secure interest in the Academy and BSF programme in Peterborough, and provide potential bidders with a clear insight into the vision of the local authority and schools.

Key project information

Local authority: Peterborough City Council
Schools: Ormiston Bushfield Academy (OBA) - sample scheme, Orton Longueville School (OLS), Stanground College (SC)
No. of pupils: OBA- 950, OLS - 1,400, SC - 1,800
Project cost: OBA -£23m, OLS - £20m, SC - £40m. ICT- £20m
Project timescales: OBA building completion July 2012; OLS and SC building completion June 2013
Partners: Technical Advisers - Rider Levett Bucknall; Feasibility Architects -Parsons Brinckerhoff

Organising a bidders' day: the experiences of Peterborough City Council

Project description

Peterborough City Council hosted a bidders' day in October 2009 to secure interest in and provide information to the Framework Panel Members regarding the construction projects at Ormiston Bushfield Academy, Orton Longueville School and Stanground College all in the south of Peterborough. Together with funding for new ICT facilities, the programme will not only transform physical school environments but also support new ways of teaching and learning for young people in Peterborough.

The Ormiston Bushfield Academy and BSF programme includes the following:

- A new building for the Ormiston Bushfield Academy which is currently operating in the predecessor school buildings
- Remodelling and refurbishment of Orton Longueville School
- A re-build of Stanground College
- ICT investment for all secondary schools in Peterborough (to be procured separately)

Who was involved in the bidders' day?

The bidders' day was organised and facilitated by Peterborough's project team and involved input from a range of stakeholders including schools. A booklet was produced by the team for distribution amongst panel members with input from the headteachers of the three schools.

The headteachers and staff from the three schools in the south of the city agreed to provide an introductory session with the headteacher and conducted a tour of their school site for the panel members. This proved a very successful way to give panel members with the opportunity to meet the headteacher, learn more about each school's vision and ethos, and ask site specific questions. It also enabled the headteachers to have their first contact with a potential future contractor.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University hosted the bidders' day, introduced speakers, explained the strategic importance of the project to the city, hosted the question and answer session, and accompanied panel members on the first

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school tour. The Executive Director Children's Services delivered a presentation to panel members outlining the priorities for Children's Services and the importance of the project to young people in Peterborough. The Project Manager provided project background. The Technical Adviser and Feasibility Architect took part in the question and answer session and the tour of schools, networking with panel members and responding to project specific questions.

The Feasibility Architect also presented the feasibility designs to panel members and provided drawings for display at the bidders' day venue. The local authority Communications Officer ensured that there was a press release announcing the bidders' day as a milestone event and liaised with the PfS Regional Information Officer regarding the overall project communications strategy.

Bidders' day structure/arrangements

Initial discussion was held amongst the project team regarding the structure and arrangements for the bidders' day in line with the project requirements and timescales. Agreement was secured from the academy Sponsor, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University and Executive Director Children's Services to their involvement in addition to the project team and partners.

The date for the bidders' day was agreed and communicated with PfS, senior local authority officers, project board and cabinet members. The agenda was drafted and arrangements communicated with the three schools who all agreed to take part in the day. In order to minimise the time commitment for headteachers, it was agreed that they would provide an introductory briefing to panel members prior to a guided tour of the school which could be conducted by a member of school staff.

Invitations were sent via email to all panel members, with a request for names of attendees, offering a maximum of five places per panel member. A series of informal meetings with panel members had been held prior to the bidders' day where the proposed date for the event had been discussed. Invitations were also sent to the PfS Project Director, PfS Regional Information Officer and Project Board Members.

The bidders' day agenda enabled contextual information to be provided to panel members prior to taking part in guided tours of the three schools. The

agenda included a morning session offering strategic context for Peterborough, a summary of the priorities for Children's Services and an outline of the project including timescales. This session concluded with a question and answer session.

Panel members' questions to the project team and partners included:

- Clarification of the procurement process
- Details of capital costs
- Confirmation of levels of engagement with the local community and school staff
- Confirmation of the numbers of design engagement meetings anticipated
- Timescales for procuring the ICT Managed Service provider.

Following the question and answer session, panel members were transported by coach for a guided tour of Ormiston Bushfield Academy (sample scheme) followed by lunch at the Academy. This provided further scope for networking and the opportunity to find out more about the Academy and its vision for the future. The afternoon session included guided tours to Orton Longueville School and Stanground College and a concluding question and answer session. Travel time for school tours was structured into the agenda.

The venue for the bidders' day was selected for value for money, quality of facilities, ample free parking and good road links. The venue also allowed for ease of collection and drop off by coach.

A bidders' day brochure was produced providing contextual information regarding Peterborough and brief summary of details for the three schools as well as an outline of the programme of work with timescales.

Outcomes and impact

- Clear, cohesive approach to promoting the project to panel members
- Strong representation from cabinet, Children's Services and partners demonstrating local authority commitment to project
- Very positive feedback that the bidders' day provided panel members with an opportunity to meet the headteachers of the schools involved and familiarise themselves with the school sites and the overall project.

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What could have been done better?

There was no direct involvement from young people during the bidders' day. It would have been possible to have involved the young people in the introductory sessions and guided tours at each school.

"I believe the way Peterborough City Council handled its BSF bidders' day was impressive. It gave all interested parties the chance to understand all the same information about the expectations of the council both from officers and a political perspective and from the consultants working on the project on behalf of the government and the council. The tour of the sites and the journey around the city gave the bidders a chance to obtain an all important feel for the area which I believe will influence the final product."

Cllr John Holdich OBE, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University

Key contact

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Further information

More information about Peterborough's BSF project can be found at: www.peterborough.gov.uk/children_and_families/schools/schools_for_the_future.aspx

A copy of the brochure produced for the event can be downloaded at: www.peterborough.gov.uk/pdf/child-schools-Ormiston_BrochureFinal.pdf