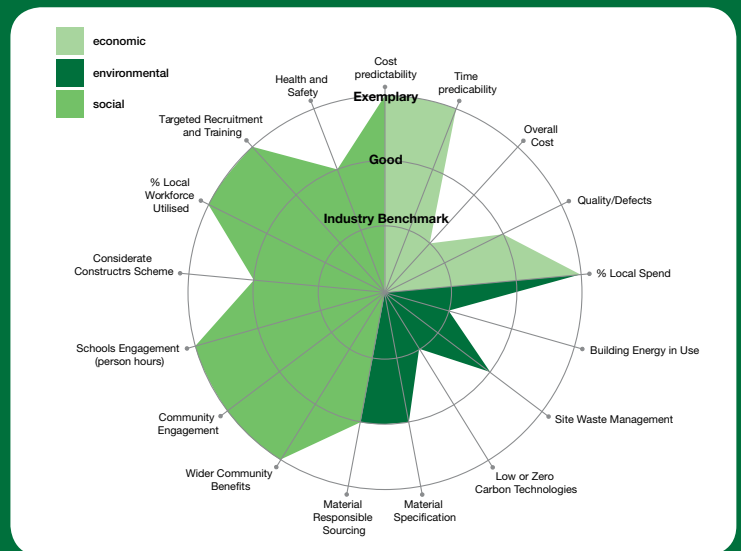


# Penarth Learning Community



Penarth Learning Community forms part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's response to the Welsh Government requirement for innovative thinking in relation to the delivery of education in the 21st Century. On completion it will provide a new 11-18 mainstream school to replace St Cyres School and a new 3 - 19 school, Ysgol y Deri, to replace three existing special education needs schools.

The project sees the integration of two distinct schools under one roof and looks to provide modern educational facilities for all pupils seeking to build on and strengthen the relationships between the existing schools for the benefit of both pupils and staff. This co-location of the two schools is a unique opportunity for a construction project to meet both strategic and end user aspirations providing a community based facility for lifelong learning. The project also provides a focus to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's requirements for the delivery of a wide range of community benefits both during the construction phase of the project and post occupation with both educational and therapy facilities being made available for use by the wider community. In delivering the Penarth Learning Community the Council is seeking to be an enabler for the expansion of the Welsh Government's aspirations for capital projects to be real drivers for economic benefit and change. This includes how the Welsh economy can be supported, both locally and nationally, and providing opportunities for training as well as drawing people out of unemployment. The completed facility will also benefit from reduced energy consumption, a lower carbon footprint and lower whole life cost when compared with current school facilities.



## project details

client:	Vale of Glamorgan Council
client rep:	AECOM
contractor:	Leadbitter
architect:	HLM Architects
project value:	£39.45m
project size:	22,000sqm
contract:	NEC Option A
procurement strategy:	2-stage D&B via SEWSCAP Framework (incorporating ECI)

## what is an Exemplar project?

An Exemplar is defined as 'something worthy of being copied'. The Exemplar programme has been developed to help identify the reasons why certain projects are successful in a standardised, quantifiable way, and to share with the industry what enabled these successes. An Exemplar considers all aspects of sustainability, including economic, social and environmental. Projects must demonstrate that they have been innovative in one or more of these aspects in a way that exceeds normal industry practices, while achieving at least minimum standards in all other areas of the project. This is to demonstrate that the scheme is well rounded and has not sacrificed one aspect to be successful in another, while also incorporating best practice measures that can advance the state of the industry. An Exemplar project therefore reflects the ideal industry goal of achieving a scheme's primary function aims in a sustainable way, at acceptable costs. Case studies are prepared at 3 key stages : post-design, post-construction, post-occupation. This ensures that lessons learnt can be demonstrated throughout the development of the project.

## what will make the project successful

- Clear direction by the client and the appointment and development of an integrated team approach to ensure certainty in terms of cost, time and quality.
- A procurement strategy based on collaboration and early contractor involvement to ensure that expertise from all parties is utilised from the outset.
- The extensive use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and integrated processes to ensure a high standard of performance monitoring, management and continuous improvement.
- Careful management of local supply chains to maximise investment in the local economy and up skilling of the local workforce.
- Extensive community and schools engagement to ensure wider benefits are gained from the project as well as key stakeholders being central to the design and delivery of the schools.
- The development of partnerships with local and national employment and training agencies to maximise opportunities for young people and socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

## notable achievements

The appointment and development of an integrated project team with previous experience of working together and supported by Early Contractor Involvement (ECI), has allowed the expertise of all parties to shape the project through design development, value engineering and risk management to arrive at an affordable and deliverable project.

The formal and well-structured use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) from the outset of the project will support the team's approach to continuous improvement.

Careful management of and attention to supply chains by the delivery team will help to meet the Client's aspiration to maximise contract spend with locally based suppliers.

Specific resource identified to ensure high quality handover and continuity into occupational period.

Partnerships have been developed with local and national employment and training agencies to maximise opportunities for young people and socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

The collaborative approach adopted by the delivery team from the outset combined with strong leadership has enabled far more effective engagement with the local community.

The delivery team has engaged extensively with local schools to maximise learning opportunities from the project with a particular emphasis on those students with access and learning difficulties to ensure that all students gain benefit from the experience.

Specific resources and expertise have been identified to incorporate whole life cost considerations into the project to ensure that the long term performance of the asset provides value for money and minimises operational costs and carbon impacts.

## economic considerations

The appointment and development of an integrated project team together with previous experience of working and supported by Early Contractor Involvement (ECI), has allowed the expertise of all parties to shape the project through design development, value engineering and risk management to arrive at an affordable and deliverable project.

The contractor was appointed by the client via the SEWSCAP framework jointly developed by 10 SEWales local authorities. This followed a 2-stage, price and quality tender approach which allowed the contractor's D&B team to be appointed relatively early in the project development process enabling the team to work with the client to develop an affordable and deliverable project within the Client's budget, timescales and scope.

### First stage of tender:

This stage incorporated an open day at St Cyres School with all contractors in Band A of the SEWSCAP flow invited to attend. At this session tenderers met with key stakeholders to discuss the project following which a comprehensive set of Q&As was issued to all tenderers based on the stakeholder's preferred approach to the project. This was seen as a positive step by both the client group and tenderers and one which should be repeated on similar projects. The selection process also included a formal interview via a panel made up of client representatives and key staff from the schools as well as the design team – which was yet to be novated. This provided an opportunity for senior staff from the schools to understand what each tenderer had to offer in relation to key issues not only to construction but also their ability to interact with the existing schools and how they could support the educational delivery and curriculum enrichment via the construction process. Feedback from those attending from the schools was that this was a very positive and rewarding process, albeit unexpected.

### Second stage of tender:

Following the appointment of the delivery team and the novation of the pre-tender design team regular meetings were held to update the team on market responses and identify

areas of risk in relation to the target cost. At this stage the client's preferred procurement route was NEC Option C with Target Cost.

Value management sessions were organised to seek opportunities to realign incoming construction package costs with cost plan allowances. These sessions reinforced the integrated team approach that was central to delivery.

Towards the end of the second stage of the tender process, it was clear that the projected contract sum based on package tender returns was still at variance to the client's project budget and a review meeting took place to agree a strategy to move the project forward. This meeting included representatives from the contractor, consultant team and client. Following extensive reviews of value and risk a number of work package areas were assigned to parties best able to manage the risk element. Following agreement of this strategy the use of NEC options to best allocate risks whilst giving the client a degree of cost certainty were reviewed. This resulted in an agreement to alter the preferred option from C to A to ensure cost predictability for the client whilst enabling the contractor to work with their supply chain to further value engineer the project through the ongoing procurement process.

Alongside this value and risk management process the client advised other tenderers who had not been successful of this approach and a self-imposed stand still period was agreed. Whilst this is not a requirement of either SEWSCAP or OJEU the team felt that this reinforced the client's and delivery team's approach to collaboration and openness.

### The formal and well-structured use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) from the outset of the project will support the team's approach to continuous improvement.

The use of Key performance Indicators (KPIs) by the team as a tool for the effective recording of performance and to establish and maintain a strategy for continuous improvement is a core part of ensuring that contractual requirements and client and community aspirations are met. These were effectively employed on previous CEWales Demonstration Projects such as Cowbridge Comprehensive School.

To improve previous KPI management systems the client is utilising an electronic data capture system which enables the team to review current performance on a monthly basis and address areas of variable performance.

Systems have been developed to capture critical data including a requirement for BREEAM Excellent, 25% betterment against Building Regulations Part L, 80 new entrant weeks per £1m of construction spend, the use of the project as a significant benefactor to the local community in relation to the local supply chain and community benefits as well as registration with the Considerate Constructors Scheme. These critical areas were jointly identified by the team.

In terms of post occupation, the aim is to utilise an electronic data capture system similar to that used at a previous CEWales Exemplar Project at Newport High School and currently used at the Gateways to the Valleys Project at Tondy.

The ongoing submission and evaluation of project KPIs will enable the team to respond proactively and ensure that agreed targets are met throughout the life of the project and beyond.

**Careful management of and attention to supply chains by the delivery team will help to meet the Client's aspiration to maximise contract spend with locally based suppliers.**

This project represents a huge one-off investment in the local economy and the client expressed a clear desire to maximise the proportion of contract spend with local suppliers. The delivery team identified 71 subcontract packages to best

complete the project and a combination of existing approved suppliers and new suppliers identified via a "Meet the Buyer" event encouraged local companies to join the delivery team. Selection criteria involved capability and competitiveness to deliver effectively and also on a commitment to collaborative principles.

As well as maximising benefits to the local economy training provided by the main contractor will help to upskill local workforces which, in turn, will support their future earning potential and support the delivery of Welsh Government policies.

Performance in terms of local spend will be monitored monthly via the suite of KPI's.

**Specific resource identified to ensure high quality handover and continuity into occupational period.**

Following lessons learnt from previous projects the client identified the handover stage to the end user as a particular area of concern in terms of maintaining client satisfaction levels and ensuring that the end user benefits from a "soft landing" approach. As a result of this the team have appointed an individual to work with the contractor through the construction period to understand the operation of the building and to then transfer to the end user on project completion to maintain continuity into the occupation stage.



## social considerations

Partnerships have been developed with local and national employment and training agencies to maximise opportunities for young people and socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

The decision to implement a contractual requirement for the implementation of a Targeted Recruitment and Training (TR&T) Policy and the development of a robust Community Benefits package is supported at the highest level within the Vale of Glamorgan Council. This level of support has enabled the project delivery team to embed this commitment throughout the delivery strategy.

The TR&T strategy is one of the most comprehensive in Wales and the Client has challenged the delivery team to improve this further. To ensure the successful delivery of the Council's aspiration, namely the contractual requirement for 80 new entrants per £1 million of construction spend, the whole team have worked together to identify and engage with appropriate external agencies to ensure effective implementation. This has led to the development of relationships with both Working Links and Elite Supported Employment, two employment support agencies. This approach will also be cascaded through the supply chain and will involve the end users of the project. It is also proposed that opportunities will be explored for the delivery team to enable people with disabilities to access, obtain and maintain employment with appropriate support. This is particularly relevant to the SEN schools associated with the project. Work trials and training together with 1:1 support, particularly for final year SEN students, are features of this service and areas of the project have been identified to provide direct experience with potentially sustainable employment. Both external agencies have become an integral part of the delivery team. This is enabling far closer working, greater understanding and better responsiveness so that the policy and strategy remains appropriate and innovative. This approach is being expanded to include "Y Prentis" which will look at opportunities to provide training 'slots' for young people.

This approach to targeted recruitment and training is being shared with other clients and supply chain partners across South East Wales.

## The collaborative approach adopted by the delivery team from the outset combined with strong leadership has enabled far more effective engagement with the local community

A wide range of opportunities will be targeted to ensure that a lasting legacy remains long after the completion of the project. Community engagement is a key element in ensuring that additional benefits meet community aspirations and the collaborative approach driven by the client and delivery team combined with the early establishment of the team in the project process has facilitated a better community engagement process.

At tender stage, the contractor outlined how they would engage with local schools and the wider community to encourage involvement and inclusion and submitted a **Community Benefits Plan** which covered:

### **New Initiatives & Client Key Objectives**

The client and the contractor were very clear at the outset that this project should be exemplar in every aspect and the Key Objectives reflect this. Early discussions with key members of the delivery team highlighted some excellent opportunities to engage with pupils, the community and local employment targets.

### **Keeping Communities Informed**

Several community meetings were held prior to commencement of onsite work providing useful observations from local residents that enabled the contractor to enhance their communication plan. Regular newsletters and Community Open days were planned to give the wider community as much opportunity to find out about the project.

A project website would also be developed providing a wealth of information.

### **Considerate Constructor Scheme**

Regular team discussions are planned to ensure best practice and innovative ideas can be implemented to achieve the highest score possible.

## social considerations continued

The delivery team has engaged extensively with local schools to maximise learning opportunities from the project with a particular emphasis on those students with access and learning difficulties to ensure that all students gain benefit from the experience.

A key factor of school engagement is the creation of opportunities for every pupil regardless of gender, ability or mobility. The contractor put forward proposals for curriculum enrichment activities, site visits and training to be available for all pupils of the project and local schools. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring full access and inclusion for those pupils from the existing SEN schools transferring to the new facility.

School Construction Ambassadors will be appointed, comprising pupils from St. Cyres and Ysgol y Deri. These will visit the project and project team on a regular basis to feedback progress.

Meetings will be held with teaching staff to discuss the best opportunities for curriculum enrichment.

The team will also use the project as a powerful tool to publicise opportunities within the construction industry to a wide audience including Cardiff and the Vale College and other partner organisations such as Swansea University.

## environmental considerations

Specific resources and expertise have been identified to incorporate whole life cost considerations into the project to ensure that the long term performance of the asset provides value for money and minimizes operational costs and carbon impacts

Penarth Learning Community School is being assessed under BREEAM 2008 Education and is targeting an 'Excellent' rating. From the beginning of the project there has been a BREEAM accredited professional (AP) involved in the design to ensure that sustainability has been embedded in the process and to secure the required credits to achieve the targeted BREEAM Excellent rating in an effective way.

The design team have engaged in the BREEAM process and as such A and A+ materials are being selected in accordance with the Green Guide and efforts made to ensure that the supply chain source materials responsibly. The contractor will be assessed by the Considerate Constructors Scheme's Code of Considerate Practice and will promote resource efficiency via appropriate management of construction site waste.

The current school site will be redeveloped to provide sports facilities for the school and the local community as well as increasing the ecological value of the site through an extensive planting and landscaping schedule. The BREEAM AP and design team will continue to liaise throughout the development to ensure that the building achieves its excellent level of environmental accreditation.

The school is being designed to reduce the amount of primary energy it uses through its orientation, the specification of energy efficient internal and external lighting, an underfloor heating system, increased air tightness and utilisation of natural ventilation where feasible.

A Combined Heat and Power (CHP) unit will serve the mainstream and SEN schools as well as the sensory pool.

This will provide significant carbon savings compared to using traditional high efficiency boilers to provide the heat to schools and pool area.