# Annex 3: Strategic outline case (SOC) template

**Executive summary**

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| **1500 Words Maximum**This should be a concise summary of the proposal.What do you want to do? (At this point, you will have moved from a long list, to a short list of options. However, it would be useful if you could state your preferred way forward at this point)Who are the beneficiaries?Why do you need to do it?What will it achieve in terms of benefits to condition, capacity and reduction of costs?What is the estimated cost?What is the proposed timescale?e.g. This is a proposal to build a new 11-19 school on an existing site for 1,500 learners.This will address surplus capacity / poor building condition in the existing school.It will result in the replacement of a Category D school with one that is Category A. It will reduce surplus capacity by 200 places, bringing the current surplus down to below 10% and we anticipate a £20k per annum revenue saving in respect of energy costs.The cost of the preferred option is estimated to be £10 million. However, more detailed analysis will take place in the OBC stage.Summary of the findings within each of the five sections of the Business Case.What support has been provided to this project i.e. Cabinet. |

**Strategic case**

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| 2000 Words MaximumThe purpose of this is to detail the strategic context of the case.Strategic Fit* which should consider strategic drivers for the investment and the associated strategies, programmes and plans at a national, regional and local level.

Case for change* What are your investment objectives? These should be strategic; measureable; achievable; relevant and time-constrained (SMART).
* Summarise the existing arrangements
* Summarise the investment need
* Identify the potential solutions
* Identify the benefits and risks
* Identify any constraints and dependencies
* It may be helpful to consider the case in terms of the following, which is expanded in the Economic Case:
	+ - a minimum scope – essential or core requirements/outcomes
		- an intermediate scope – essential and desirable requirements/outcomes
		- a maximum scope – essential, desirable and optional requirements/outcomes.

There are a number of key questions that should be answered when the case for change is addressed. These include:**General*** What are the names, location and types (e.g. community, voluntary aided) of schools affected by the proposal?
* What is the proposed age range and language medium of the provision?
* What is the location of the provision and the location of any provision which is to be replaced, if different?
* Why has this location been chosen?
* What is the condition of the school or college that you wish to replace/refurbish/relocate?
* What is the current capacity of the school?
* What is the demand for places at the school? If an increase in demand is forecast please provide evidence of the uptake in future years.
* What are the results of any catchment area review? (as an alternative to expanding provision at a location).
* How will the proposed project reduce surplus capacity/how will the proposed project meet demand for school places?
* What is the proposed size of provision, with details of any nursery, sixth form or additional learning needs provision?
* If additional needs provision is proposed, information on the needs of the pupils to be admitted
* Proposed transitional arrangements and the impact on standards
* What is the condition of the school/college that you wish to replace/refurbish/relocate or amend catchment?
* What is the current capacity of the school/college?
* What is the demand for places at the school/college? (with regard to secondary and all through schools, has a timetable been run across the proposed room/facility capacity to ensure the proposed school size isn’t too big/too small?)
* How will the proposed project reduce surplus capacity meet demand for school/college places?
* What will be the impact of this project be on nearby schools and colleges – will it increase surplus capacity elsewhere/will it address sufficiency of places in the area?
* How does the school/college work with other providers in the area?
* Please confirm that you have completed and appended an Equality Impact Assessment and a Children's Rights Impact Assessment.

**Welsh medium education** – this is a mandatory requirement.  If the information is not detailed in your business case, it will be rejected.* Does the proposed project impact upon the availability of Welsh medium provision? Confirm that the project is in accordance with (or enhances) commitments in your Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
* Provide details about how the proposal will contribute to the Welsh Government’s commitment of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 (e.g. expanded provision or change of linguistic category) or clarify why this is not appropriate and note the evidence base to support that decision

Examples might include:* + How the project will lead to an increase in the number of Welsh medium places available (e.g. new Welsh medium school or unit; expansion of existing school or unit).
	+ How the investment will be used as a catalyst to move schools along the linguistic continuum (e.g. increasing Welsh medium provision within the school; establishing a Welsh medium unit).

**Childcare/Nursery**Provide details about the way you have considered how your proposal could accommodate early years and/or pre school service provision.Will the project have any impact on:* nursery places
* early years education
* play areas
* after school care
* wrap around childcare
* Special Educational Needs provision
* Welsh medium provision
* Further Education provision
* sports facilities
* holiday play schemes

outside space for play and recreational opportunities* wider community benefits for instance use of building and facilities outside school hours?

An appraisal of the childcare needs in the locality of the proposed development need to be taken into consideration within the business case. This appraisal should take into account the Local Authority Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Both current and future needs must be assessed. It should be ensured that there are sufficient flexible and additional spaces in each development to ensure that new and innovative ways of supporting parent’s child care needs can be met. This should include facilities which could provide full day care, wrap around care, breakfast clubs, out of school and holiday provision and be accessible to children with special educational needs. **Learner Travel Policy*** Has the local authority assessed the travel needs of learners in their area in accordance with their statutory duty under Learner Travel Measure 2008?
* Has the local authority assessed the potential travel needs of learners who will attend the new school?
* What will be the impact on the number of learners eligible for free transport under the age, distance, aptitude criteria? Have the on-going cost implications of this been considered?
* What is the impact on journey times between home and school?
* Has the local authority risk assessed the walked routes to school?
* What will the impact on learner travel be? Will the project reduce or increase the opportunities for learners to walk or cycle to school?

**School Performance*** What are your transitional arrangements for learners – how will learner outcomes be maintained during the period of the build?
* What are the proposed curriculum benefits?
* What are the proposed targets for improvements in attainment?
* Please give details of current school performance, including Estyn inspection outcomes, and learner outcomes along with projections of measureable improvements to these figures for each phase of learning. This will ensure that a comparison pre and post-investment can be made and will demonstrate that the impact on learner outcomes has been fully considered. Please confirm whether your regional education consortium is appraised of the proposals.

**Community/sports facilities*** What impact will the project have on the community? Will there be any loss or addition to community facilities such as leisure centres or sports/playing grounds/fields/community halls? If so:
* have you actively consulted/involved the local authority’s own leisure/sports development team in the early stages of the preparation of the business case?
* is the project being considered as part of the wider collaboration work around rugby, football and hockey pitches (3G, ATP & grass)?
* has the guidance document, *Facilities for Future Generations: A blueprint for sport and active recreation in Wales* been considered?  <http://sport.wales/news--events/news--events/our-news/latest-news/new-blueprint-launched-for-future-fit-sports-facilities-in-wales.aspx?lang=en&>

You may also wish to speak to Sport Wales for technical advice regarding projects that impact upon existing sports facilities or include the development of new facilities. Please contact Ceri Richards, Sport Wales ceri.richards@sport.wales or 029 20338246.**Youth Engagement** * Proposals must consider wider government priorities so that new buildings or refurbishments provide appropriate or flexible spaces to deliver Welsh Government education strategies including curriculum reform.
* Does the proposed project enable effective delivery of the new curriculum in Wales? For example, does it consider open-plan areas, individual or quiet learning areas, discussion zones, innovative spaces to learn and play or outdoor learning facilities?

Please refer back to the Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) noting any key changes since the production and approval of this document. |

**Economic case**

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| **2000 Words Maximum**The purpose of this section is to take your long list of options and bring it down to a short list.It is important that you identify your critical success factors at this stage. For example, does the option fit with local/national strategies? Does the option provide good value for money? Is the option deliverable? Is the achievable in the timeframe? Is the option affordable? Is the option socially/politically acceptable? Does the option enable resources such as sports facilities and pitches to be used by the local community or clubs thereby helping to improve sustainability? Does the option support different styles of teaching and learning?Each option should be assessed against both the investment objectives and critical success factors and carried forward or discounted as appropriate.These options should be examined as a group exercise and that you record the time, date and attendees involved in this process.As a minimum, each option should include:* a brief description of the option;
* a recording of each option’s advantages and disadvantages;
* a recording on the conclusion reached in respect of the option;
* the reasoning behind any decision made, particularly when an option is discounted.

Use of the options framework is encouraged.Following this analysis, a short list of options is identified that will be taken forward for more detailed analysis in the OBC. The short list of options should **always** include a ‘status quo/do minimum’ option.At this point, a brief analysis should be undertaken around the indicative economic costs for the shortlisted options (although keep the analysis proportionate). Remember to also make allowances for optimism bias, particularly in the absence of more detailed risk appraisal.  |

**Commercial case**

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| **Maximum 250 words**Are the projects being grouped or procured individually? If the latter, explain why this route has been chosen.Please state your preferred procurement route. For example, use of a regional framework such as SEWSCAP, South West Wales Regional Contractor Framework (SWWRCF) or [North Wales Schools and Public Buildings Contractor Framework](http://www.government-online.net/north-wales-schools-and-public-buildings-contractor-framework/)or via a separate/ use OJEU procurement route. If you are undertaking a separate OJEU process what form of contract will be used? E.g. JCT, NEC.Reference should be made to the inclusion of community benefits and, if known, the specific community benefit objectives e.g. apprenticeships, supply chain initiatives, educational initiatives etc and whether they will be core and/or non core to the contract and confirmation that the Community Benefits Measurement Tool will be used to capture and report results.Confirmation of plans to engage with UK and Wales steel manufacturers to make them aware of the opportunities on the project if there are steel requirements for the construction element of the build. |

**Financial case**

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| **Maximum 250 words**Please state the current estimated funding requirement and how this bid will be match funded. |

**Management case**

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| **Maximum 250 Words**This should explain that the scheme is an integral part of the local authority/further education institution 21st Century Schools and Education Programme and provide a list of the projects to be delivered.Include the following:* Governance, management, risk, programme arrangements
* Confirmation that the project will be managed in accordance with PRINCE2 methodology
* Gateway Review – has a Gateway Review has been undertaken on the programme, in conjunction with agreement to the SOP
* Milestone activities
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**Signed…………………………………………………………………………………**

**Printed…………………………………………………………………………………**

**Position in the organisation………………………………………………………**

**Date…………………………………………………………………………………….**