



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**  
**COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A meeting of the CABINET will be held at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX  
Thursday, 24th January, 2019 at 1.00 pm

Contact: Emma Wilkins - Principal Executive & Regulatory Business Officer (Tel No. 01443 424110)

Councillors and members of the public wishing to request the facility to address the Cabinet on any of the business as listed below, must request to do so by 5pm on the Tuesday, 22 January 2019 Councillors and Members of the public should stipulate if this address will be in the medium of English or Welsh.

It must be noted that the facility to address the Cabinet is at the discretion of the Chair and each request will be considered based on the agenda items being considered, the public interest/interest of the member in each matter and the demands of the business on that day. To make such a request please email:- [ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk)

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**Note:**

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest; and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they **must** notify the Chairman when they leave.

**2. MINUTES**

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 as an accurate record.

**3. PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR THE LLANILID HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

To receive the report of the Director, Education and Inclusion Services advising Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of proposals to establish new primary education provision to serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan.

**(Pages 17 - 76)**

**4. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION PROVISION IN CYNON VALLEY**

To receive the report of the Chief Executive advising Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of proposals to improve education provision in the Cynon Valley.

**(Pages 77 - 204)**

**5. PROPOSAL TO RE-ALIGN LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RCT**

To receive the report of the Director, Education & Inclusion Services advising Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of the proposal to realign the mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

**(Pages 205 - 426)**

**6. KEY STAGE 4 AND KEY STAGE 5 EXAMINATION RESULTS AND PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION FOR 2018**

To receive the report of the Director, Education & Inclusion Services providing Members with the final confirmation of Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 examination results for 2017-18 and the Welsh Government Primary and Secondary School Categorisation for 2018-19.

**(Pages 427 - 440)**

**7. NATIONAL ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018 AND THE VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services providing Members with an update on the progress of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative through the Annual Reports.

**(Pages 441 - 494)**

**8. THE INTRODUCTION OF FIXED PENALTY NOTICES TO DEAL WITH SMALL SCALE FLY-TIPPING**

To receive the report of the Director of Highways and Streetcare advising Members of new legislative powers available and to consider the range of measures to improve the approach to address fly-tipping across the Authority.

**(Pages 495 - 500)**

**9. PORTH TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION STRATEGY**

To receive the report of the Director, Regeneration, Planning and Housing providing Members with the feedback of the public consultation undertaken in respect of the draft Porth Town Centre Strategy.

**(Pages 501 - 580)**

**10. TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:**

“That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 12 and 13 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act”.

**11. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S SENIOR AND ASSOCIATED MANAGEMENT POST STRUCTURE - UPDATE**

To receive the report of the Chief Executive, containing exempt information, providing Members with an update on the review of the Council's Senior and Associated Management Post Structure.

**(Pages 581 - 592)**

**12. URGENT ITEMS**

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.



**Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services**

**Circulation:-**

**Councillors:** Councillor A Morgan (Chair)  
Councillor M Webber (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor R Bevan  
Councillor A Crimmings  
Councillor G Hopkins  
Councillor M Norris  
Councillor J Rosser  
Councillor R Lewis  
Councillor C Leyshon

**Officers:** Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive  
Chris Jones, Director, Legal & Democratic Services  
Christian Hanagan, Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services  
Chris Lee, Group Director Corporate & Frontline Services  
Gio Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services  
Colin Atyeo, Director of Corporate Estates & Procurement  
Esther Thomas, Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services  
Jane Cook, Director, Regeneration, Planning & Housing  
Nigel Wheeler, Director of Highways & Streetcare Services  
Paul Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services  
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources  
Simon Gale, Service Director, Planning  
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Derek James, Head of Regeneration and Prosperity



## RHONDDA CYNON TAF

### RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet meeting held on Tuesday, 18 December 2018 at 10.30 am at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

#### County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber	Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor M Norris	Councillor J Rosser
Councillor R Lewis	Councillor C Leyshon

#### Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive  
Mr C Jones, Director, Legal & Democratic Services  
Mr C Lee, Group Director Corporate & Frontline Services  
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services  
Mr N Wheeler, Director of Highways & Streetcare Services  
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services  
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources  
Mr. M. Phillips, Revenues Services Manager  
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
James, Head of Regeneration and Prosperity  
Ms A Batley, Service Director, Children's Services  
Mr D Batten, Head of Leisure  
Ms L Davies, Head of Public Protection  
Ms Z Lancelott, Head of Engagement & Participation  
Ms A Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools  
Mr A Cope – Regional Development Manager –Fostering Services  
Ms A Browning – Head of Service, Looked After Children

#### Others in attendance

Councillor P Jarman  
Councillor M Weaver  
Councillor E Webster

Mr D Lewis-Rowlands (RCT Member of the UK Youth Parliament)

#### 92 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations of interest were made pertaining to agenda item 12:-

- County Borough Councillor R Bevan declared a personal interest in the matter and remained in the meeting when the item was discussed and voted upon: "A family Member works as a Senior Officer within the

Authority although the post is not referenced within the report”.

The following officers declared a personal and pecuniary interest in this matter and left the meeting when the matter was discussed and voted upon:

- Mr C Lee – Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services
- Mr G Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children’s Services
- Mr C Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
- Mr N Wheeler – Director, Highways & Streetcare Services
- Ms G Davies - Director, Education & Inclusion Services
- Mr P Mee - Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
- Mr D James - Head of Regeneration & Prosperity
- Mr D Batten - Head of Leisure, Parks & Countryside
- Mr M Phillips Head of Service – Revenue & Benefits
- Ms L Davies – Head of Public Protection

The following officers declared personal and pecuniary interests in this matter but remained present whilst the report was considered in order to advise Cabinet:-

- Mr C Bradshaw – Chief Executive
- Mr R Evans – Director, Human Resources

## 93 MINUTES

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2018 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

## 94 CONSULTATION ON VOTES AT 16

The Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience, together with Mr D Lewis-Rowlands (RCT Member of the UK Youth Parliament) provided Members with an overview of the outcomes of the Votes at 16 Consultation in response to the UK Youth Parliament National Make Your Mark Campaign.

Members were advised of an 8 week consultation with all residents of the County Borough, with 452 young people engaging in the consultation and 161 adults. The RCT Member of the UK Youth Parliament commented that 349 young people were in support of the votes at 16. It was also highlighted that a large concern from residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf regarding the Votes at 16 campaign relates to their belief that there is a lack of education and information available to everyone, not just young people. A commitment to improve education and more readily available information could have a significant positive impact on voter engagement including the 5,253 potential additional voters within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Cabinet Member for Children & Young People welcomed the consultation feedback and also took the opportunity to thank Mr Lewis-Rowlands for his contributions to RCT through the Youth Forums. The Cabinet Member spoke of taking forward a piece of work in respect of improving education, awareness and information for residents across the County Borough in respect of voting rights and democracy.

County Borough Councillor P Jarman also spoke on this item.

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To support the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Youth Forum with its Votes at 16 campaign activities by promoting them via the Council's formal communication channels including the corporate website and social media platforms.
2. To support the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Youth Forum to conduct further research into the type of information members of the public would like to see available to improve their knowledge and understanding of voting in response to the consultation findings.
3. To make a commitment to improve the information and communication available to residents of all ages on politics, local government and voting within Rhondda Cynon Taf prior to the next election period.

## **95 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2018-2022**

The Head of Public Protection advised members of the statutory duty placed upon the Council under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to undertake a homelessness review for its area, advising of the subsequent Homelessness Strategy formulated through the reviews findings. Members were informed that there was a further duty on the Council to formulate and adopt a Homelessness Strategy that would prevent homelessness and ensure suitable accommodation and satisfactory support is available for people who are or who may become homeless.

Members were referred to the Strategy within the report and details of the consultation undertaken with the relevant stakeholders was highlighted.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services commented on the strategy and the pressures and demands placed on services, commenting on the importance of having a strategy which was 'fit for purpose' in place. The Cabinet Member spoke of the preventative measures and the need to support those most vulnerable.

The Leader also commented on the service and the valuable and hard work taking place behind the scenes.

Following discussions it was **AGREED**:

1. To note the feedback in respect of the Draft Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022 from the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on the 6th November 2018 and the actions taken in response, as detailed in paragraph 6.4 of the report.
2. To approve the Rhondda Cynon Taf Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022 (attached as Appendix 1 of the report).

96

## **OUT & ABOUT TWO: THE RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF 2019-2029**

The Head of Leisure, Parks & Countryside provided Members with an overview of his report in respect of the recent review undertaken on the Council's Rights of way Improvement plan.

Members were informed of the key themes for action taken forward within the plan and the consultation taken forward to help shape its contents with the public, consultees and the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure & Heritage Services welcomed the revised plan and the responses received during the consultation highlighting the importance and value the public place on the 'out doors' of the County Borough. The Cabinet Member spoke of the positive work undertaken with volunteering, tourism and the popularity of short walks all impacting on the positive wellbeing of the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Members **RESOLVED**:

1. To endorse to Council the adoption of the 'Out & About Two: The Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf 2019-2029'.

97

## **A COUNCIL WIDE PLAN FOR THE DELIVERY OF ACCESSIBLE ARTIFICIAL TURF PITCHES (ATP) AND 3G PITCHES**

The Head of Leisure, Parks & Countryside provided Members with an overview of his report which proposed the development of a Council wide plan for full public access to artificial turf pitches (ATP) and 3G pitches with a common pricing policy.

Members were advised that through a collaborative approach between Leisure and Parks with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools, the Council has invested in the development of 3G pitches over the last 3 years, committing to achieve its aim of every resident to live within a 3-mile radius of a 3G pitch. The Head of Leisure, Parks & Countryside proceeded to advise Members of the proposal to develop a public access plan for ATP and 3G pitches across the County Borough. The proposal would ensure that schools would access the facilities for curriculum and extra-curriculum sessions (8am – 5pm) with full public access from 5pm on weeknights and over the weekend (9am – 5pm on both days).

The Officer further discussed the pricing policy as detailed within the report discussing the rationale for the pricing policy going forward. To offset any potential concerns from the users the Head of Service proposed that the revised prices be introduced from April 2019 and be frozen until April 2021.

The Cabinet Member Environment, Leisure & Heritage Services referenced the importance the Council places on the Health & Well Being of its residents, commenting on the proposals within the report of improving access for all residents. The Cabinet Member spoke on the facilities available and the possibility for residents to continue with their sporting activities on the 3G pitches regardless of the weather. She added that full public access alongside streamlined administration procedures would ensure that access to top quality sports facilities are maximised by those that live, work and visit Rhondda Cynon



Taf.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Young People welcomed the proposals although commented on the concerns raised by some schools in respect of the income and potential administration burden. The Cabinet Member clarified that the administration of the pitches would be taken forward by the Council and that any financial impact would be minimised.

The Leader and Deputy Leader also spoke positively on the proposals and the importance of ensuring the provisions are accessible for the schools and the whole communities. The Leader referenced the efficiency savings that would be achieved through the Council administration of the proposals.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the proposed full public access plan alongside the common pricing policy for ATP and 3G pitches as set out in Section 5 of the report.
2. That Leisure and Parks, with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools, continually engage with Secondary Schools in the development and implementation of the proposed full public access plan and common pricing policy.

#### **98 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2018- 19**

The Director, Legal & Democratic Services provided Cabinet Members with a draft work programme for the 2018-19 Municipal Year, which listed matters requiring consideration by Cabinet. The Director commented that utilising the programme assists with openness and transparency of the decision making process within the Council and gives greater opportunity for Pre-Scrutiny.

Members **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the Work Programme for the 2018-19 Municipal Year (with appropriate amendment where necessary) and receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

#### **99 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** – that the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in: Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to the financial affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). Transparency in the conduct of local authority business is desirable; however, personal financial information will be discussed and considered. Consequently it is considered; the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing information by virtue of which the meeting is likely not to be open to the public during its consideration.

#### **100 MOUNTAIN ASH TOWN CENTRE: DRAFT REGENERATION FRAMEWORK**

The Head of Regeneration, Housing & Property provided Members with an overview of his report which contained exempt information. The report provided Members with the draft regeneration framework which coordinated the current investment package that would deliver improvements for Mountain Ash Town Centre

Following consideration of the Report by Cabinet Members it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To the Mountain Ash Town Centre Regeneration Framework as a basis for coordinating and delivering the schemes as set out within the document.
2. To initiate a planning application on the proposals to redevelop the site of Rhos Square.
3. To take all necessary steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of a CPO, if negotiations to acquire the land identified on the plan at Appendix 1 of the report fail.

**(N.B.** With the agreement of the Chair, County Borough Councillor P Jarman spoke on this item.)

**101 FOSTERING SERVICES - REGIONAL COLLABORATION TO CREATE A FRONT DOOR FOR FOSTER CARER RECRUITMENT**

The Regional Development Manager - Fostering Services and Service Director Children's Services provided Members with an overview of their report which contained exempt information. The report provided Cabinet with a proposal to create a Cwm Taf Regional front door for Fostering Services.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the information contained within the report and to give formal approval to commence specific proposals to work collaboratively with MTCBC to create a regional front door for fostering recruitment enquiries, consisting of a call centre function, recruitment officer and marketing officer.
2. To terminate all elements of the current contract arrangements and bring the assessment of potential foster carers back in house to RCTCBC.

**102 WRITE OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS**

The Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services provided Members with a position statement on irrecoverable debt which contained exempt information.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To write-off the accounts as set out in the attached schedule to the appropriate Bad Debt Provision contained within the Council's accounts ( and if further information on any debt becomes available, payment to be pursued).

## REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S SENIOR AND ASSOCIATED MANAGEMENT POST STRUCTURE

The Chief Executive provided Members with his report which contained exempt information, outlining the proposed revisions to the Council's Senior and Associated Management post structure. Members were advised that Implementation of the proposed revised structures would provide an overall estimated reduction in annual management costs at the Senior and Associated Management grade levels of £404,604 (inclusive of on-costs).

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the revised directorate structures shown at Appendices 2(i), 2(ii), 2 (iii) and 2(iv) to the report be implemented from April 2019, subject to the necessary staff consultation process. Implementation of these revised structures would provide an overall estimated reduction in annual management costs at the Senior and Associated Management grade levels of £404,604 (inclusive of on-costs);
2. To note that as part of the ongoing efficiency savings programme (and subject to any required approval of the Council's Appointment's Committee), these revisions would result in the deletion of the following posts with effect from April 2019 from the Council's structure:
  - i) Director of Legal & Democratic Services (Director Level 1);
  - ii) Head of Legal Services - Litigation, Community & Children, Planning & Environment (Head of Service Level 1);
  - iii) Head of Legal Services - Corporate, Democratic Services, Information Governance, Elections & Business Support (Head of Service Level 1);
  - iv) Director of Corporate Estates & Procurement (Director Level 1);
  - v) Service Director – Corporate Design & Maintenance (Service Director Level 2);
  - vi) Head of Procurement & Energy (Head of Service Level 1) x 0.6 FTE;
  - vii) Group Director – Corporate & Frontline Services (Group Director grade);
  - viii) Director of Highways & Streetcare (Director Level 2);
  - ix) Director of Regeneration & Planning (Director Level 1); and
  - x) Service Director – Planning (Service Director Level 2);
3. To note that emanating from the decision in 1. above Cabinet have authorised:
  - i. The amendment of the post of Head of Legal Services – Planning & Environment (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Legal Services (Head of Service Level 1);
  - ii. The amendment of the post of Service Director – Cabinet Office & Public Relations (Service Director Level 2) to Service Director –

- Democratic Services & Communications (Service Director Level 2);
- iii. The amendment of the post of Head of Payroll & Pensions (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services (Service Director Level 2);
  - iv. The amendment of the post of Head of Audit & Procurement Delivery (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Procurement Delivery (Head of Service Level 1);
  - v. The amendment of the post of Service Director – Highways & Streetcare (Service Director Level 2) to Service Director – Highways & Streetcare (Service Director Level 1);
  - vi. The amendment of the post of Head of Streetcare (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Streetcare Services (Service Director Level 2);
  - vii. The amendment of the post of Head of Strategic Investment Projects (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Strategic Investments (Head of Service Level 1);
  - viii. The amendment of the post of Head of Regeneration & Prosperity (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Prosperity and Development (Service Director Level 2);
  - ix. The amendment of the post of Director of Financial Services (Director Level 2) to Director of Finance & Digital Services (Director Level 1);
  - x. The amendment of the post of Service Director – Resources & Performance Services (Service Director Level 2) to Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services (Service Director Level 1);
  - xi. The amendment of the post of Head of ICT (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – ICT & Digital Services (Service Director Level 2);
  - xii. The amendment of the post of Service Director – Children’s Services (Service Director Level 1) to Director of Children’s Services (Director Level 2);
  - xiii. The amendment of the post of Service Director - Adult Services (Service Director Level 1) to Director of Adult Services (Director Level 2);
  - xiv. The amendment of the post of Head of Transformation Services (Head of Service Level 1) to Head of Children Looked After (Head of Service Level1);
  - xv. The amendment of the post of Head of Assessment & Direct Services (Head of Service Level 1) to Head of Care & Support (Head of Service Level1);
  - xvi. The amendment of the post of Head of Assessment & Care Planning

- (Head of Service Level 1) to Head of Intensive Intervention (Head of Service Level 1);
- xvii. The amendment of the post of Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards (Head of Service Level 2) to Service Director – Public Protection Services (Service Director Level 2);
  - xviii. The amendment of the post of Head of Community Learning (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Community Services (Service Director Level 2);
  - xix. The amendment of the post of Head of Participation & Engagement (Head of Service Level 1) to Head of Community Wellbeing & Resilience (Head of Service Level 1);
  - xx. The creation of the post of Director of Legal Services (Director Level 2);
  - xxi. The creation of the post of Service Director – Legal Services (Service Director Level 2);
  - xxii. The creation of the post of Director of Corporate Estates (Director Level 2);
  - xxiii. The creation of the post of Head of Corporate Design (Head of Service Level 2);
  - xxiv. The creation of the post of Head of Corporate Maintenance Services (Head of Service Level 2);
  - xxv. The creation of the post of Head of Estates (Head of Service Level 2);
  - xxvi. The creation of the post of Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (Group Director Grade); and
  - xxvii. The creation of the post of Director of Prosperity and Development (Director Level 2);
4. To recommend to Council that Mr. Gio Isingrini, the Group Director for Community & Children’s Services, undertake the role of Deputy Chief Executive (commencing the day after Mr. Lee finishes in that role);
  5. To recommend to Council that the designation of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) role be assigned to the incumbent Director of Financial Services, Mr Barrie Davies;
  6. To transfer certain functions outlined in the report from the Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services Group (currently Corporate & Frontline Services Group) to the Chief Executive Group;
  7. To transfer certain functions outlined in the report from the Chief Executive Group to the Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services Group (currently Corporate & Frontline Services Group);

8. To transfer certain functions outlined in the report from Legal Services (currently Legal & Democratic Services) to Democratic Services & Communication (currently Cabinet Office and Public Relations);
9. To transfer certain functions outlined in the report from Democratic Services & Communications (currently Cabinet Office and Public Relations) to Prosperity & Development Services and Public Health, Protection & Community Services;
10. To transfer certain functions outlined in the report from Public Health, Protection & Community Services to Highways & Streetcare Services;
11. To authorise the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources, to commence the staff consultation process in accordance with the Council's agreed Managing Change Policy and, subject to 12 below (2.12 of the report), thereafter implement the proposals;
12. Subject to the completion of the consultation process referred to at 11. above ( 2.11 of the report), and where necessary, refer the matter of the terms and conditions of employment and remuneration of the posts included in the proposed revised directorate's structure, shown at Appendices 2(i) to 2(iv) of the report, to the Appointments Committee and/or full Council as appropriate; and
13. To note that consequential changes would be required to the Council's Constitution in terms of the removal and creation of Chief Officer posts.

**N.B** With the agreement of the Chair, County Borough Councillor P Jarman spoke on this item.

(As referenced in Minute a number of Officers provided Declarations of Interest in relation to this item and left the meeting when the item was discussed and voted upon)

**This meeting closed at 12.00 pm**

**Cllr A Morgan  
Chairman.**

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

24 JANUARY 2019

#### PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR THE LLANILID HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

**Authors:** Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of proposals to establish new primary education provision to serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached Consultation Report, which includes details of correspondence received during the consultation exercise, and notes of the various meetings held.
- 2.2 Agree to progress the proposals to the next stage of the consultation process by firstly agreeing to publish the Consultation Report, and secondly issuing an appropriate Statutory Notice two weeks after the Consultation Report is published.

#### 3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code).

#### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018, approval was given to begin a process to formally consult on a proposal to establish new primary education provision to

serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan. This will be achieved in the first instance, by treating the new building that will be provided by the housing developers as an extension to the dual-language provision at the existing Dolau Primary School.

## **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Welsh Language, Equality and Community Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of this proposal and were published on the Council's website together with the consultation document that outlines the proposal in detail. Copies of these reports are attached as Appendix A to this report.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and recently updated in November 2018. These arrangements stipulate that a Consultation Report must be prepared and published prior to the publication of any Statutory Notices which will progress the proposal. It further states that this Report must be published within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 in this instance.
- 6.2 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix B for your attention. It contains information in respect of meetings held to discuss the proposal, with copies of the notes taken at these meetings. It also contains details of correspondence received together with the responses given to the points raised in this correspondence.
- 6.3 It must be noted that there has been a limited response to this particular consultation process with only 6 responses received. Approximately 25 people attended the open evening held to provide further information on 18th October 2018.

## **7. THE STATUTORY PROCESS**

- 7.1 The Statutory Notice for this proposal will refer to:
- Creating new Primary education provision to serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan.
  - This will be achieved, in the first instance, by treating the new building that will be provided by the housing



developers as an extension to the dual-language provision at the existing Dolau Primary School.

- 7.2 If agreed, and subject to the matter not being called in for consideration by Scrutiny, the Consultation Report will be published on January 30<sup>th</sup> 2019, and following a 2 week period the Statutory Notice will be published on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
- 7.3 If any objections are received during this period, in accordance with the aforementioned Code, an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, probably in April 2019, for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The capital cost of constructing the new school will be met by the housing developers (Persimmon Homes) as part of their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) responsibilities.

## **9 LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND THE WELL BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 9.1 The Council's Corporate Plan commits to "Continue to invest in improving school buildings, to ensure the County Borough's pupils have the learning environment fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The proposals considered in the report contribute to all 7 well-being goals in the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

## **10 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, to agree to its immediate publication, and to give officers approval to publish an appropriate Statutory Notice on February 13<sup>th</sup> 2019 to progress this proposal.

**Appendices to the report are:**

- **Equality Impact Assessment**
- **Community Impact Assessment**
- **Welsh Language Impact Assessment**
- **Consultation Report**

***Contact Officer***

**Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager  
01443 744062**

**Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People***

PLEASE NOTE THAT A WELSH VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE AVAILABLE  
PRIOR TO PUBLICATION

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CONSULTATION REPORT

**Proposal : To establish new Primary Education provision to serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan.**

#### 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 011/2018. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 1st October 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

#### 2. Who did we consult with?

A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

- The governing body of Dolau Primary School
- Pupils of Dolau Primary School
- Parents, carers, and staff members of Dolau Primary School
- The governors, pupils, parents, carers and staff members of Ysgol Llanhari and Y Pant Comprehensive School
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring primary schools, including those in adjacent local authority areas
- The governing body of Pencoed Comprehensive School
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for the Rhondda
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Llanharan Community Council
- Llanharry Community Council
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Menter Iaith
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Neighbouring local authorities

Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area

Copies were also sent to all local authorities that share a boundary with Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### **3. The Proposal**

Outline planning consent for the construction of up to 1,850 homes at the former Llanilid Opencast Site, Llanharan, was granted by the Council's Development Control Committee in January 2016.

As part of the planning process, the Council will collect a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on each dwelling constructed, which will be utilised to provide the essential infrastructure that is required to support a housing development of this size. A new Primary school building, of 540 places in total (including Nursery provision) will form part of the essential infrastructure.

The Council has undertaken a full assessment of the potential impact of this large development on existing school provision in this area and has also calculated the numbers of children that are likely to reside on this development. To ensure that the demand for school places can be met in future years, through the preferred language medium of the parents' choice, it is proposed that the new school building be established, in the first instance, as an extension to the dual language school provision of Dolau Primary School.

The developers are proposing to construct the new school building in a single phase, so when it opens in 2021 it will initially have considerable surplus capacity. This capacity will be filled as and when the new homes are constructed and become occupied, but in order to avoid the unacceptable scenario of a new school opening with very few pupils on day 1, we have instead decided to treat the new building as an extension to an already well established school in the first instance. The Headteacher of Dolau will be able to utilise the new building to accommodate classes between the two buildings as he sees fit, to make the best use of all available resources. The school will then 'grow' as more houses are constructed.

The construction of 1,850 dwellings is considered to be the first phase of what is likely to be a much larger development in forthcoming years. The new school building will form part of the education provision that will serve this wider area and by this time, its provision will be firmly established under the management and guidance of Dolau Primary School. At this point in time, the Council will make an assessment of the requirements and demand for school places, including the likely language medium choices being expressed by parents, and will consider establishing the Llanilid primary school building as a new school in its own right.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was circulated to all the stakeholders listed overleaf which is attached as Appendix 1.

#### **4. The Consultation Process**

All stakeholders identified in Section 2 overleaf were sent paper or electronic copies of our consultation documentation. The following meetings were also convened:

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Dolau Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 3.30 – 4.15pm	Dolau Primary School
Dolau Primary School	School Council	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 2pm	Dolau Primary School
Members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 4.30 – 6pm	Dolau Primary School

Notes of all of the above meetings were taken and are attached as Appendix 2. These notes record questions raised, comments and statements made, with responses provided where appropriate.

An open evening/exhibition was held at Dolau Primary School on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the purpose of which was to provide further information on the proposal, answer any questions and give people the opportunity to ask questions. Officers from the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate and Persimmon were in attendance. This event was attended by approximately 25 people which included school governors, pupils, parents and local residents.

#### **5. Summary of Responses to Consultation**

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 2. In addition to this 6 written responses were received, and 10 comments were submitted during the public drop-in session on post-it notes via the ‘Have your say’ board. All comments have been collated and are attached at Appendix 3. No questionnaires or feedback opposing the proposals were received.

A summary of comments raised during the consultation period are below. Where appropriate our responses are included:

- **Concerns were raised in relation to the existing highway infrastructure, and whether it would cope with the increase in traffic that the school could generate**

A further planning application will be submitted specifically for the new school, and as a part of this there will be a Traffic Impact Assessment undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will not only look at the current capacity of the highway, but also the impact of any increase in traffic flow, on not just the highway but also on pedestrian and cycling routes.

The expectation is that this report will contain recommendations in relation to improving the existing highway infrastructure as well as incorporating pedestrian safety measures which could include traffic calming or additional pedestrian crossing points.

- **The size of the primary school was raised as a concern.**

The exact pupil numbers that will be generated from the housing development are not yet known, nor do we have control of the timescales, but it is likely that as the school grows a decision will be made to split the school and create 2 separate primary schools. If this does occur, then this will be subject to another consultation.

- **The impact upon secondary school places in the area was raised as a concern.**

The Council has a statutory duty to manage the supply and demand for pupil school places. The Council acts in the best interests of all local children and ensures there is sufficient capacity for language and faith choice in the local Community. The Council monitors the situation continually and will ensure that appropriate strategies are in place to manage any future demand from the proposed housing developments in the area and will collaborate cross border with other local authorities should the need arise.

- **Will additional community services and infrastructure be catered for?**

The Council will ensure that it collaborates with all parties who have a vested interest in the community.

**Estyn's response to the consultation by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council to establish new primary school provision for the Llanilid housing development, by extending the provision of Dolau primary school, from September 2021.**

### ***Introduction***

*This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.*

*Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn.*

*However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.*

*Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.*

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

*The proposal appropriately sets out the need for additional educational provision to accommodate both the planned and potential for further housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan. It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of educational provision in the area.*

### **Description and benefits**

*The proposal sets out clearly the need for additional nursery and pupil places arising from the planned housing developments and the potential for further developments in the area. The proposal appropriately considers the advantages and disadvantages associated with the extension of the current school, through the creative use of a new school build, alongside the construction of a major new housing development.*

*The proposal usefully explains how the current primary school at Dolau will respond to the increasing population expected within the new housing development, by using the new build as an extension to the existing school. The benefits of this approach are well set out within the proposal, which include the management of an 'ad hoc' demand for new places throughout the school year, associated with the arrivals of new residents. The proposer also explains well the disadvantages associated with the alternative of opening a brand new school immediately without full capacity.*

*The current primary school at Dolau is a dual stream school, and the expansion will accommodate both language preferences, therefore maintaining parental choice and should provide sufficient places as demand increases in the short term. However, the intended change from an extension to the existing school to the creation of a separate new school, and its language preference remains deferred until an unspecified time in the future.*

*The proposer sets out well the current local authority practice for the provision of school transport, which is more generous than the statutory minimum. The proposal sets out clearly that the policy will be applied for pupils attending this school, and also takes into account the risk assessments for the walking routes to school, which are considered to be unsuitable for pupil foot traffic. Additionally the proposals sets out clearly the implications for secondary aged pupils who will live on this new housing development, and their options for either the closest school which is in neighbouring local authority, or the nearest English medium and Welsh medium schools in the proposer's local authority. The proposer also*

*clarifies how the local authority's current policy for home to school transport will apply for these pupils.*

*The proposer provides detailed past and projected nursery places and pupil numbers for Dolau primary school, which take account of the expected numbers based on the current catchment, and the planned new development.*

### ***Educational aspects of the proposal***

*The construction of the new school, and its initial use as an extension to the current school should not represent a risk to the school and its education provision. The opportunities arising from additional space, state of the art classroom design and new outdoors facilities are likely to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils.*

*The proposal appropriately considers the likely impact of the new school on standards, provision and leadership by referring to the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspections, as well as the Regional Consortium's categorisation of the school. In July 2015, Estyn judged the school's performance to be good, and its prospects for improvement also good. The local consortium categorises the school as green.*

*This information supports the proposer's reasonable claim that Dolau Primary school should be able to maintain its current standards during the expansion.*

## **6. Assessment of Consultation**

In view of the responses and comments received during the consultation period, a further assessment of the proposals, which are included within the consultation document, has been undertaken. The proposals have been revisited and the impact of the proposals on the quality and standards of education, the community, and transport arrangements, have been reassessed.

After further consideration, the proposals are deemed to be the most appropriate and as such no amendments have been made.

## **7. Conclusion**

No information that has been presented during the consultation period has been deemed to necessitate a change to the consultation document and so the information remains unchanged. As such it is considered that these proposals should be wholly implemented.

The recommendation is that this report is published, and at the appropriate time a statutory notice be published as consulted upon with no modifications, in order to progress this proposal.



## Appendix 1



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH  
NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION FOR THE  
LLANILID HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, BY EXTENDING  
THE PROVISION OF DOLAU PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## Table of Contents

Introduction to the Proposal .....	3
Who will we consult with? .....	4
What will the consultation process entail? .....	4
What do you need to consider? .....	5
How do you make your views known? .....	5
Background to the Proposal .....	7
The new proposed school provision for the Llanilid development.....	7
Information on Dolau Primary School .....	10
Governance, Staffing and Admission Arrangements .....	12
Financial details .....	13
The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).....	13
The statutory process .....	14
Site Plan for the Llanilid development.....	15
Consultation Response proforma .....	16

## Introduction to the Proposal

---

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on a proposal to establish new Primary Education provision to serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan.

Outline planning consent for the construction of up to 1,850 homes at the former Llanilid Opencast Site, Llanharan, was granted by the Council's Development Control Committee in January 2016, following over six years of discussion and consideration of the proposals between Council officers and agents representing the landowners. The delay in applying for and granting planning consent was mainly due to the complex nature and large scale of the proposals, and the fact that the original agents responsible for the planning application went in to administration.

As part of the planning process, the Council will collect a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on each dwelling constructed, which will be utilised to provide the essential infrastructure that is required to support a housing development of this size. It has already been agreed that a new Primary school building, of 540 places in total (including Nursery provision) will form part of the essential infrastructure. The housing developers have requested that they be allowed to construct the school building and hand it over to the Council at an agreed point in time, as 'part payment' of their CIL obligation; the Council has accepted and agreed to this request. A further planning application for full permission to commence the first phase of house construction has been received and is due to be considered by our Planning and Development Committee in September 2018; if permission is granted, house construction will commence before the end of the year.

The Council has undertaken a full assessment of the potential impact of this large development on existing school provision in this area and has also calculated the numbers of children that are likely to reside on this development. This calculation is outlined and explained in a document entitled 'Supplementary Planning Guidance', which is available to view and download from the Council website at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk). The relevant section of this document is 'Planning Obligations'.

To ensure that the demand for school places can be met in future years, through the preferred language medium of the parents' choice, it is proposed that the new school building be established, in the first instance, as an **extension to the dual language school provision of Dolau Primary School**. As part of the Welsh Government initiative to increase the number of people in Wales who can speak the Welsh Language to at least 1 million by 2050, the Council is aiming to increase capacity in the Welsh Language school sector, to encourage more parents to choose this medium of education for their children. Dolau offers provision in both languages, with parents given the freedom to choose which language they wish for their child to be educated in.

The developers are proposing to construct the new school building in a single phase, so when it opens in 2021 it will initially have considerable surplus capacity. This capacity will be filled as and when the new homes are constructed and become occupied, but in order

to avoid the unacceptable scenario of a new school opening with very few pupils on day 1, we have instead decided to treat the new building as an extension to an already well established school in the first instance. Dolau Primary is a very successful school, as is evidenced by the data and information provided in this document and is located a very short distance (approx. 400m) from the site of the new building. Having the new school provision as an extension to this successful school, rather than as a separate entity will allow the senior leadership and governors of Dolau to work with the Council to establish new school provision under their expert guidance. This will also remove the need to appoint a new Headteacher and produce a staffing structure for a new school, which could open with very few pupils in attendance. The Headteacher of Dolau will be able to utilise the new building to accommodate classes between the two buildings as he sees fit, to make the best use of all available resources. The school will then ‘grow’ as more houses are constructed.

The construction of 1,850 dwellings is considered to be the first phase of what is likely to be a much larger development in forthcoming years. There is sufficient land available in this area to be able to construct a further 3000+ homes and should this be realised, there will be a need to consider the establishment of further education provision, both in the Primary and Secondary school sectors, to serve this expanding community. The new school building will form part of the education provision that will serve this wider area and by this time, its provision will be firmly established under the management and guidance of Dolau Primary School. At this point in time, the Council will make an assessment of the requirements and demand for school places, including the likely language medium choices being expressed by parents, and will consider establishing the Llanilid primary school building as a new school in its own right.

### Who will we consult with?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The governing body of Dolau Primary School
- Pupils of Dolau Primary School
- Parents, carers, and staff members of Dolau Primary School
- The governors, pupils, parents, carers and staff members of Ysgol Llanhari and Y Pant Comprehensive School
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring primary schools, including those in adjacent local authority areas
- The governing body of Pencoed Comprehensive School
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Llanharan Community Council
- Llanharry Community Council
- The Welsh Language

- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
- Commissioner
- Menter Iaith
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Neighbouring local authorities

### What will the consultation process entail?

The consultation will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 and will be completed at 5pm on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in January 2019. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on Page 6 of this document.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report and will decide, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal a statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the outcome of the statutory notice at the next available Cabinet meeting and determine whether to implement the proposal.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and her response to them within 7 days of the day of the determination of the proposal. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on Page 6 of this document.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal the implementation date is **1<sup>st</sup> September 2021** for the extended school provision at Dolau Primary School. This date is dependent on progress made by the housing developer and may be subject to change therefore.

### What do you have to consider?

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the extension of dual language Primary school provision at Dolau Primary. We would like you to consider

the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposals as described.

### How do you make your views known?

Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meeting.

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Dolau Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 3.30 – 4.15pm	Dolau Primary School
Dolau Primary School	School Council	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 2pm	Dolau Primary School
Members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 4.30 – 6pm	Dolau Primary School

A consultation questionnaire is attached, it will also be available at the drop-in session detailed above and on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Council's Cabinet.

You are also welcome to put your views, comments and any questions you may have in writing to:

Director of Education  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon CF45 4UQ Telephone (01443) 744227 Fax (01443) 744224

E-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

All correspondence should be received **no later than 5pm Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.**

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the statutory notice.

## Background to the proposal

---

### **The new proposed school provision for the Llanilid housing development**

As outlined previously, the new school provision is required to cater for known and planned housing development at the former Llanilid Opencast Site, Llanharan. The site is identified as a strategic housing site in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006 – 2021; a new Primary school building to serve the development is detailed in the LDP as a policy requirement for essential infrastructure necessary to support the development.

It is proposed that the new school building will accommodate up to 480 pupils, plus 60 part time Nursery places, for children aged between 3 and 11 years. It will be created and established as an extension to Dolau Primary School in the first instance, and will thus increase the total available capacity of this dual language school to 921, plus 124 part time Nursery places. The admission number will be 131 per year group and the admissions authority will be Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The admissions policy of the LA is outlined in a document entitled 'Starting School', this document is updated annually and contains information on how to apply for a school place, and the criteria used to determine admission applications in the case of oversubscription. The current version of the document (for the academic year 2018 - 2019) can be viewed and downloaded from the Council website at:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/SchoolsandLearning/Applyingforaschoolplace/RelatedDocuments/1819/StartingSchool201819.pdf>.

The site of the new provision that will form the extension will be located at the top right hand sector of the development site, immediately adjacent to the site of the existing Dolau Primary School. An indicative site plan for the housing development, denoting the location of the proposed school building is included in this document for information (see page 15). The school building will comprise 16 general teaching classrooms, a large Nursery unit capable of accommodating 60 children (on a part time basis) and the general ancillary accommodation associated with a primary school, such as a multi-functional assembly hall, kitchen, staff room, offices, toilets, storage and changing rooms. The external areas will include a tarmac playground, car park, MUGA and a sports pitch that will be operated as a joint use facility with the local community. The sports facilities will also be available for use by the existing Dolau Primary School. As the two buildings are located just a short distance from each other, arrangements will be made to create an access between the two sites to ensure a safe and secure walking route between the two buildings that will comprise the extended Dolau Primary School.

The new building will be fully accessible to all and will meet all the requirements and provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

The building will be constructed by Persimmon Homes under the direction and supervision of the local authority and will be handed over to the Council on completion

of construction, which is scheduled to coincide with the construction of the 299<sup>th</sup> dwelling on the development.

The catchment schools serving the Llanilid housing development will therefore be:

English and Welsh Medium Primary – Dolau Primary School.

The catchment area of Dolau Primary School will therefore be expanded to encompass the new Llanilid housing development for both English and Welsh Medium Primary provision.

The associated Secondary schools to which pupils attending the schools overleaf would ordinarily transfer to (at Year 7), subject to parental preference and a successful application are:

Welsh Medium Secondary – Ysgol Llanhari

English Medium Secondary – Y Pant Comprehensive

Although Y Pant is designated as the catchment school for this development, there is a nearer school that offers Secondary education, namely Pencoed Comprehensive School, which is located in Bridgend County Borough. Any children resident on the Llanilid development who apply for and are successful in obtaining a place at Pencoed will receive free transportation to this school, as it is the nearest school to their home address and is in the main, outside of the two mile ‘qualifying distance’ operated by RCTCBC for school transport provision. The walking route to Pencoed from Llanilid is also classed as ‘unavailable’, so any pupils not receiving transport on distance criteria will still qualify for free transport on these grounds.

It must be noted at this point that catchment areas of all schools are subject to regular review and may be changed as part of this review process. It is a fact that there is likely to be further, extensive housing development in this part of the County Borough in future years, with further school provision being constructed as a necessary element to support this expansion. As a result of this the catchment areas will need to be reviewed regularly as development proceeds, in particular those of the Secondary schools detailed above, and changes to the associations between the Primary and Secondary schools will be inevitable should new Secondary school provision be opened in the future.

As indicated in the introduction to this document, once the housing development is well established and the pupil numbers at Dolau increase to fill the spare capacity that will be created by the new building, consideration will be given to making the new building a separate school in its own right. The language medium of the new school will also be determined at this point in time.

There is a statutory duty placed upon the local authority (LA) to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe “walking distance” to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh or dual language mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe “walking distance” is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory



school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:

- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles as required by the Measure;
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to children who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday) as required by the Measure.
- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles as required by the Measure.
- Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education as required by the Measure. This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner's home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in accordance with their preferred religious denomination.
- The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. have a flying start in life;
2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal will benefit the children who will attend the new school, and those who will continue to attend Dolau Primary School in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

## Information on Dolau Primary School

Dolau Primary School is a dual language Community Primary School situated at Bridgend Road, Llanharan. The school site comprises a traditional style building, constructed in 1928 (which has Grade II listed building status) and a modern classroom block and hall extension added in 2009. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Dolau Primary is graded a B for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £414,000.

The pupil numbers at Dolau Primary over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory pupil level annual school census (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. All data is split between the respective English (E) and Welsh (W) departments of the school:

School	Age Range	School Capacity (whole school)	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Dolau Primary (W)	3 - 11	441	188	182	177	176	182
Dolau Primary (E)	3 - 11	441	198	224	235	231	243

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending)

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Dolau Primary (W)	23	20	24	26	19
Dolau Primary (E)	43	42	38	38	43

Five year forecasts for the school:

School	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023
Dolau Primary (W)	441	163	157	148	146	141
Dolau Primary (E)	441	250	265	262	256	248

## Primary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of the two departments of Dolau Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on the numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals:

Subjects	Foundation Phase Outcomes					
	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
	Dolau Primary (W)	Dolau Primary (E)	Dolau Primary (W)	Dolau Primary (E)	Dolau Primary (W)	Dolau Primary (E)
Foundation Phase Indicator	97 (1)	93.1 (2)	96.4 (1)	94.3 (2)	95.2 (2)	92.3 (3)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100 (1)	96.6 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Language literacy and communication skills English/welsh	97 (2)	93.1 (2)	96.4 (2)	97.1 (1)	95.2 (2)	92.3 (3)
Mathematical development	97.2 (2)	93.1 (2)	96.4 (2)	94.3 (3)	95.2 (2)	92.3 (3)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Subjects	Key Stage Two Outcomes					
	2015		2016		2017	
	Dolau Primary (W)	Dolau Primary (E)	Dolau Primary (W)	Dolau Primary (E)	Dolau Primary (W)	Dolau Primary (E)
English	95.8 (2)	92.0 (3)	92.3 (3)	97.2 (2)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Welsh 1 <sup>st</sup> lang	95.8 (2)	N/A	92.3 (2)	N/A	100 (1)	N/A
Maths	100 (1)	92.0 (3)	100 (1)	94.4 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Science	100 (1)	92.0 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	95.8 (2)	92.0 (3)	92.3 (3)	94.4 (2)	100 (1)	100 (1)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

The attendance of the pupils of the school over the past three years is set out overleaf, please note that this data is for the whole school:

<b>Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year</b>						
<b>School</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2015 Benchmark Quartile</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2016 Benchmark Quartile</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2017 Benchmark Quartile</b>
Dolau Primary	95.5	2	95.1	3	95.6	2

Dolau Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in July 2015. The school’s current performance was deemed to be good, and its prospects for improvement also good.

Estyn also set out that, in order to build upon the progress made to date, the school should:

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum, especially in key stage 2
- Ensure consistency in marking so that pupils have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve their work

The Council’s School Improvement Services are provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. Schools are rated as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red in respect of their standards. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region and considers that:

*Dolau Primary School has been categorised as a ‘Green’ school, the highest level it can achieve. This rating means that the school has a track record of sustaining a high level of learner outcomes, it demonstrates resilience at all levels and is challenged to move forward towards, or sustaining excellence.*

### **Future Forecasts for the extended Dolau Primary School**

It is intended that this proposal be implemented in September 2021. The housing developer has advised us of the number of housing units that are likely to be completed each year from 2019 onwards. We have therefore recalculated our future forecasts from 2021 to 2023 (the end of our current forecasting period), for Dolau Primary with the new building as an extension to its provision, to include the impact of housing development as follows:

<b>School</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Dolau Primary	534	566	596

The housing construction works will be on going until the full planned complement of 1,850 houses are completed, pupil numbers at the school will therefore continue to rise

steadily in subsequent years. This is likely to take at least 10 years, based on the estimated rate of completion of houses provided by the developers.

## **Governance, Staffing and Admission Arrangements**

As this new provision is being created as an extension to Dolau Primary School, rather than a new school in its own right, the current governing body and leadership of Dolau Primary will remain in place. As the pupil numbers rise on completion of the new houses, there will be a need for the governing body to continually review their staffing structure and to appoint more staff as and when they are required. Parents will apply for places as they do at present. The new building, which will be classed as an extension is located just 5 minutes walk from the existing Dolau Primary buildings, so there will be no changes to school journeys, travelling times or transport eligibility.

It will be a matter for the Headteacher and governing body to manage the use of the accommodation that will be provided at the new building, but we would expect them to make full use of the new accommodation and facilities by transferring some of the existing classes at the school to the new building when it opens.

## **Financial Details**

As this is the creation of new school provision, by means of an extension to existing provision, with no other schools closing as a consequence, there will be no financial savings achieved by these proposals. The capital costs of the new building will be met by the housing developers as part of their required contributions to provide the necessary infrastructure to service their development. This will be paid as part of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that they have an obligation to meet.

## **The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**

All local authorities in Wales now have to produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). This document indicates how the local authority intends to promote the teaching of the Welsh Language, how it intends working towards increasing the number of children taught through the medium of Welsh and how it can assist achieving the Welsh Government's target of having one million people in Wales speaking Welsh by 2050. The WESP for RCT can be viewed and downloaded from the Council website via this link

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

Included among the list of actions and outcomes the Council will undertake to help achieve the targets set out in the WESP, by increasing the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh are the following:

- New and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh Medium provision in their catchment areas

The extension to the dual language provision of Dolau Primary School will make more Welsh Medium school places available, and will give parents the total freedom of choice and flexibility to have their children taught in the language medium of their choice.

## What is the statutory process to extend provision at an existing school?

The Code on School Organisation (“The Code”) is made under Sections 38 and 39 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Code came into force on 1 October 2013 and applies in respect of all school proposals published by way of a statutory notice after that date. The current Code is due to be revised on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 and the process we will undertake will follow the guidance contained within this updated document. Proposals to make regulated alterations to schools, by increasing their capacity by more than 25% of their existing levels have to follow the following process:

1. The Council’s Cabinet considers the Code and authorises a consultation process to commence;
2. At the start of the consultation period the Council **must** provide consultees with access to a consultation document and give them at least 42 days in which to respond, with at least 20 of these days being school days. If the Council considers it appropriate meetings are held with stakeholders during the consultation period;
3. Consultation comments are collated and summarised by the Council. This summary together with the Council’s officers own responses is published in a consultation report within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period, and two weeks prior to the publication of any statutory notice, and presented to the Council’s Cabinet for consideration;
4. The Council’s Cabinet decide whether to proceed with the changes within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period. If the decision is to proceed, Step 5 is taken. If a new option emerges during the consultation which the Council’s Cabinet wish to consider, then Steps 1-3 are repeated;
5. Statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The notice **must** be published on a school day and with 15 school days (not including the day of publication) in the notice period;
6. If objections are received, the Council **must** publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their responses to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority’s determination as to whether to proceed with the proposals;
7. The Council’s Cabinet must decide to issue its decision on the proposals within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period;
8. If the proposals receive approval they should be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date.





## Consultation Response Pro-forma

---

In order to comply with its legal duty under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and help the Council reach a decision on the proposal below, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Please note, any personal information given by you will not be shared and only used to provide you with feedback, should you request it. Any comments that could identify you will be anonymised in the consultation report produced. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

*Director of Education*

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team*

*Ty Trevithick*

*Abercynon*

*CF45 4UQ*

*or by fax to 01443 744224, or e-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)*

### The proposal

The proposal is to create new, dual language Primary education provision to serve the Llanilid housing development, by constructing a new school building on the development site and then establishing its provision, in the first instance, as an extension to Dolau Primary School.

1. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes  No  Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

---

---

---

2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

---

---

---

3. Please indicate who you are (eg parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school, member of the community etc.)

---

---

4. Name (optional)

---

5. Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

---

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

*Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.*

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice) and the Councils **data protection** pages here [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).

## **Proposal to extend Dolau Primary School (to provide for the Llanilid housing development)**

### **Community Impact Assessment**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex D of statutory guidance circular 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

This proposal is to be consulted on between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have already been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. This document clearly focuses on the reasons for the need for additional Primary education provision in this area, this Impact Assessment is not included in the consultation document as we are mindful that the document needs to be as concise and informative as possible, whilst at the same time being readable and 'user-friendly'. The free availability of this document is however stressed; in addition, it is available for any person to view or download from the Council website.

It has to be emphasised at this point that the community impact of this proposal will be negligible, indeed if any impact is realised at all. Dolau Primary School will remain and no provision whatsoever is being removed. A new school building is to be constructed by housing developers on a site that is immediately adjacent to Dolau, and in the first instance, this provision will be established as an extension to Dolau Primary School. It is therefore considered that the overall impact of these proposals will be neutral on the local community, there will be no change to the level of services and provision that are offered at present at Dolau, but there will instead be opportunities for it to be extended and enhanced.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending Dolau Primary that reside within the catchment area is 76% for the English stream and 64% for the Welsh stream. This is of the total number of pupils on roll in January 2018 (date of the PLASC return), including non-statutory Nursery and pre-Nursery pupils.

Dolau Primary offers a breakfast club to all pupils; this provision will continue should this proposal be agreed. The school also offers after school clubs and sessional care for pupils (run by Menter Iaith) and these too will continue.

The school has several organisations that use their facilities on a regular basis outside of school hours, as detailed below. The provision of a new building will enhance and expand the opportunities for community groups to access the facilities available:

Drop in Centre Activity Club – 1 evening per week

Starfish Swimming Club – 1 evening per week

Welsh for Beginners class – 1 evening per week

RCT Community Dance Group – 1 evening per week

This proposal seeks to enhance the accommodation and facilities of Dolau Primary, to benefit all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will be extended to encompass the Llanilid housing development site). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area. However, as part of the facilities the housing developer is obligated to provide, the new school site will benefit from sports pitches and a Multi use Games Area (MUGA), which will be available to the whole school to use, and the community outside of school hours (under the agreement of the school).

It must also be noted that the site of the new building is located just a short distance away from the current school. A dedicated and safe footpath will be created to physically link the both sites. No additional transportation will be required and walking distances and travel times to the new site will be negligible.

As children are going to attend the same school, albeit with two separate buildings that are located within a short distance of each other, is not considered that there will be any changes to their mode or method or transportation to school and there will be no extra distance involved in respect of this journey.

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL**

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Directorate:** Education  
**Service Area:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
**Responsible officer:** Julie Hadley  
**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018

**1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project:** The establishment of Primary education provision to serve the Llanilid housing development

The Project is to:  
Create new Primary school provision for the Llanilid housing development

**2. Policy Aims,** you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?  
How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

**New school provision is required to cater for known and planned housing development at the former Llanilid Opencast Site, Llanharan. The site is identified as a strategic housing site in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006 – 2021; a new Primary school building to serve the development is detailed in the LDP as a policy requirement for essential infrastructure necessary to support the development.**

**It is proposed that the new school building will accommodate up to 480 pupils, plus 60 part time Nursery places, for children aged between 3 and 11 years. It will be created and established as an extension to Dolau Primary School in the first instance, and will thus increase the total available capacity of**

this dual language school to 921, plus 124 part time Nursery places. The admission number will be 131 per year group and the admissions authority will be Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

The site of the new provision that will form the extension will be located immediately adjacent to the site of the existing Dolau Primary School. The school building will comprise 16 general teaching classrooms, a large Nursery unit capable of accommodating 60 children (on a part time basis) and the general ancillary accommodation associated with a primary school, such as a multi-functional assembly hall, kitchen, staff room, offices, toilets, storage and changing rooms. The external areas will include a tarmac playground, car park, MUGA and a sports pitch that will be operated as a joint use facility with the local community. The sports facilities will also be available for use by the existing Dolau Primary School. As the two buildings are located just a short distance from each other, arrangements will be made to create an access between the two sites to ensure a safe and secure walking route between the two buildings that will comprise the extended Dolau Primary School.

The new building will be fully accessible to all and will meet all the requirements and provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

The building will be constructed by Persimmon Homes under the direction and supervision of the local authority and will be handed over to the Council on completion of construction, which is scheduled to coincide with the construction of the 299<sup>th</sup> dwelling on the development.

Once the housing development is well established and the pupil numbers at Dolau increase to fill the spare capacity that will be created by the new building, consideration will be given to making the new building a separate school in its own right. The language medium of the new school will also be determined at this point in time.

**3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate**

Members of the public   Staff   Both   Other   Please state: children aged 3-11 years resident in the existing catchment area of Dolau Primary School, and the new housing development at Llanilid

**4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:**

New

**5. Identifying Impacts** – Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager’s guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Young – Yes		Old – no impact	<p>Better learning facilities for all and sufficient school capacity to cater for all children who will reside within the catchment area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make the learning environments comfortable and attractive for all children who access them, to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standards.</li> <li>• access services to improve the lives of children and their families.</li> <li>• Improved facilities will enable the pupils to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities.</li> <li>• The changing curriculum, life long learning opportunities and use of ICT will provide the opportunity to enable all learners to reach their potential.</li> <li>• Facilities at Primary schools, in particular the Infant teaching areas are geared towards the needs of young children and are, as such not suitable for use by older persons.</li> </ul>
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			<p>As this will be a brand new building, it will comply with all of the requirements of planning and building control legislation and will also fully comply with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, being fully accessible to all.</p>



People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	
Welsh Language	Yes			The school will offer education provision in both English and Welsh Mediums, subject to parental preference and choice.
Carers			Yes	

## EVIDENCE

6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet - September 2018.  
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal

7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

None

## INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

### 9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

The following consultation meetings/ open events are to be held

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Dolau Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 3.30 – 4.15pm	Dolau Primary School
Dolau Primary School	School Council	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 2pm	Dolau Primary School
Members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018, 4.30 – 6pm	Dolau Primary School

A consultation questionnaire was also available in the consultation document and on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk)

Interested parties were also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon CF45 4UQ

e-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

### **10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?**

The Council's school improvement, governor support and HR teams will be fully engaged in supporting the governing body to establish the new provision, and to enable the school to 'grow' in size as new houses are constructed. This support will continue for as long as it is required.

## **ADDRESSING THE IMPACT**

### **11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?**

- Continue the Policy

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

**The evidence outlined in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach.**

### **12. ACTION PLAN**

**You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.**

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
To monitor and supervise the construction of the new school building, which will be constructed by Persimmon Homes and delivered to the Council upon completion of the 299 <sup>th</sup> house on the development	Colin Atyeo Director of Corporate Estates	By September 2020 (or whichever date the construction of the 299 <sup>th</sup> dwelling falls on)		

13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None.

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team

The Pavilions

Cambrian Park

Clydach

CF40 2XX

Email: [equality@rhondda-cynon- Taf.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rhondda-cynon- Taf.gov.uk)

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies                      Date: 1/10/18

Job Title: Director of Education & Inclusion Services

# **Proposals to Establish Primary Education Provision for the Llanilid Housing Development, Llanharan**

## **Welsh Language Impact Assessment**

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Annex C of the School Organisation Code.

Outline planning consent for the construction of up to 1,850 homes at the former Llanilid Opencast Site, Llanharan, was granted by the Council's Development Control Committee in January 2016, following over six years of discussion and consideration of the proposals between Council officers and agents representing the landowners. As part of the planning process, the Council will collect a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on each dwelling constructed, which will be utilised to provide the essential infrastructure that is required to support a housing development of this size. It has already been agreed that a new Primary school building, of 540 places in total (including Nursery provision) will form part of the essential infrastructure.

To ensure that the demand for school places can be met in future years, through the preferred language medium of the parents' choice, it is proposed that the new school building be established, in the first instance, as an **extension to the dual language school provision of Dolau Primary School**. As part of the Welsh Government initiative to increase the number of people in Wales who can speak the Welsh Language to at least 1 million by 2050, the Council is aiming to increase capacity in the Welsh Language school sector, to encourage more parents to choose this medium of education for their children. Dolau offers provision in both languages, with parents given the freedom to choose which language they wish for their child to be educated in.

It is proposed that the new school building will accommodate up to 480 pupils, plus 60 part time Nursery places, for children aged between 3 and 11 years. It will be created and established as an extension to Dolau Primary School in the first instance, and will thus increase the total available capacity of this dual language school to 921, plus 124 part time Nursery places. We consider that this capacity will be sufficient to cater for current and forecasted pupil demand and it will also allow for growth in the Welsh Medium sector.

All services provided by Dolau Primary School outside of school hours, such as breakfast clubs, after school clubs and other community facilities will continue in the new, extended school campus. Any links with outside organisations such as the Urdd, Menter Iaith etc will be maintained and hopefully strengthened and expanded. The new and existing school buildings will have spare capacity initially that can be utilised by community groups and organisations and the headteacher will be encouraged to consider using these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh Language. This may

include offering opportunities to parents and other community members to learn Welsh, and possibly providing the potential to invite outside organisations to provide childcare and 'wrap around' care provision on the school site if requested and if there is recognised demand for such facilities .

Information on the standards of provision at Dolau Primary School is again contained within the consultation document. It must be stressed that this proposal is to treat the new school building as an extension to Dolau Primary School; it is not creating a brand new school and as such we have not outlined how an alternative school provision will improve on current standards, which are recognised as being of a high quality.

One of the main targets outlined in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is to increase the number of children receiving education through the medium of Welsh, which will assist the local authority in working towards the Welsh Government target of having 1 million people in Wales able to speak Welsh by 2050. We consider that this proposal will provide extra pupil capacity through the medium of Welsh in a new, state of the art building and will hopefully encourage more parents to choose a Welsh Medium education for their children.

## Appendix 2

### Notes of a meeting held with school council and year 6 pupils of Dolau Primary School Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 2:00pm Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to establish Primary education provision for the Llanilud housing development

#### Present

Julie Hadley, School Organisation Manager  
Nicola Goodman, Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer  
Sophie Nicholls, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Graduate Officer  
72 pupils present (14 from school council and year 6 classes from English and Welsh medium streams).

Julie Hadley (JH) set out the proposals and asked pupils if they knew what the proposal was about. The meeting was open for pupils to pose questions.

#### Question

We know there will be a new building and they are discussing it tonight.

JH explained the consultation process. If the decision is passed by Cabinet then the building will be designed and built.

#### Question

Will any buildings be removed from the site?

JH  
No

#### Question

What will happen to this building?

JH  
There are no plans to alter this building. We are trying to build the school big enough to cope with all of the new houses, and it will be a separate building on site.

#### Question

Will the old building be forgotten?

JH  
No, the Council and Governors will look after and protect it. It will still be part of the school.

#### Question

How long will it take to build?

JH  
It will probably take a year.

#### Question

Will they have dinners here or there?

JH

They will be able to have dinners in the new building.

Question

When will you start building?

JH

Hopefully, next summer.

Question

What will happen to the animals in the woods?

JH

We will make sure the animals have a home and we will protect and enhance their habitats with the school council.

Question

Will we have new wifi boxes for our new mega school?

JH

We will improve the IT to deliver the new curriculum.

Question

How will we pay for the new teachers?

JH

The budget for the staff depends on the number of pupils in the school and the Council provide the funding to the governors to pay for your teachers.

Question

How much will it cost to build?

JH

It will probably cost more than £5m.

Question

Will there be a path connecting the school building?

JH

Yes there will be a path connecting the buildings.

Question

Will we get a new PE hall?

JH

There will be a hall included in the new building.

Question

Will the fire alarms be linked between the buildings?

JH

The fire systems will be in place for all the buildings.

Question

How many classes will be taught in the new building?

JH

I'm not sure. That would be up to Mr Evans to decide.



Question

What are the pink buildings on the map?

JH

Those are groups of houses. These are not the official plans for the school yet. These are just to show you what might be able to happen if this is passed by Cabinet.

Question

Where will we all go break time?

JH

There will be a larger play area between both buildings. There may be a new grass pitch and maybe a MUGA.

Question

Will the new building be for foundation phase or juniors?

JH

The building will be suitable for both.

Question

There will be more traffic.

JH

Yes, we will ask for a large drop off facility for the school and make sure it is safe for you to walk and cycle to school.

Question

What will happen to the nature area?

JH

Some of it may have to be moved elsewhere to make way for a path that connects both buildings. We wouldn't get rid of it all as we know how important the green space is to the school.

Question

Would this turn into a comp?

JH

No. Over a few years there will be more pupils filling this school, and the spare places will be filled. Eventually both buildings will be full of primary aged pupils.

Question

Will there be a new head for that school?

JH

No. It will be Mr Evans as head for both buildings under the one school of Dolau Primary.

Question

Will year 6 be able to visit?

JH

Of course, it will be your new school building.

Question

Will there be storage for outside play equipment.

JH

Yes we will make sure there is storage.

Question

Will they teach different subjects there?

JH

No, it will still be part of Dolau like your classes are now.

Question

How will the buses get there?

JH

That will depend on how the housing estate is designed. There will be a bus drop off area on the school site though.

Question

Will the English and Welsh be separate in the buildings?

JH

That is up to Mr Evans and the Governors to decide.

Question

How will the local comprehensive schools cope with the increased capacity of Dolau?

JH

The Welsh stream will be fine as there is plenty of room in Ysgol Llanhari. We will need to look at the English stream and see what the best solution is to ensure there is enough space for everyone.

Question

Will you change the school logo or mascot?

JH

No, that will not be affected by this. That is for the school to decide at any point.

Question

Will there be a new pool?

JH

No. We don't put pools in our schools anymore because they are expensive for the schools to run.

Question

What about disabled children that move in?

JH

The new building will be suitable for anyone with additional learning needs.

Question

How many children will there be in the school?

JH

There will be 540 new school places.

Question 3

Where will we have the summer and Halloween fates?

JH

That is up to the school to decide.

Question 3

Will the school be a more modern design?

JH

The new block we are currently sat in is very modern and we build new 21<sup>st</sup> Century modern school buildings.

Question

Will pupils have to pay more for school trips?

JH

No

Question

How many builders will there be?

JH

Hopefully lots of them.

Question

Llanharan will turn big. Will there be extra police and fire stations?

JH

That will be up to those services to decide.

Question

How big will the new housing area be?

JH

You can look at the map on the board to see some ideas about designs and how many houses.

Question

Why won't it be a comp?

JH

There is room elsewhere for children to go to secondary school. We need to make sure there is enough space for primary age pupils.

Question

How many new houses will there be?

JH

1800

Question

Will we share yards?

JH

Yes. There will be a much bigger external space for you to share.

Question

Will it be locked so people can't come into school?

JH

Yes the whole site will be secure and your safeguarding is essential to the council.

Question

What if there are too many pupils there?

JH

The site will be bigger and there will be enough space in the buildings and on the yard for all pupils to learn and play.

Question

How will the cars get there?

JH

There will be new roads built as part of the wider housing development.

Question

How long will design take?

JH

Hopefully they will start building next summer, but it takes about 6-8 months to design a school.

Question

Will there be enough buses and car parks?

JH

There will be a pick up/drop off area and safety is our main concern. You will be able to get on and off your buses safely.

Question

Will there be a bike park?

JH

There will likely be a bike shelter as we put them in most schools, and maybe a path to cycle on.

Question

Will there be a new field?

JH

Yes there will be a MUGA and a grass pitch for all pupils to use.

Question

Will there be two nurseries? There are already two for each class.

JH

Possibly, that is for Mr Evans to decide.

Question

How many trees will there be?

JH

I'm not sure how many but we won't get rid of them all and hopefully plant some new ones.

Question

Will there be a running track?

JH

Probably not.

Question

Is Persimmon building it?

JH

Yes, and the houses around it.

Question

What happens if there is an emergency in one building?

JH

The building will be evacuated and the emergency services will be called.

Question

Did you build this school?

JH

Yes the Council arranged for the building of this extension we are sat in.

JH

Thank you all for your questions and comments.

**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors of Dolau Primary School**

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 3:45pm**

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to establish Primary education provision for the Llanilud housing development**

**Present**

Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Julie Hadley, School Organisation Manager  
Nicola Goodman, Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer  
Sophie Nicholls, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Graduate Officer  
28 members of school staff and the governing body

Introductions from Council officers.

Andrea Richards (AR) welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the proposal, the reasons for the proposal, the purpose of the meeting, the consultation process and timescales relating to the consultation process and the proposals themselves should they be implemented.

AR referred to the detailed consultation documents which outline the precise reasons for this consultation process, and provide further information regarding the school, such as pupil numbers, building condition information etc. The consultation document also provides information regarding where written comments should be sent and includes a questionnaire should people wish to complete this.

AR explained that the questions / comments / responses would be recorded for inclusion in the consultation report which would be fed back to Cabinet in January 2019, as would the feedback from pupils. AR stressed that this was a period of consultation and should the proposals proceed to the next stage (statutory notice), objections would be received and recorded at that stage.

AR outlined the full consultation process as:-

- This initial consultation;
- A further report to elected members and production of a consultation report, which is also published;
- If elected members agree to proceed, a statutory notice is issued. This allows for a statutory 28 days period of consultation, during which any interested person may comment, or raise objections;
- Following the 28 day period, a further report will be presented to elected members, together with an objections report which again has to be published.
- The Council's Cabinet will then make the final determination of the proposal.

It is anticipated that, subject to the outcome of this consultation process and progress with the construction of the new homes, the new school building would be provided by September, 2021; the exact date is not known at this stage as it is subject to house construction schedules that are outside of the Council's control.

In the case of staff, it is expected that there will be no impact whatsoever on the existing staff employed at Dolau; as the school grows in size in subsequent years additional staff will be required, so the staffing structure of the school will require continuous review by the Headteacher and governing body.

AR explained that the purpose of the meeting was to seek views on the proposal being put forward.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

#### Comment

The consultation document states that consideration is being given regarding two separate schools. What if the Council decides to make it a 'super school'?

#### Response

The intention is to use Dolau Primary School as an exemplar primary school, as it is a very good school. Staff and governors can shape the school in the future. There are a large number of houses proposed to be built and there will be a need for even more school places should further projected homes materialise. A through school (3-16 years or 3-19 years) would need another consultation.

#### Comment

Concern expressed regarding the school having 1,000 pupils. Primary schools are about community / smaller schools where teachers know the pupils' names.

#### Response

The intention is, once the schools are established, to split them. This is subject to further consultation at the relevant time. At the moment, it is not known how many pupils will be generated by the new housing development and what language medium education they will require, therefore, the proposal is to open the new building under the umbrella of Dolau Primary School in the first instance.

#### Comment

If the school is running okay, the Council may not want to split the school and spend money on a new / extra Headteacher.

#### Response

The school will be funded appropriately as numbers grow. The governing body will determine the staffing structure going forward. Dolau Primary School is currently a big school. There are other primary schools within Rhondda Cynon Taf which also have over 500 pupils. There is better financial management in larger schools, but the concerns expressed regarding larger schools are noted.

### Comment

The current proposal (to open as an extension to Dolau Primary School) is understood as the numbers of pupils are clearly not known at present and separation in the future could be foreseen – it is good to have the choice.

### Comment

One point of clarification was made in relation to the opening statements - the houses and investment in the area are coming because of the Council, not the M4.

### Question

There is a 3G pitch at the new school in Pencoed. Could this be negotiated with the developers?

### Response

This cannot be promised, but it could be discussed with the developers. Two pitches are being provided as part of the new build – the surfaces of these has not been determined at present.

### Question

The reference made to the demographic of the school (i.e. Welsh or English medium) into the future being made by governors – will the Council or Welsh Government provide guidance on this?

### Response

Ultimately it is the governors' decision, however, the governing body would be suitably supported by the Council. The current building will also continue to receive investment going forward.

### Question

Will school staff be consulted regarding the new building?

### Response

Persimmon (the housing developer) have already been provided with an accommodation schedule of required spaces in a school of this size. Once their proposals are received, the Council will review them and consult with the school. Planning permission is being requested imminently for the house construction. If the application is successful, the house construction is due to start in the new year. This is the first time that the Council has had a school provided by a developer. The Council will consult with school staff in due course, as they are the practitioners.

### Comment

The new building provides an opportunity for new initiatives, for example, a radio station, specialist rooms to put the school on the map in terms of the new curriculum.

### Response

The building needs to be future-proofed and innovative. There is a need to ensure that the building can deliver the new curriculum.

### Question

Are there any plans for development of any of the Comprehensive schools in the area?

### Response

The Council continually monitors the position and are also collaborating with Pencoed in Bridgend. There is space for secondary school age pupils requiring



Welsh medium education at Ysgol Llanhari; however, English medium capacity at secondary school age is an issue.

Comment

The majority of people moving into the new development may want English medium education.

Response

The Council continually monitors the situation and applies the management of school places. There is also the Welsh Government target of over one million Welsh speakers by 2050 which may impact. However, ultimately, parental choice determines the language choice for a child's education.

Comment

The buildings at Ysgol Llanhari need to be looked at to attract further Welsh medium pupils.

Response

The Council are passionate about investment and have invested over £200 million in school buildings over the last five years. We are aware of Ysgol Llanhari (secondary department) and we will continue to work with the school. The primary department has received substantial investment and is now of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standard.

Comment

Some parents may prefer bilingual / dual language and other parents may prefer all Welsh, but this cannot be predicted.

Comment

Nursery applications – may these be considered across the border?

Response

There is no cross-border provision for nursery education as nursery education is paid for by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, not by the Welsh Government, hence, is only available to Rhondda Cynon Taf residents. This was part of the budget cuts implemented and it is not fair for residents from across the border to benefit from Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's budgets.

Bridgend Council are currently reviewing their nursery provision and there are similar border issues elsewhere in RCT.

Secondary school pupils attending schools across the border are funded by Welsh Government.

Question

299 houses will be built before the school building opens – where will these children go?

Response

There may be a need to provide temporary / mobile classroom accommodation for a short period and increase the school's admission number accordingly.

Question

One problem to take into account is parking issues. Aware that it is an issue in all schools, but could drop off points be included?

Response

The Council has authorised traffic impact assessments. These can then input into the discussions / negotiations with Persimmon.

Traffic will be reviewed on the proposed new and existing school sites and any recommendations following the Traffic Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

Question

Would the new building have a separate kitchen and ancillary spaces etc?

Response

This will be included.

Question

Would there be more provision for Special Educational Needs?

Response

All new school buildings are fully accessible and available to pupils with Additional Learning Needs.

Comment

With two school buildings, there needs to be a space for all staff to come together.

Response

There will be large enough spaces to accommodate staff meetings.

Comment

The Headteacher commented that the staff and governors of Dolau Primary School would ensure that this is the best school in the UK (not just RCT) and are really excited by the next phase.

AR thanked all for their attendance and inputs and encouraged all present to contact the Council with any further comments or concerns and emphasised that the Council aims to provide a fantastic new facility.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

The meeting closed at 4:35pm

**Estyn's response to the consultation by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council to establish new primary school provision for the Llanilid housing development, by extending the provision of Dolau primary school, from September 2021.**

### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposal appropriately sets out the need for additional educational provision to accommodate both the planned and potential for further housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan. It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of educational provision in the area.

### **Description and benefits**

The proposal sets out clearly the need for additional nursery and pupil places arising from the planned housing developments and the potential for further developments in the area. The proposal appropriately considers the advantages and disadvantages associated with the extension of the current school, through the creative use of a new school build, alongside the construction of a major new housing development.

The proposal usefully explains how the current primary school at Dolau will respond to the increasing population expected within the new housing development, by using

---

Estyn, Llys Angor/Anchor Court, Heol Keen/Keen Road, Caerdydd/Cardiff, CF24 5JW  
Ffôn/Telephone 02920 446446

ymholiadau@estyn.llyw.cymru • enquiries@estyn.gov.wales  
www.estyn.llyw.cymru • www.estyn.gov.wales

Mae Estyn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Bydd gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn y naill iaith neu'r llall yn cael yr un flaenoriaeth.

Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

the new build as an extension to the existing school. The benefits of this approach are well set out within the proposal, which include the management of an 'ad hoc' demand for new places throughout the school year, associated with the arrivals of new residents. The proposer also explains well the disadvantages associated with the alternative of opening a brand new school immediately without full capacity.

The current primary school at Dolau is a dual stream school, and the expansion will accommodate both language preferences, therefore maintaining parental choice and should provide sufficient places as demand increases in the short term. However, the intended change from an extension to the existing school to the creation of a separate new school, and its language preference remains deferred until an unspecified time in the future.

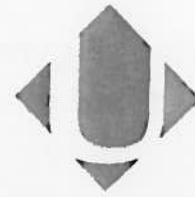
The proposer sets out well the current local authority practice for the provision of school transport, which is more generous than the statutory minimum. The proposal sets out clearly that the policy will be applied for pupils attending this school, and also takes into account the risk assessments for the walking routes to school, which are considered to be unsuitable for pupil foot traffic. Additionally the proposals sets out clearly the implications for secondary aged pupils who will live on this new housing development, and their options for either the closest school which is in neighbouring local authority, or the nearest English medium and Welsh medium schools in the proposer's local authority. The proposer also clarifies how the local authority's current policy for home to school transport will apply for these pupils.

The proposer provides detailed past and projected nursery places and pupil numbers for Dolau primary school, which take account of the expected numbers based on the current catchment, and the planned new development.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The construction of the new school, and its initial use as an extension to the current school should not represent a risk to the school and its education provision. The opportunities arising from additional space, state of the art classroom design and new outdoors facilities are likely to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils.

The proposal appropriately considers the likely impact of the new school on standards, provision and leadership by referring to the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspections, as well as the Regional Consortium's categorisation of the school. In July 2015, Estyn judged the school's performance to be good, and its prospects for improvement also good. The local consortium categorises the school as green. This information supports the proposer's reasonable claim that Dolau Primary school should be able to maintain its current standards during the expansion.



**UCAC**  
Undeb  
Cenedlaethol  
Athrawon  
Cymru

YMGYNGHORIAD AR GYNNIG I  
SEFYDLU DARPARIAETH ADDYSG  
GYNRADD NEWYDD AR GYFER  
DATBLYGIAD TAI LLANILID DRWY  
YMESTYN DARPARIAETH YSGOL  
GYNRADD DOLAU

Rhagfyr 2018

**UCAC** | yr undeb sy'n diogelu athrawon a darlithwyr Cymru

[www.athrawon.com](http://www.athrawon.com)

## **Yr ymgynghoriad ar gynnig i sefydlu darpariaeth addysg gynradd newydd ar gyfer datblygiad tai Llanilid drwy ymestyn darpariaeth Ysgol Gynradd Dolau**

Mae Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC) yn gwerthfawrogi'r cyfle i ymateb i'r ddogfen ymgynghori hon gan Gyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Mae UCAC yn falch gweld dyhead Cyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf i geisio creu mwy o lefydd addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y sir ac yn cadw at yr hyn a amlinellwyd yn eu Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg drwy *"Adeiladau ysgol newydd a gwell sydd â lefelau priodol o leoedd ar gael i fodloni'r rhagolygon o ran galw am ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg yn eu dalgylchoedd."*

Rydym am weld y bydd pob cyfle i blant yr ardal gael addysg Gymraeg yn Ysgol Gynradd Dolau os ydynt yn dymuno hynny. Nid ydym am weld darpariaeth addysg cyfrwng Saesneg yn cael mwy o flaenoriaeth nac addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg a bod tegwch a chyfle cyfartal i bob plentyn. Mae dyletswydd ar Gyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf i gynyddu nifer o blant y sir sy'n cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg ac felly mae angen sicrhau rhoi blaenoriaeth i ehangu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y sir. Bydd hyn yn cyd-fynd gyda nôd Llywodraeth Cymru o gael miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050.

Cydnabyddir bod ad-drefnu ysgolion fel hyn yn fater cymhleth a bod amrywiaeth barn a theimladau cryfion o du disgyblion, rhieni, staff ysgol a'r gymuned ehangach.

Os bydd y cynllun arfaethedig yn cael ei gymeradwyo gan Gyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf mae UCAC yn gofyn am sicrwydd y bydd ymgynghoriad llawn gyda staff ac undebau llafur yr ysgol os bydd unrhyw newidiadau staffio.

**UCAC  
Rhagfyr 2018**

WRITTEN FEEDBACK FOR THE PROPOSAL TO EXTEND DOLAU PRIAMRY SCHOOL

Agree with proposal	Comments	Additional Views
Yes	For quality education you need to ensure you have the classroom sizes to cater for the population of the community.	<p>I would like to see Community Services taken into account and infrastructure of informed educational opportunities to be catered for - ensuring sufficient play and youth support services for the growing population of our community.</p> <p>I would like to see a joined up collaborative approach to this development involving local youth and community charity Llanharan Community Development Project (LCDP), with Persimmon Homes and Education working together to provide better community services outside of school hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-After school clubs</li> <li>- Outdoor play space</li> <li>- Open natural play space</li> <li>- Community building to support further education classes as well as informal education opportunities for all ages.</li> </ul>
Not sure	<p>I agree that a large increase in the population of Llanharan will necessitate additional capacity within Dolau Primary School and longer term a new secondary school. My main concern is what changes will be made to the existing infrastructure to accommodate the increase in the population of Llanharan. The existing road through Llanharan struggles to cope with the volume of traffic using it at non rush hour period, especially at the railway bridge when larger vehicles or even vans pass each other. The situation outside the school during morning and evening drop off/pick up times is particularly bad, especially during the winter months when the weather is poor. Parents struggle to park their vehicles and park wherever they can – on verges, within the neighbouring estate or the Greggs car park. Will there be a drop off/pick up collection points for parents? It would be preferable for the students of Dolau to walk/cycle to school if possible which would reduce the requirement for parents to drive their children to school but the existing infrastructure doesn't encourage this.</p>	<p>Will Active Travel initiatives be included as part of the development scheme? The current road through Llanharan is unlit for the majority of the route which would be used by school children coming from the west of the new school building. The footpaths are narrow and not suitable for walking or cycling safely. The existing carriageway is narrow and does not lend itself to safe cycling, especially for young children. Cars pass along his section very quickly. Would a 20mph speed limit be introduced with crossing points for residents on the north side of the road to commute to school? The footpaths could be widened and a shared segregated cycle/pedestrian route introduced along the length of the A473. This road is well used by runners and dog walkers through the lighter summer months but in the dark evenings is hardly used due to the poor lighting etc mentioned previously. Also, the residents of the new Llanilid developments and existing residents at Enterprise Way may benefit from using the section of carriageway, currently not in use, being opened to remove additional vehicles off the A473. It will still be used as a rat run by large delivery vehicles etc. The new development will need as many access points as possible to reduce the volume of traffic using the roundabouts on the A473 thereby maintaining the flow of traffic on the A473. I look forward to seeing how the project develops.</p>
Yes	The extension to Dolau and further proposals will provide appropriate Primary Education	We would wish to support any choices made by residents who wish to select Pencoed

	<p>provision for the Housing Development at Llanilid</p>	<p>Comprehensive School (including the Penybont 6<sup>th</sup> Form College) as a school and 6<sup>th</sup> Form provision for their children. Our current capacity will allow residents of the development to opt for our school should they choose. The school currently has some 900 pupils on roll with a capacity of 1137. However, projections made by Bridgend County Borough Council (in its consultation document on the potential re-organisation of post-16 provision across Bridgend suggests that the school will be over capacity by 2022 taking account of new build programmes within the Local Authority boundaries. We note the commitment, in the consultation document, of the local authority to provide free transportation to this school, as it is the nearest English Medium Comprehensive School to the development.</p>
<p>Not sure</p>	<p>Y Pant School is already full. Pencoed has space for another 150/200 or so pupils. When the new secondary is built how will this affect the existing schools? Will they see a fall in numbers? Will the secondary school have a sixth form? If so how will this affect the current provision in both Pencoed and Y Pant. If the new school English medium is should be beneficial to Llanharri which is under-capacity.</p>	<p>Road, both main and side roads, are already congested to excess in this area. The motorway is also congested at peak times going into Cardiff. What effect will this have on existing housing in the immediate and wider vicinity?</p>



### **Appendix 3**

#### **Llanilid consultation – public event 18.10.18**

Comments left on 'Have your say' boards:

- Great progress, but please consider 'play opportunities' for out of school times all year around. After school clubs, early years services – Llanharan community development project.
- Good opportunity for new changes
- Can you ensure that the green space isn't lost and the forest area isn't built on as this is great for the children's education?
- As a parent and teacher I feel this extension is too big for a primary school and am worried this would impact on the education my children would receive and the security.
- Can you ensure there will be sufficient childcare (including Welsh childcare) in the area for working parents?
- How will you deal with the 299 homes with children before the new school is ready? Parking is a major issue. How will this be dealt with? I'm worried such a big extension to a primary would affect quality.
- Can you please ensure that we promote benefits of raising your child bilingually with families in the area so they will consider Welsh language education?
- Please consider traffic access and parking spaces for school drop off/pick up. It is already extremely busy on Bridgend Road and surrounding areas.
- If the school is split into an English and Welsh site, can you ensure that all children will be given the same opportunities e.g choir, sport, eisteddfod regardless of their language medium.
- Woodland!

# THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

The history of the United States is a complex and multifaceted story that spans centuries. It begins with the early Native American civilizations, such as the Mayans, Aztecs, and Incas, who built sophisticated societies in the Americas. The arrival of European explorers in the late 15th and early 16th centuries marked the beginning of a new era. The Spanish, French, and British established colonies and fought wars for control of the continent. The American Revolution (1775-1783) was a pivotal moment that led to the birth of the United States as an independent nation. The Constitution was drafted in 1787, and the country grew through westward expansion, the Civil War (1861-1865), and the Industrial Revolution. The 20th century saw the United States emerge as a global superpower, leading the world in the Cold War and playing a central role in the development of the modern world.

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

24 JANUARY 2019

### 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION PROVISION IN CYNON VALLEY

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

**Authors:** Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of proposals to:
- Improve and increase education provision in Hirwaun by investing in a new school for Hirwaun Primary School;
  - Improve Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community Primary School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium Primary School;

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached Consultation Report, which includes details of items of correspondence received during the consultation exercise and notes of the various meetings held.
- 2.2 Note that the consultation report recommends that an amendment to the consultation proposals be made, which **will** allow new English medium admissions to Penderyn Community Primary School until such time that the change in category of Penderyn Community Primary School, from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school, comes into effect.
- 2.3 Agree to progress the proposals plus amendment to the next stage of the review process by firstly agreeing to publish the Consultation Report, and secondly issuing an appropriate Statutory Notice two weeks after the Consultation Report is published.
- 2.4 The modified proposals are to:

- create a new school for Hirwaun Primary School by September 2021;
- change the category of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school from September 2021;
- continue to allow new English medium admissions to Penderyn Community Primary School until such time that the change in category of Penderyn Community Primary School, from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school, comes into effect.

### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code).

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018, approval was given to begin a process to formally consult on a proposal to improve and increase education provision in Hirwaun by investing in a new school for Hirwaun Primary School; and improve Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community Primary School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium Primary School.

### **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Equality, Community and Welsh Language Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of this proposal and were published on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document that outlines the proposal in detail. Copies of all impact assessments are attached as an appendix to this report.

### **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and recently updated in November 2018. These arrangements stipulate that a Consultation Report must be prepared prior to the publication of any Statutory Notices which will progress the proposal. It further states that this Report must be published within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 in this instance.

- 6.2 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix B for your attention. It contains information in respect of meetings held to discuss the proposal, with copies of the notes taken at these meetings. It also contains a summary of the correspondence received during the consultation period and where appropriate, the responses given to the comments and queries raised. The report also references the Draft minutes of the Children & young People Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2018.
- 6.3 It must be noted that there has been a fair response to this particular consultation process with 58 written responses received; in addition to this approximately 60 people, plus pupils, from both Hirwaun Primary and Penderyn Community Primary School attended the open evening held to provide further information on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## **7. THE STATUTORY PROCESS**

- 7.1 The Statutory Notice for this proposal will refer to:
- Increasing education provision in Hirwaun by constructing a new school for Hirwaun Primary School; and
  - Improving Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community Primary School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium Primary School
- 7.2 If agreed, and subject to the matter not being called in for consideration by Scrutiny, the Consultation Report will be published on January 30<sup>th</sup> 2019. Following a two week period the Statutory Notice will be published on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
- 7.3 If any objections are received during this period, in accordance with the aforementioned Code, an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, probably in April 2019, for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 If the proposal proceeds, it is proposed that a new school building be constructed to accommodate the new Hirwaun Primary School and it is

estimated that the cost of this work will be approximately £10.4m. This will be funded by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme, which includes a 65% contribution from Welsh Government. The Council's 35% share of the capital costs will be met through prudential borrowing.

8.2 Any revenue and capital costs that accrue in completing the consultation and preparing financial business cases for Welsh Government approval will be met from within existing budgets.

8.3 The Welsh Government has approved in principle the Strategic Outline financial business case to construct a new Hirwaun Primary School. A more detailed Outline Business Case will be submitted to the Welsh Government in February 2019, and if approved a Full Business Case will follow.

## **9 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.**

9.1 The Council's Corporate Plan commits to "Continue to invest in improving school buildings, to ensure the County Borough's pupils have the learning environment fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The proposals considered in the report contribute to all 7 well-being goals within the Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

## **10 CONCLUSION**

10.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, to agree to its immediate publication, and to give officers approval to publish an appropriate Statutory Notice on February 13<sup>th</sup> 2019 to progress this proposal.

### **Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People***

### **Appendices to the report are:**

- **Equality Impact Assessment**
- **Community Impact Assessment**
- **Consultation Report**

### ***Contact Officer***

**Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager - 01443 744062**

PLEASE NOTE THAT A WELSH VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE AVAILABLE PRIOR TO PUBLICATION

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CONSULTATION REPORT

**Proposal : To construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.**

#### 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 011/2018. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 1st October 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

#### 2. Who did we consult with?

A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

- The governing bodies of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Pupils of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Parents, carers and staff members of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education &
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium – Joint Education Service
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Communities for Work Plus Employment Support Programme
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council
- The Welsh Language Commissioner

- Skills
  - Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
  - Menter Iaith
  - Mudiad Meithrin
  - Neighbouring local authorities

Copies were also sent to all local authorities that share a boundary with Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### 3. The Proposal

The proposal is to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School buildings with a newly constructed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standard building, on the existing site of the current school with a capacity of 390 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be English medium; and to amend the language category of Penderyn Community Primary School from its current dual language status to a 3-11 Welsh medium community primary school with a capacity of 231 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be Welsh medium.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was circulated to all the stakeholders listed overleaf which is attached as Appendix 1; this also includes the Community Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and the Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

### 4. The Consultation Process

All stakeholders identified in Section 2 overleaf were sent paper or electronic copies of our consultation documentation. The following meetings were also convened:

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Penderyn Community Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Penderyn Community Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 / 3pm-6pm	Hirwaun Primary School



Notes of all of the above meetings were taken and are attached as Appendix 2. These notes record questions raised, comments and statements made, with responses provided where appropriate.

An open evening/exhibition was held at Hirwaun Primary School on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018, the purpose of which was to provide further information on the proposal, answer any questions, and give parents in particular the opportunity to ask questions. Officers from the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate, Corporate Estates, and Highways Directorate were in attendance. This event was attended by approximately 60 people, which included school governors, pupils, parents and local residents.

A meeting with the Children's and Young People's Scrutiny Committee was held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018, where the consultation proposals were presented and comments and questions on the proposals received and where appropriate were answered by the Officers in attendance. Notes of this meeting were recorded and are included at Appendix 3.

## **5. Summary of Responses to Consultation**

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 2 and 3. Also enclosed at Appendix 4 are summaries of the questionnaires and written responses received plus comments posted on a 'Have your say' board provided for this purpose at the open evening.

There were 58 written responses received during the consultation period and the number of those which are in favour of the proposals and those which are not are; 15 in favour, 22 against, and 21 unsure or their preference not specified.

Comments submitted during the consultation period, as well as feedback provided verbally at the public drop-in session, are recorded below. Where a number of letters received were duplicated, or a common theme raised by numerous respondents during the consultation process, we have captured this in a singular comment in this part of the report. Where required and/or appropriate our responses are included:

- **The consultation report does not quantify the number of children being taught through the medium of Welsh that live outside the Penderyn catchment area.**

The number of pupils that are educated through the medium of Welsh at Penderyn Community School that are within the Welsh medium catchment area is 89%, therefore 11% are out of catchment.

The language split of pupils that attend Penderyn Community Primary who reside in the Penderyn 'English' School catchment are 22 English and 17 Welsh.

- **Penderyn is a community school and all children should be able to attend.**

If these proposals are to go ahead then Penderyn will remain open as a community school, this will not change. The proposal is to remove the English language stream from the school not close it. The School Admissions Code will be implemented which ensures that all pupils who wish to attend Penderyn Community School, that live in catchment, will be able to do so.

- **Concerns were raised over Hirwaun Primary School's poor Estyn Report**

Since receiving their inspection report in February 2018, Hirwaun Primary School, Central South Consortium and the Local Education Authority, have been working closely to significantly improve upon the findings of the Estyn Report. A Post Inspection Action Plan has been written which focuses on those areas in need of improvement and provides targets to ensure that progress is made against each of the recommendations in the Estyn inspection report.

Progress continues to be closely monitored by the Director of Education and Challenge Advisors. The half term review suggests that progress is being made on the targets outlined in the PIAP. Ongoing support and monitoring will be provided to ensure that the school continues on its school improvement journey.

- **Concerns were raised that pupils will be unsettled if they move to a new school mid way through the primary phase**

Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption. Advice and support will be provided by the local authority to both Hirwaun Primary School and Penderyn Community Primary School to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and worry free as possible for the pupils.

- **Hirwaun needs a new school building**

- **Children are being discriminated against as they cannot be taught English in their local school**

School Organisation and School Admissions are administered through Statutory Codes and are requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. We ensure that all of our procedures are in line with this code which ensures we undertake due diligence so that no pupil is unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against. This consultation has been carried out in accordance with this code.

- **It is likely to result in job losses for the English medium staff currently employed at Penderyn. This is not acceptable.**

The impact upon staff is still unknown at this early stage in the consultation process. However RCT's Human Resources Department have confirmed that they will discuss any concerns with staff members on an individual basis.

- **Having children attend two different schools from September 2019 is not practical**

Having considered this and all comments that have been submitted during this consultation period, the recommendation is that this element of the consultation proposal is amended so that new English medium admissions **will** be accepted after September 2019. The recommendation will be to change the category of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school from September 2021, which will align with the proposed opening of the new Hirwaun Primary School.

- **The Penderyn catchment area was reduced so why not extend it again**

It can be confirmed that the former Mid Glamorgan Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council have not changed any catchments to Penderyn.

- **Penderyn School is subject to a restrictive covenant that is specific around the education of children through English and Welsh languages. Please could you confirm if there are covenants in place for Penderyn School**

The Conveyances for Penderyn Community Primary School have been checked and there are no covenants or restrictions on the title relating to the education of children through English and Welsh languages.

- **Making Penderyn Community Primary School will help to achieve the Welsh Government's target of creating 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.**

- **Free transport is not a suitable option for such young children.**

Rhondda Cynon Taf is experienced in providing safe transport for pupils upwards from the age of 3, and this service is provided in line with the School Transport Policy. The Council currently transports 2,292 primary age pupils to school, of which 252 are in their first year of school (aged 3-4). All primary school contracts are operated by drivers and passenger assistants that have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount to us at all times.

- **Object to the idea of all pupils accessing the school site via Glanant Street and Longfield Court throughout the construction of the new school**

This consultation process is in respect of proposals to provide Hirwaun with a new larger primary school and amend the language category of Penderyn Community Primary School and follows statutory guidance contained within the School Organisation Code. If the proposal progresses and a planning application for a new school is submitted in the future, then further consultation will be undertaken in the community under the relevant legislation (the Town and Country Planning Act). This is entirely separate from the current consultation process.

These objections are however noted for the purpose of this report.

### **The View of Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales) of the Overall Merits of the Proposal.**

*This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.*

*Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.*

*Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.*

#### **Summary/ Conclusion**

*The proposer is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, and the proposal relates to the construction of a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School (Hirwaun PS) and a change of language medium status - to Welsh medium only - at Penderyn Community Primary School (Penderyn CPS) from September 2021.*

*Overall, the proposal is likely to have a beneficial impact on the standard of education provision in the area.*

#### **Description and benefits**

*The proposer has given a clear description of the proposal and arrangements for responding to the consultation.*

*The proposer has made suitable reference to: the schools' performance data and trends; information about the condition of the estate; current and projected pupil numbers and*

*attendance; recent Estyn reports. Both of the schools affected by the proposal have been inspected within the past year, and the proposal acknowledges the judgements of Adequate and needs improvement, and Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement that were awarded at Hirwaun PS. It notes the relatively poor condition of the school buildings at Hirwaun PS.*

*The proposer has set out its rationale for changing Penderyn CPS to a Welsh medium-only school, both in terms of a trend of increasing numbers of pupils attending its Welsh medium stream, and in respect of the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). In relation to the change of catchment, the proposal sets out the priorities for allocating pupils a place according to the authority's school admissions policy. Pupils studying in the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS would transfer automatically to provision at Hirwaun PS without any additional application process.*

*The proposal addresses transport for pupils within the proposed changed school catchments appropriately. Pupils living in Trenant and Penywaun (within the expanded catchment area for Penderyn CPS) who wish to receive Welsh medium education would be eligible for free transport to school at Penderyn CPS. Pupils living in Penderyn (within the expanded catchment area for Hirwaun PS) who wish to receive English medium education would receive free transport to Hirwaun PS.*

*The proposal addresses potential staff changes as a consequence of closing the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS. Staff below SLT level would have the opportunity to apply for new posts at Hirwaun PS before they are externally advertised, and these posts would initially be 'ring fenced' to former Penderyn CPS teachers.*

*The proposer identifies a few disadvantages to the proposed changes. These include the perceptions by parents that a smaller school may be more appropriate to their child's needs and increased travelling distance for some pupils in some communities. The proposer has mitigated the increased travel for these pupils by providing free transport for those pupils affected. The proposal includes consideration of demographic changes in the area in the near future, including housing developments and future development at the site of the former Tower Colliery at Hirwaun. These are likely to lead to an increase in demand in both English- and Welsh-medium provision.*

*The proposer has considered alternative options, including maintaining the current language status of the two schools, and replacing the old buildings at Hirwaun PS 'like for like'. However, it has concluded that these would not address the increasing demand for Welsh medium provision, the local demographic changes or the potential benefits to quality that having larger single-language provision at the two schools could bring. The proposal includes consideration of the risk of disruption to pupils at Hirwaun PS during building works. The proposer notes that these risks will 'be mitigated by the detailed and thorough project management arrangements that will be put in place', although does not give any detail of these arrangements.*

### ***Educational aspects of the proposal***

*The proposal sets out the perceived benefits. They include, for the construction of an English-medium school at Hirwaun: an extended, enhanced environment in a modern, purpose built school, all pupils being taught in same-age-group classes, improvements brought about by increases in scale to pupils' and teachers' opportunities. For Penderyn CPS, the benefits identified include: total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school, the creation of a 'critical mass' of Welsh medium learners, more opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh and improved recruitment and retention of staff.*

*The potential benefits identified by the proposer appear to be a reasonable assessment of the consequences of the proposed changes.*

## **6. Assessment of Consultation**

In view of the responses and comments received during the consultation period, a further assessment of the proposals, which are included within the consultation document, has been undertaken. The proposals have been revisited and the impact of the proposals on the quality and standards of education, the community, and transport arrangements, have been reassessed.

Following this reassessment the proposals are not wholly considered to be the most suitable and as such it is considered appropriate that an amendment to the proposals be tendered. The recommendation is that an element of the consultation proposal is amended so that new English medium admissions **will** be accepted to Penderyn Community Primary School after September 2019.

The recommendation of this report is to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School, change the category of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school from September 2021, and continue to allow new English medium admissions to Penderyn Community Primary School until such time that the change in category of Penderyn Community Primary School, from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school, comes into effect.

## **7. Conclusion**

The recommendation is that this report is published, and at the appropriate time a statutory notice be published with the recommended modification as stated above, in order to progress this proposal.



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT A  
NEW SCHOOL BUILDING FOR HIRWAUN PRIMARY  
SCHOOL AND THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF LANGUAGE  
MEDIUM STATUS OF PENDERYN COMMUNITY  
PRIMARY SCHOOL, FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021**

## Table of Contents

### Introduction to the Proposal

Who will we consult with?	3
What will the consultation process entail?	4
What do you have to consider?	4
How do you make your views known?	5

### Background to the Proposal

Information on the schools – Penderyn Community Primary School	6
Information on the schools – Hirwaun Primary School	9
What is the basis for this proposal?	12
The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	12
What is the educational case for changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School and increasing pupil capacity at Hirwaun Primary School?	13
What will this proposal mean for the schools' pupils?	13
Catchment changes	14
Transport policy	15
What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the schools?	17
What is the likely impact of the proposal on the communities of Penderyn and Hirwaun?	17
What are the financial implications of the proposal?	17
What are the disadvantages of this proposal?	18
What alternative options have been considered?	18
Governance	19
The new proposed school building	19
What is the statutory process?	20
Catchment maps	21
Consultation Response pro-forma	23



## Introduction to the Proposal

---

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School. The change will be achieved by the construction of a new school building on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School, to replace the current building, with Penderyn Community Primary School becoming a completely Welsh medium community primary school. As part of the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School to completely Welsh medium, it is also proposed to extend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to include the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (currently in the Welsh medium catchment for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). It is proposed that this catchment change will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. It is proposed that pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building on 1 September 2021. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, no new pupils wishing to be educated through the medium of English will be admitted to Penderyn Community Primary School.

### Who will we consult with?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The governing bodies of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Pupils of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Parents, carers and staff members of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium – Joint Education Service
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Communities for Work Plus Employment Support Programme
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Menter Iaith
- Mudiad Meithrin

- Neighbouring local authorities

### **What will the consultation process entail?**

The consultation will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 and will be completed at 5pm on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in January 2019. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on page 5 of this document.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report and will decide, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal a statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the outcome of the statutory notice at the next available Cabinet meeting and determine whether to implement the proposal.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education and Inclusion Services will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their response to them within 7 days of the day of the determination of the proposal. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on page 6 of this document.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal the implementation date is 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 for the Welsh medium catchment change and 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 for the provision of the new school building at Hirwaun.

### **What do you have to consider?**

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed change to primary education provision in Hirwaun and Penderyn. We would like you to consider the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School and its extended catchment area proposal, and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School. The change will be achieved by the construction of a new school building on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School, to replace the building, with Penderyn Community Primary School becoming a completely Welsh medium community primary school with a larger catchment area encompassing the communities of Trenant and Penywaun. It is proposed that pupils attending the English medium stream of

Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building on 1 September 2021.

The proposal is to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School buildings with a newly constructed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standard building, on the existing site of the current school with a capacity of 390 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be English medium, and to amend the language category of Penderyn Community Primary School from its current dual language status to a 3-11 Welsh medium community primary school with a capacity of 231 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be Welsh medium.

### How do you make your views known?

Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meeting.

School Affected	Group	Date / Time	Venue
Penderyn Community Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Penderyn Community Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 / 3pm-6pm	Hirwaun Primary School

A consultation questionnaire is attached, it will also be available at the drop-in session detailed above and on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Council's Cabinet.

You are also welcome to put your views, comments and any questions you may have in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
 Ty Trevithick  
 Abercynon CF45 4UQ Telephone (01443) 744227 Fax (01443) 744224

E-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

All correspondence should be received **no later than 5pm Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.**

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the statutory notice.

## Background to the proposal

---

### Information on the schools – Penderyn Community Primary School

Penderyn Community Primary School is a dual language community primary school situated at Pontprenllwyd, Penderyn, which is a few miles from the town of Aberdare. The school site consists of a new building which was opened in 2006 and the school benefits from a Multi-Use Games Area and woodland area. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Penderyn Community Primary School is graded a B for condition and A for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £165,995.

The school is organised into two language streams. Parents choose for their children to study most of their lessons either through the medium of Welsh or through the medium of English. In recent years the number of pupils (including nursery) in the Welsh language stream has increased to 179, whilst numbers have fallen to just 54 in the English stream. Of the 54 pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School, only 22 pupils actually live within the Penderyn catchment area. The majority of pupils (27 pupils) live within the Hirwaun catchment area. There are 9 classes in the school, 6 of which are taught in Welsh and 3 which are taught in English.

The pupil numbers in Penderyn Community Primary School over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory pupil level annual school census (PLASC) which is undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government’s statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately. All data is split between the respective Welsh (W) and English (E) streams of the school:

School	Age Range of whole school	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Penderyn Primary (W)	3 - 11	138	146	150	159	162
Penderyn Primary (E)	3 - 11	58	59	57	56	51

Note: The pupil capacity of the school is 231 (excluding nursery) – this capacity covers the Welsh and English streams.

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending):

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Penderyn Primary (W)	28	23	24	23	17
Penderyn Primary (E)	12	2	4	4	3

Over the next five years the pupil forecasts for Penderyn Community Primary School, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows:

School	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023
Penderyn Primary (W)	167	160	162	152	150
Penderyn Primary (E)	46	47	41	36	38

### Primary School Standards

The following tables set out the performance of the Welsh (W) and English (E) streams of Penderyn Community Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on the numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals.

Foundation Phase Outcomes						
Subjects	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)
Foundation Phase Indicator	92 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (1)	90 (3)	96.4 (1)	100 (1)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Language literacy and communication skills English/Welsh	96 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (2)	90 (3)	96.4 (2)	100 (1)
Mathematical development	96 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Key Stage Two Outcomes						
	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
Subjects	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)
English	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.4 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Welsh 1st	88.2 (3)	N/A	94.2 (2)	N/A	95.5 (2)	N/A
Maths	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Science	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (3)	88.9 (4)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.2 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)

The figures in brackets in the table overleaf, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

The attendance of the pupils of the school over the past three years is set out below:

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2015	2015 Benchmark Quartile	2016	2016 Benchmark Quartile	2017	2017 Benchmark Quartile
Penderyn Primary (whole school)	94.2	4	94.6	3	94.6	4
Penderyn Primary (W)	94.7	3	94.8	3	94.8	4
Penderyn Primary (E)	93	4	94	4	94.5	4

Penderyn Community Primary School was inspected by Estyn in April 2018 and the outcomes were as follows:-

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Estyn also set out that, in order to build upon the current work, the school should:

- R1** Refine monitoring and self-evaluation procedures and ensure that reports identify the school's qualities and areas for development clearly

- R2** Make sure that planning procedures ensure appropriate achievement of the curriculum over time, and that they are useful to teachers in sessions on the classroom floor
- R3** Ensure that the school implements all of the principles of the foundation phase consistently

The Council’s School Improvement Services are provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. Schools are categorised as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red in respect of their standards. The categorisation colour shows the level of support a school needs (with the schools in the green category needing the least support and those in the red category needing the most intensive support). Each school will receive a tailored programme of support, challenge and intervention based on this category. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region and Penderyn Community Primary School has recently been categorised as a ‘Yellow’ school.

### Information on the schools – Hirwaun Primary School

Hirwaun Primary School is an English medium Community School located at Glannant Street, Hirwaun, Aberdare and the school site consists of two separate single storey prefabricated buildings, consisting of concrete sections built around a steel frame with flat felt roof, constructed in 1969. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Hirwaun Primary School is graded a C minus for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £1,931,226.00.

The pupil numbers in Hirwaun Primary School over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory pupil level annual school census (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government’s statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately:

School	Age Range of whole school	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Hirwaun Primary	3 - 11	195	201	201	211	208

Note: The pupil capacity of the school is 265 (excluding nursery).

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending):

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Hirwaun Primary	38	33	32	36	41

Over the next five years the pupil forecasts for Hirwaun Primary School, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows:

School	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023
Hirwaun Primary	214	218	220	222	228

It should also be noted that there are currently 102 'in catchment' children resident in Hirwaun attending schools outside of the Hirwaun Primary catchment area (excluding those attending faith schools). If demand from in catchment children should rise due to the provision of a new school building, the growth in pupil numbers would be able to be accommodated within the new building.

### Primary School Standards

The following tables set out the performance of Hirwaun Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on the numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals.

Foundation Phase Outcomes			
	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
Subjects	Hirwaun Primary	Hirwaun Primary	Hirwaun Primary
Foundation Phase Indicator	86.2 (2)	86.2 (2)	89.3 (1)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	93.1 (3)	100 (1)	96.4 (2)
Language literacy and communication skills English/welsh	86.2 (2)	86.2 (2)	92.9 (1)
Mathematical development	89.7 (2)	93.1 (1)	92.9 (1)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Key Stage Two Outcomes			
Subjects	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
English	83.3 (3)	90.9 (1)	94.6 (1)
Maths	91.7 (1)	95.5 (1)	97.3 (1)
Science	91.7 (2)	95.5 (1)	94.6 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	83.31 (2)	90.9 (1)	91.9 (1)



The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

The attendance of the pupils of the school over the past three years is set out below:

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2015	2015 Benchmark Quartile	2016	2016 Benchmark Quartile	2017	2017 Benchmark Quartile
Hirwaun Primary	94.2	2	93	4	93.6	3

Hirwaun Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in February 2018 and the outcomes were as follows:-

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Adequate and needs improvement
Teaching and learning experiences	Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

Estyn also set out several recommendations for the school to implement, namely, that the school should:

- R1** Improve the quality of teaching and feedback to pupils
- R2** Improve standards of pupils' reading, writing and presentation of work
- R3** Improve pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT)
- R4** Ensure that the curriculum meets requirements and develops pupils' skills progressively
- R5** Improve pupils' independent learning skills
- R6** Correctly identify and address important areas of teaching and learning that need to improve and hold all members of staff to account robustly

Following this inspection, a detailed action plan was drawn up to address the recommendations. The school will be fully supported to implement the improvements needed by officers from the local authority's School Improvement Service and the Central South Consortium. Estyn will visit to re-inspect the school in the next academic year, to determine whether the necessary measures to effect the required improvements have been put in place.

As indicated previously, the Council's School Improvement Services are provided by the Central South Consortium. Schools are rated as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red in respect of their standards. Hirwaun Primary School has recently been categorised as a 'Red' school, as a consequence of the outcome of its Estyn inspection, as outlined above.

The Council has commissioned its school improvement service (the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service) to ensure that strong progress is made against each recommendation in the Estyn inspection report and regular feedback is provided to the Director of Education and Inclusion Services, the Senior Challenge Adviser, the Headteacher and the chair of the governing body.

### **What is the basis for this proposal?**

The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.

### **The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**

All local authorities in Wales now have to produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). This document indicates how the local authority intends to promote the teaching of the Welsh Language, how it intends working towards increasing the number of children taught through the medium of Welsh and how it can assist achieving the Welsh Government's target of having one million people in Wales speaking Welsh by 2050. The WESP for RCT can be viewed and downloaded from the Council website via <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

Included among the list of actions and outcomes that the Council will undertake to help achieve the targets set out in the WESP by increasing the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh are the following:

- New and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools

This proposal, to change Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a totally Welsh medium school and in doing so to also increase the number of Welsh medium primary school places will work towards the achievement of these targets in this area of the County Borough.

## **What is the educational case for changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School and increasing pupil capacity at Hirwaun Primary School?**

School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.

It is the Council's view that changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to Welsh medium and constructing a new school building with a larger pupil capacity for the communities of Hirwaun and Penderyn to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School will improve educational outcomes and provision.

A larger, new, purpose built English medium primary school at Hirwaun could offer:

- Greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced educational environment in which to learn and grow;
- Potential for financial savings in terms of services, which accrue to a larger school which can be reinvested for the benefit of all pupils;
- The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the construction of a modern, state of the art purpose built school that meets all the required standards of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment;
- More opportunities for the teaching and support staff which are provided by a larger school;
- Pupils being taught, in the main, with their year group. All classes in the Penderyn English medium stream are currently mixed year groups.

A completely Welsh medium primary school at Penderyn could:

- Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school;
- Enable total immersion in the Welsh language to be offered to a larger number of pupils from the youngest possible age;
- Offer more opportunities for the teaching and support staff which could be provided by a larger wholly Welsh medium school;
- Create a critical mass of Welsh-medium learners;
- Enable the development of increased Welsh-medium provision at secondary level;
- Provide more opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh;
- Improve recruitment and retention of staff

## **What will this proposal mean for the schools' pupils?**

In making the proposed changes, in addition to the points above, there are several further perceived benefits that can be realised:

- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom in a larger school at Hirwaun which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- A larger team of staff at Hirwaun Primary School to share expertise and experience;
- More pupils being taught in a new, state of the art, purpose built school buildings, which will be fit for the purpose of providing education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. have a flying start in life;
2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits the children in these communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

### **Catchment changes**

#### **Penderyn Community Primary School**

Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference).

The Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar).

These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough.

In the case of oversubscription at any school, published admissions criteria are applied to all applications received for places, to determine which pupils are successful in obtaining the places available. These criteria, which are outlined in our school admission policy booklet entitled 'Starting School' and listed in priority order are:

- Category 1 – ‘Looked after’ children (children in public care) and previously ‘looked after’ children.
- Category 2 – Children whose home is inside the school’s catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, who will continue to attend that school on the expected date of admission of the younger child.
- Category 3 – Children whose home is inside the school’s catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.
- Category 4 – Children whose home is outside the school’s catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, who will continue to attend that school on the expected date of admission of the younger child.
- Category 5 – Children whose home is outside the school’s catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.

The term ‘home’ in the categories above refers to the actual location of the residential dwelling in which the child lives.

Children will be admitted up to the published Admission Number in the order of priority as outlined above. If within any one of the priority categories listed all of the applicants cannot be offered a place, preference will be given to children living nearest to the school. Distance will be measured using the shortest, safe walking route between the home address and the nearest open school gate. In areas where no safe walking route has been identified, the shortest driving route between the home address and the nearest open school gate will be used. This distance will be measured using the Mapinfo System only, measurements calculated by any other system will not be considered. The home address in instances where parents have shared responsibility for children, will be the address to which Child Benefit is paid.

For the purpose of applying admissions criteria, any child living in the areas to be transferred from the Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar (YGG Aberdar) catchment area, as detailed on the map enclosed in this document and who has an older sibling still attending YGG Aberdar in September 2020 will have their application considered as if they still resided in the YGG Aberdar catchment area, i.e. their application will fall in to Category 2 of the aforementioned criteria and not Category 4. This protection will continue until all older siblings have left the school. This will only cover siblings attending Reception to Year 6 in September 2020, any attending the Nursery class will not be eligible (as this is non-statutory education).

### **Hirwaun Primary School**

The catchment area of the new Hirwaun Primary School will extend to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School. Any pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will simply transfer to the new school building in Hirwaun when it opens in September 2021 (subject to parental preference). They will not need to complete admission applications unless they are applying for Nursery or Reception places.

### **Transport policy**

There is a statutory duty placed upon the local authority (LA) to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe “walking distance” to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh or dual language mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe “walking distance” is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:

- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles as required by the Measure;
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to children who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday) as required by the Measure.
- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles as required by the Measure.
- Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education as required by the Measure. This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner’s home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in accordance with their preferred religious denomination.
- The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate.

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the extended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe “walking distance” from their nearest suitable school.

In catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be ‘unavailable’. This provision will not be available to any English Medium pupils who

currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the schools?**

It is our intention to recommend to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School that they ringfence any additional positions they need to appoint as a result of increased pupil numbers, below senior leadership level, to the existing staff currently employed in the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School in the first instance. This process means that the Penderyn Community Primary School staff will be given the first opportunity to apply for additional posts in the extended Hirwaun Primary School prior to any being advertised externally. If they are successful, they will then simply transfer to the new school when it opens. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.

The creation of a larger primary school at Hirwaun and the provision of additional Welsh medium pupil places at Penderyn Community Primary School would provide staff with the opportunity to specialise in specific areas of the curriculum. Larger schools with more staff allows for such specialism with the ability to share workload more effectively and therefore gives staff more opportunities to progress their careers.

### **What will be the likely impact of the proposal on the communities of Penderyn and Hirwaun?**

Part of the Hirwaun electoral ward is within a Communities for Work area and is also a Flying Start Area.

A community impact assessment, equality impact assessment and Welsh-medium impact assessment have been completed for this proposal. These will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that they include pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The community impact assessment and equality impact assessment will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal. A copy of the community impact assessment, equality impact assessment and Welsh-medium impact assessment are available from the contact details at the start of this document and are also available on the Council website, using the web link provided on page 5. It is considered that the overall impact on the local communities of these proposals, with improved and extended school facilities will be a positive, beneficial one.

### **What are the financial implications of the proposal?**

As this proposal involves the change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School to Welsh medium and the construction of a new, larger English medium building at Hirwaun, there will only be minor financial savings – these are associated with the change of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to solely Welsh

medium school; plus there is potential for future financial savings largely relating to economies of scale achievable by the provision of services in a larger school.

The capital costs of the new Hirwaun Primary School building will be funded as part of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme. The estimated cost of the new building is £10.4m which will be funded from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme, 50% of which will be funded by the Welsh Government and 50% from the Council.

### **What are the disadvantages of this proposal?**

Some parents and pupils may feel that a smaller English medium stream is better for pupils rather than one larger school – in other words there could be a view that smaller schools may be more personal and less daunting, particularly for new entrants. Hirwaun Primary School will be larger, but will be able to offer many advantages over the smaller English medium stream in the dual language school, for example, fewer mixed year groups; and more opportunities to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities as afforded by a larger school.

Some pupils may have further to travel to school, however, as set out at pages 15 and 16, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will to apply to both schools whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport.

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the amended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school.

In catchment pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposal outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for pupils and parents.

### **What alternative options have been considered?**

The current position is that we have a relatively new dual language school at Penderyn with a continually decreasing English medium stream which is becoming unviable, with difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff, and an English medium primary school at Hirwaun which is in a very poor condition. There is demand for Welsh medium education in the wider Aberdare area, further driven by additional housing developments - planning consent has recently been granted for 93 properties immediately adjacent to Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun (Pentwyn Cynon Farm). The opportunity exists to create a purely Welsh medium primary school which, along with associated catchment changes would cater for this demand. There would also be other associated benefits for some pupils,



including total immersion in the Welsh language. The construction of a new, larger replacement school building for Hirwaun could comfortably accommodate demand for English medium places and would provide pupils with 21<sup>st</sup> century schools education facilities. This is therefore the preferred option.

Further, Hirwaun village has been identified as one of the key settlements in the Council's Local Development Plan 2011-2021 and land to the south of Hirwaun (former Tower Colliery site) has been identified as a strategic site for development, thus, the demand for school places (English and Welsh medium) in this immediate area is likely to grow further in the future.

The only other feasible option considered by the Council was for Penderyn Community Primary School to remain as a dual language school and poor condition accommodation at Hirwaun Primary School to be demolished and simply replaced 'like for like', i.e. maintain the status quo in respect of education provision. This option would not address the Welsh medium demand in the area, or provide the benefits associated with a purely Welsh medium school and the issues associated with a continually decreasing English medium stream. In addition, this option would not change the current position of the two schools at all and projections are that the pupil numbers in the English medium stream at Penderyn Community Primary School will continue to fall. It would also not deliver one of the key aims outlined in our WESP to increase the number of places available to learners wishing to be educated in Welsh by making our dual language schools in to full Welsh Medium provision.

## **Governance**

As this proposal does not involve the creation of any new school provisions, the current governing bodies of the schools will remain in place and their membership will not change. There will be opportunities in the future for other parents and community members to apply for positions on the governing bodies as and when posts become vacant.

## **The new proposed school building**

It is being proposed that a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School will be constructed on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School. The school will be a replacement for the existing school building and will cater for children aged between 3 and 11 years of age requiring English-medium education. It will have a proposed admissions number of 55 pupils per year group, and an overall pupil capacity of 390 (plus nursery). In addition it will have 60 nursery places available; there will however be flexibility to increase the number of nursery places, if there is evidenced demand, by utilising spare capacity that will exist within the building. The accommodation will consist of a nursery, 13 general teaching areas and ancillary accommodation that will be appropriate for the numbers of pupils, including a multi-purpose hall, kitchen, offices, resource areas, rooms for use by the local community and of course toilet provision. The new building will be accessible and fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. Admissions to the school will be administered by the local authority and all pupils currently attending the English medium stream at Penderyn Community Primary School will automatically transfer to the new

Hirwaun Primary School building school when it is completed (subject to parental preference).

Any risks that may be associated with these proposals, such as construction delays will be mitigated by the detailed and thorough project management arrangements that will be put in place.

Penderyn Community Primary School will be able to offer Welsh medium provision to 231 pupils (plus nursery), with an admission number of 33 pupils per year group. Admissions to the school will be administered by the local authority.

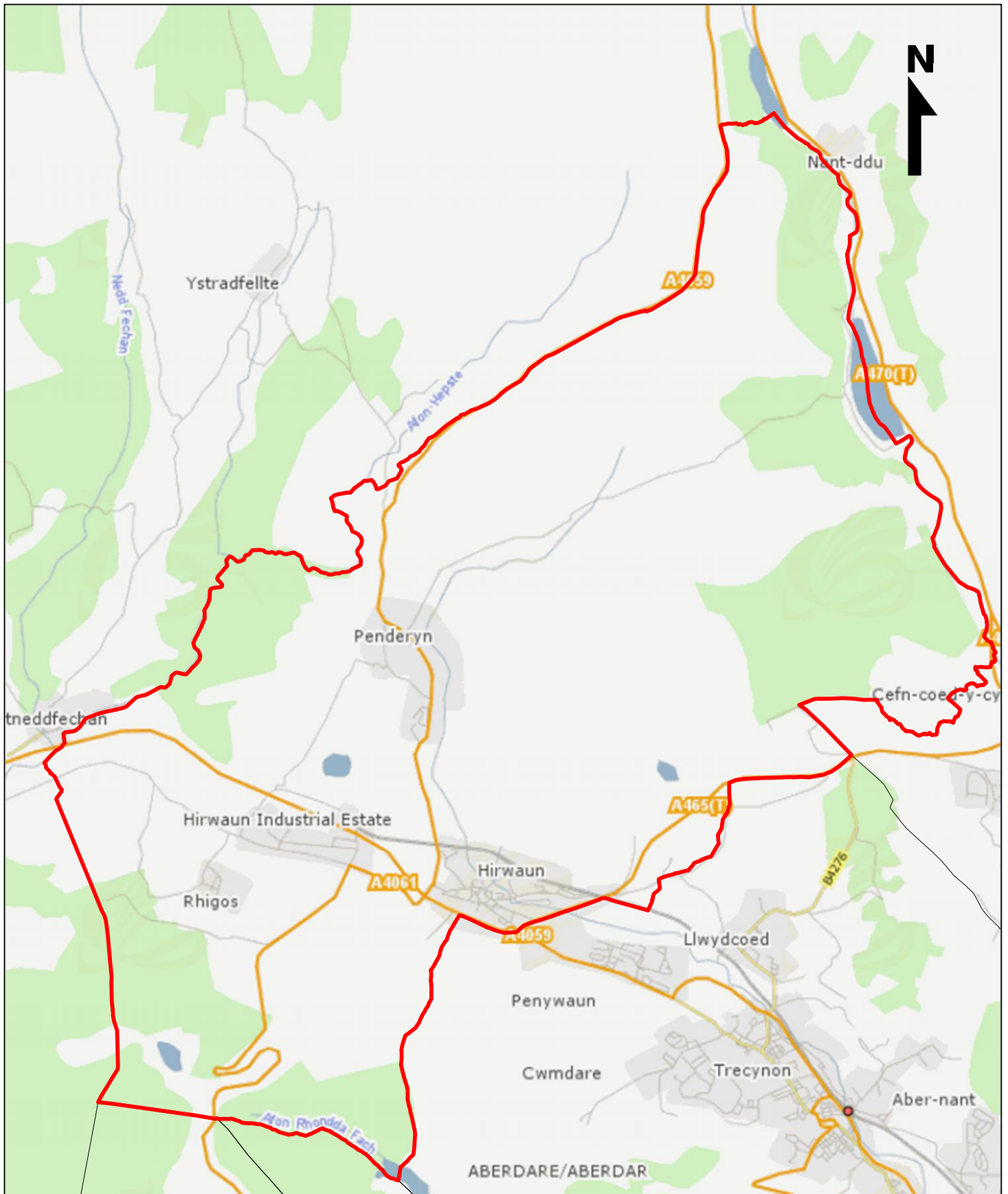
### **What is the statutory process?**

The Code on School Organisation (“The Code”) is made under Sections 38 and 39 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Code came into force on 1 October 2013 and applies in respect of all school proposals published by way of a statutory notice after that date. The current Code is due to be revised on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 and the process we will undertake will follow the guidance contained within this updated document. Proposals to make any regulated alterations to schools have to follow the following process:

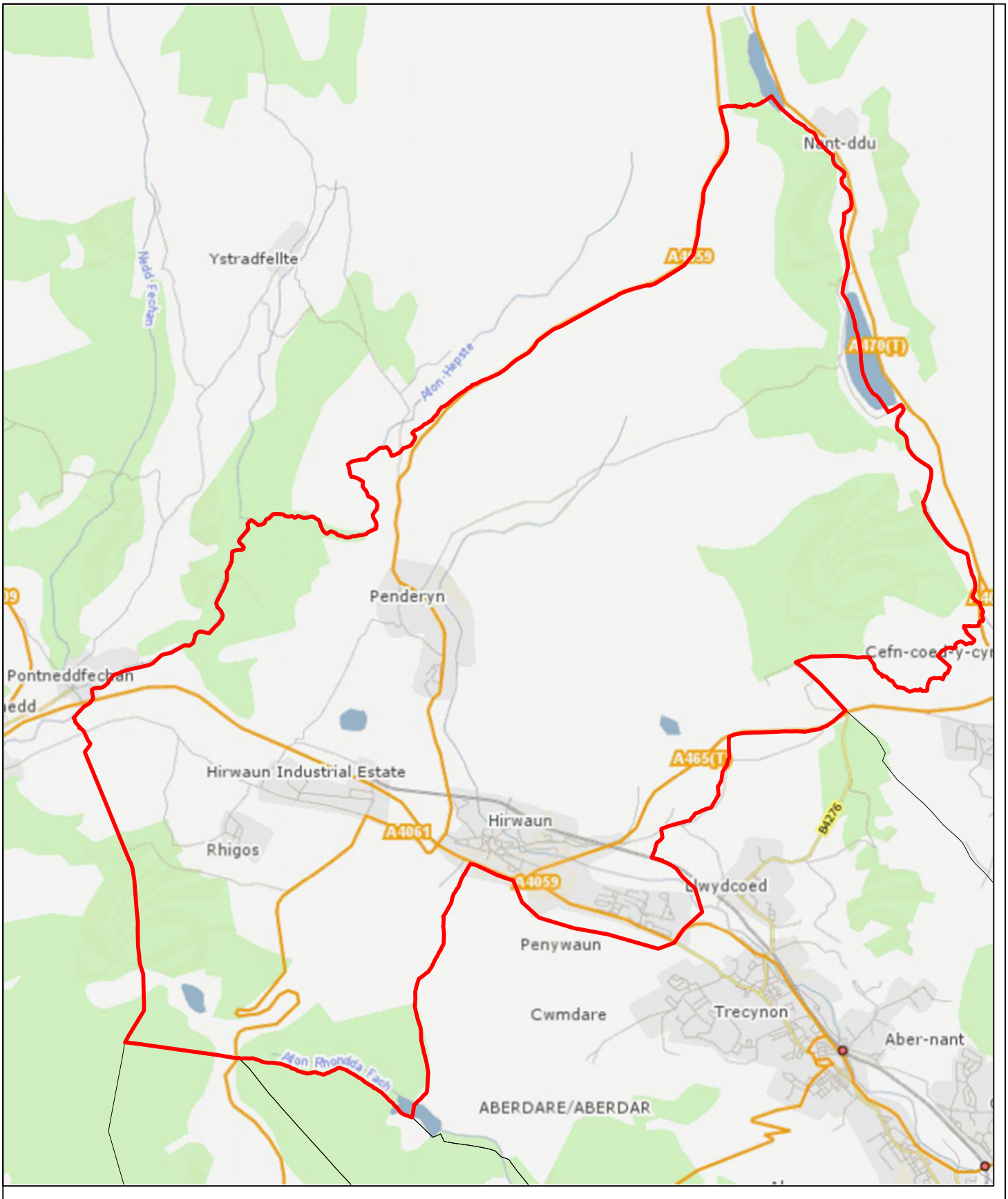
1. The Council’s Cabinet considers the Code and authorises a consultation on the changes to the schools;
2. At the start of the consultation period the Council **must** provide consultees with a consultation document and give them at least 42 days in which to respond, with at least 20 of these days being school days. If the Council considers it appropriate meetings are held with stakeholders during the consultation period;
3. Consultation comments are collated and summarised by the Council. This summary together with the Council’s officers own responses is published in a consultation report within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period and presented to the Council’s Cabinet for consideration;
4. The Council’s Cabinet decide whether to proceed with the changes within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period. If the decision is to proceed, Step 5 is taken. If a new option emerges during the consultation which the Council’s Cabinet wish to consider, then Steps 1-3 are repeated;
5. Statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The notice **must** be published on a school day and with 15 school days (not including the day of publication) in the notice period;
6. If objections are received, the Council **must** publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their responses to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority’s determination as to whether to proceed with the proposals;
7. The Council’s Cabinet must decide to issue its decision on the proposals within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period;
8. If the proposals receive approval they should be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date.



The existing Penderyn Primary Welsh Medium catchment area



The proposed Penderyn Welsh Medium catchment area



## Consultation Response Pro-forma

---

In order to comply with its legal duty under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and help the Council reach a decision on the proposal below, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Please note, any personal information given by you will not be shared and only used to provide you with feedback, should you request it. Any comments that could identify you will be anonymised in the consultation report produced. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

*Director of Education and Inclusion Services*  
*21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team*  
*Ty Trevithick*  
*Abercynon*  
*CF45 4UQ*  
*or by fax to 01443 744224, or e-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)*

### The proposal

The proposal is to change the language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to Welsh medium and extend its catchment area; and to increase the pupil capacity of Hirwaun Primary School, in a new, purpose built school building.

All changes will be implemented by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.

1. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes  No  Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

---

---

---

2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

---

---

---

3. Please indicate who you are (eg parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school, member of the community etc.)

---

---

4. Name (optional)

---

5. Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

---

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

*Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.*

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice)

and the Council's **data protection** pages here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).

## **Community Impact Assessment**

### **Proposal to change the language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, amend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School and increase the pupil capacity of Hirwaun Primary School**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.

This proposal is to be consulted on between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. This Impact Assessment is not included in the consultation document as we are mindful that the document needs to be as concise and informative as possible, whilst at the same time being readable and 'user-friendly'. The free availability of this document is however stressed; in addition, it is available for any person to view or download from the Council website.

#### The proposal

The proposal is to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to wholly Welsh medium, with an amended catchment area encompassing the communities of Trenant and Penywaun; and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School by the construction of a new, larger building on the current Hirwaun Primary School site. Both schools will offer provision for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 years, with Penderyn Community Primary School offering places through the medium of Welsh and Hirwaun Primary School offering places through the medium of English. Penderyn Community Primary School will have Welsh medium capacity for 231 pupils (plus nursery) and Hirwaun Primary School will have English medium capacity for 390 pupils (plus nursery). The Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £10.4m in constructing a new primary building at Hirwaun to ensure pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

#### Community impact

It has to be stressed at this point that the community impact of these proposals is negligible. The proposal does not involve the physical closure of any school buildings or facilities. If anything, community access will actually be improved. Hirwaun Primary School is proposed to be replaced by a new, state of the art purpose built English medium primary school for the villages of Hirwaun and Penderyn. The new building will be built on the site of the existing Hirwaun Primary School and will have brand new community rooms that can be used by existing community groups and will be able to accommodate further community usage. The facilities can be used by groups such as Flying Start parenting groups, parent and toddler groups, health visitors and adult learning. The whole school will be accessible and fully compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Also included in the new facilities at Hirwaun will be external grass playing field provision and



Multi-Use-Games-Area (MUGA) facilities that will be for the exclusive use of the pupils during the school day, but will be available to the community outside of school hours. Penderyn Community Primary School is a new building which was opened in 2006 and already benefits from MUGA facilities, as well as a woodland area.

The existence of other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area, especially as no existing facilities will be lost under these proposals.

Pupils within and outside current catchments

The percentage of pupils attending Penderyn Community Primary School and Hirwaun Primary School that reside within and outside of their current respective catchment areas are as follows:-

School	Pupil numbers – January 2018 (including nursery)	% pupils in current catchment	% pupils from outside current catchment
Penderyn Community Primary School (whole school)	233	72.1%	27.9%
Penderyn Community Primary School (Welsh)	179	81.5%	18.5%
Penderyn Community Primary School (English)	54	40.1%	59.9%
Hirwaun Primary School	249	93.9%	6.1%

It can be noted that of the 54 pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School, only 22 pupils live within the Penderyn catchment area. The majority of pupils (27 pupils) live within the Hirwaun catchment area.

Catchment changes

This proposal seeks to enhance the accommodation and facilities available to pupils from within the catchment areas requiring Welsh-medium and English-medium education. It is proposed to extend the catchment area of Hirwaun Primary School to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School.

Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference). It is also proposed to extend the Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). This adjustment is being made to the Welsh medium catchment areas to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough. Proposals to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar by 60 pupil places and proposals to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun by 162 pupil places also seek to address the Welsh medium demand in this part of the County Borough.

#### Travel implications

Some pupils may have further to travel to school, however, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will apply to both schools whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live one and a half miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport.

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the extended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school.

In catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'. This provision will not be available to any English Medium pupils who currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.

Hirwaun Primary School and Penderyn Community Primary School are 2.6 miles apart and the journey time between both schools by bus is not expected to exceed 15 minutes.

There will be no changes whatsoever to distances travelled by pupils currently attending Penderyn Community Primary School for Welsh-medium education - they will remain in the same school, consequently there will be no changes or any other implications for home to school transport provision for these pupils.

#### Current 'out of school hours' usage

Should these proposals proceed, all current before and after school activities in both schools will continue. The breakfast clubs currently offered by both schools would continue. Also, all after school clubs would continue to be offered. Current after school activities comprise:-

*Penderyn Community Primary School*

Urdd After School Club  
Sports Club

*Hirwaun Primary School*

Athletics  
Netball  
Tennis  
Girls' football  
Cricket

The construction of the new, larger building at Hirwaun will allow for expansion of such activities. Also, the change in language medium at Penderyn Community School from dual language to Welsh medium could also offer further opportunities for the development of further after school activities through the medium of Welsh.

Community and third party use of the schools' facilities will be encouraged. Also, any usage by groups affiliated to the schools, such as the PTA for functions, would continue to be offered by both schools should these proposals proceed.

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL**

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Directorate:** Education & Lifelong Learning

**Service Area:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

**Responsible officer:** Julie Hadley

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project:**

**Change of language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School; amendment to catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School; and extension of capacity of Hirwaun Primary School**

The Project is to:

Change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to wholly Welsh medium, with an amended catchment area encompassing the communities of Trenant and Penywaun; and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School by the construction of a new, larger building on the current Hirwaun Primary School site. Both schools will offer provision for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 years, with Penderyn Community Primary School offering places through the medium of Welsh and Hirwaun Primary School offering places through the medium of English. The Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £10.4m in constructing a new primary building at Hirwaun to ensure pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

**2. Policy Aims**, you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?

How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

**This proposal is fully outlined in a detailed consultation document that has been distributed to all interested parties and stakeholders, it is also available on the Council's website for any person to view or download.**

**This proposal does not involve the physical closure or relocation of any school buildings or facilities; the larger English medium primary school at Hirwaun will utilise the site of the existing school, and the proposed changes will enhance the facility by replacing very poor condition buildings with a brand new school and associated external play facilities fit for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning needs and fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010.**

The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.

**The proposal also addresses the following actions and outcomes identified in the WESP to increase the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh by:**

- Providing new and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's WESP can be viewed and downloaded from the Council's website via this link - <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

**Amending the Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar) will match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough.**

Educational considerations -

**School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.**

**It is the Council's view that changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to Welsh medium and constructing a new school building with a larger pupil capacity for the communities of Hirwaun and Penderyn to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School will improve educational outcomes and provision.**

A larger, new, purpose built English medium primary school at Hirwaun could offer:

- **Greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced educational environment in which to learn and grow;**
- Potential for financial savings in terms of services, which accrue to a larger school which can be reinvested for the benefit of all pupils;
- The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the construction of a modern, state of the art purpose built school that meets all the required standards of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment;
- More opportunities for the teaching and support staff which are provided by a larger school;
- Pupils being taught, in the main, with their year group. All classes in the Penderyn English medium stream are currently mixed year groups.

A completely Welsh medium primary school at Penderyn could:

- Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school;
- Enable total immersion in the Welsh language to be offered to a larger number of pupils from the youngest possible age;
- Offer more opportunities for the teaching and support staff which could be provided by a larger wholly Welsh medium school;
- Create a critical mass of Welsh-medium learners;
- Enable the development of increased Welsh-medium provision at secondary level;
- Provide more opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh.

Implications for staff -

- **The creation of a larger primary school at Hirwaun and the provision of additional Welsh medium pupil places at Penderyn Community Primary School would provide staff with the opportunity to specialise in specific areas of the curriculum. Larger schools with more staff allows for such specialism with the ability to share workload more effectively and therefore gives staff more opportunities to progress their careers.**
- **It is our intention to recommend to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School that they ring-fence any additional positions they need to appoint as a result of increased pupil numbers, below senior leadership level, to the existing staff currently employed in the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School in the first instance. This process means that the Penderyn Community Primary School staff will be given the first opportunity to apply for additional posts in the extended Hirwaun Primary School prior to any being advertised externally. If they are successful, they will then simply transfer to the new school when it opens. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.**

Implications for pupils –

In making the proposed changes, in addition to the points above, there are several further perceived benefits that can be realised:

- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom in a larger school at Hirwaun which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- A larger team of staff at Hirwaun Primary School to share expertise and experience;
- More pupils being taught in a new, state of the art, purpose built school buildings, which will be fit for the purpose of providing education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;

**The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of the educational provision, and this should have a significant impact on educational performance of the pupils. This will bring about improvements for all pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or disability. It should be noted that of the 897 pupils (including nursery) attending Penderyn Community Primary School, Hirwaun Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymrage Aberdar, none are indicated as being Gypsy or Traveller children (per January 2018 PLASC). To reiterate, these proposals are not seen as being detrimental to any particular group of pupils, they are intended to improve educational provision for all.**



**Although some pupils may have further to travel to school, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will apply whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport.**

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the amended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school.

**In catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'. This provision will not be available to English medium pupils who currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.**

**Penderyn Community Primary School and Hirwaun Primary School are 2.6 miles apart and the journey time between both schools by bus is not expected to exceed 15 minutes.**

**The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposal outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for pupils and parents.**

Catchment changes –

**Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference).**

**The Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough. Transport will be provided to pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the amended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area, as outlined above.**

**The catchment area of the new Hirwaun Primary School will extend to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School. Any pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will simply transfer to the new school building in Hirwaun when it opens (subject to parental preference). They will not need to complete admission applications unless they are applying for Nursery or Reception places.**

As outlined earlier, in catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'. This provision will not be available to any English Medium pupils who currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.

Financial implications –

**As this proposal involves the change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School to Welsh medium and the construction of a new, larger English medium building at Hirwaun, there will only be minor financial savings – these are associated with the change of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to solely Welsh medium school; plus there is potential for future financial savings largely relating to economies of scale achievable by the provision of services in a larger school.**

**3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate**

Members of the public School Staff Both Other Please state: children aged 3-11 years resident in the catchment areas of Penderyn Community Primary School and Hirwaun Primary School; and children in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun; the parents and carers of these children.

**4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:**

Review and Proposed cessation

**5. Identifying Impacts** – Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager's guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Yes	Yes		<p>Creating a larger English medium primary school in a brand new building offering state of the art accommodation and facilities for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning on the current Hirwaun Primary School site and changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School to totally Welsh-medium with an amended catchment area will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide comfortable and attractive learning environments for all children who access the schools;</li> <li>• Offer 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities to enable all pupils in the local communities to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities;</li> <li>• Facilitate delivery of the changing curriculum and enable the further use of ICT to provide the opportunity for all learners to reach their potential;</li> <li>• Enable the demand for additional places in the Welsh Medium Primary sector to be met by the utilisation of existing resources which is both educationally beneficial and financially efficient;</li> <li>• Mean that some pupils may have further to travel to school; however, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will to apply whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to</li> </ul>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				school transport.
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			The new building at Hirwaun will be fully accessible to all persons and will comply with all current legislation in this regard.
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	
Welsh Language	Yes			The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<p>and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.</p> <p><b>The proposal also addresses the following actions and outcomes identified in the WESP to increase the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing new and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;</li> <li>• Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools</li> </ul> <p>This proposal, to change Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a totally Welsh medium school and in doing so to also increase the number of Welsh medium primary school places will work towards the achievement of these targets in this area of the County Borough.</p> <p>The amendment to Penderyn's catchment area to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun will also cater for Welsh medium primary school demand associated with additional housing developments in the area.</p>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Carers			Yes	

EVIDENCE

6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Report of the Chief Executive to Cabinet - 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018  
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal

7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

**The only negative impact identified is that some pupils will have longer travel times / distances to school; however, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will to apply whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport. Further detail regarding transport provision is contained at pages 5 and 6.**

## INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

### 9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

The following consultation meetings/ open events are to be held:

School Affected	Group	Date / Time	Venue
Penderyn Community Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Penderyn Community Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 / 3pm-6pm	Hirwaun Primary School

Schools are also being offered opportunities for consultation with pupils, via meetings of their School Councils as detailed in the table above.

Interested parties are also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

or by fax to 01443 744224, or e-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

### MONITORING AND REVIEW



## **10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?**

The Council's HR teams will be fully engaged in supporting the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School in the appointment of staff to any additional positions they need to appoint as a result of increased pupil numbers. It is the intention of the Council to recommend to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School that such posts, below senior leadership level, be ring-fenced to the existing staff currently employed in the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School in the first instance. This process means that these Penderyn Community Primary School staff will be given the first opportunity to apply for additional posts in the extended Hirwaun Primary School prior to any being advertised externally. If they are successful, they will then simply transfer to the new school when it opens. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.

### **ADDRESSING THE IMPACT**

## **11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?**

- Continue the Policy

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

**The evidence outlined in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach.**

## **12. ACTION PLAN**

**You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.**

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officers	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
If the proposals proceed, undertake the statutory consultation process to implement the proposals	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team	By March 2019		
If the proposals proceed, finalise the plans for the construction of the new school	David Powell, Service Director, Corporate Design and Maintenance	By September 2019		
If the proposals proceed, provide assistance and support to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School, as required, regarding the appointment of staff to any additional positions	HR Officers	By September 2019		

13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None.

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team  
The Pavilions  
Cambrian Park  
Clydach  
CF40 2XX  
Email: [equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies                      Date: 30/09/18  
Job Title: Director of Education and Inclusion Services

## Welsh Language Impact Assessment

### **Proposal to change the language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, amend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School and increase the pupil capacity of Hirwaun Primary School**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.

As part of our proposals in respect of the above, we are planning to undertake some reorganisation of Welsh Medium Primary education provision in this area of Rhondda Cynon Taf, which will increase Welsh Medium pupil capacity.

#### Language category of school

We are proposing that Penderyn Community Primary School, which is currently a dual language school, becomes a wholly Welsh medium school which will be able to offer all of its available capacity of 231 pupils (plus nursery) to pupils requiring a Welsh medium education. It is proposed that pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to Hirwaun Primary School which is to be rebuilt with an extended capacity, should these proposals proceed. The catchment area of the new Hirwaun Primary School will extend to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School.

Penderyn Community Primary School is currently organised into two language streams and parents choose for their children to study most of their lessons either through the medium of Welsh or through the medium of English. In recent years the number of pupils (including nursery) in the Welsh language stream has increased to 179, whilst numbers have fallen to just 54 in the English stream. There are 9 classes in the school, 6 of which are taught in Welsh and 3 which are taught in English. *(Figures from January 2018 PLASC).*

We are also proposing to amend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough and will increase the number of Welsh medium school places available in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough. Admissions to the schools will be administered by the local authority.

#### Performance standards

The following tables set out the performance of the Welsh (W) and English (E) streams of Penderyn Community Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on the numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals:

Foundation Phase Outcomes						
Subjects	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)
Foundation Phase Indicator	92 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (1)	90 (3)	96.4 (1)	100 (1)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Language literacy and communication skills English/Welsh	96 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (2)	90 (3)	96.4 (2)	100 (1)
Mathematical development	96 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)

Key Stage Two Outcomes						
Subjects	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)
English	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.4 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Welsh 1st	88.2 (3)	N/A	94.2 (2)	N/A	95.5 (2)	N/A
Maths	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Science	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (3)	88.9 (4)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.2 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)

*The figures in brackets in the tables above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

### Welsh medium growth

If these proposals are agreed Penderyn Community Primary School will become a wholly Welsh medium school and will be able to offer all of its available capacity to pupils requiring a Welsh medium education. The school will be able to offer Welsh medium provision to 231 pupils (plus nursery), with an admission number of 33 pupils per year group. This will increase the number of Welsh medium school places available in this part of the County Borough. Admissions to the school will be administered by the local authority.

Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference). The Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough.

Other proposals within this area of the County Borough seek to further ensure the demand for Welsh medium places is matched with the available supply and will increase the number of Welsh medium school places available in this part of the County Borough, namely:-

- The proposed increase in capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar by 60 pupil places by the construction of a new classroom extension block and improvements to parking and external play facilities;
- The proposed increase in capacity of Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun by 162 pupil places by the construction of a new classroom extension block and a separate sports hall containing classrooms for the PE curriculum.

#### Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020

The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.

The Council's WESP document indicates how the local authority intends to promote the teaching of the Welsh Language, how it intends working towards increasing the number of children taught through the medium of Welsh and how it can assist achieving the Welsh Government's target of having one million people in Wales speaking Welsh by 2050. The WESP for RCT can be viewed and downloaded from the Council website via <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

Included among the list of actions and outcomes that the Council will undertake to help achieve the targets set out in the WESP by increasing the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh are the following:

- New and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools

This proposal, to change Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a totally Welsh medium school and in doing so to also increase the number of Welsh

medium primary school places will work towards the achievement of these targets in this part of the County Borough.

#### Further advantages

A completely Welsh medium primary school at Penderyn could also:

- Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school;
- Enable total immersion in the Welsh language to be offered to a larger number of pupils from the youngest possible age;
- Offer more opportunities for the teaching and support staff which could be provided by a larger wholly Welsh medium school;
- Create a critical mass of Welsh-medium learners;
- Enable the development of increased Welsh-medium provision at secondary level;
- Provide more opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh;
- Improve recruitment and retention of staff.

#### Before and after school activities

At present Penderyn Community Primary School offers a breakfast club each morning before school. After school activities comprise - an Urdd after school club two evenings per week, plus a sports club. These activities will be unaffected by these proposals.

These proposals could provide Penderyn Community Primary School with the possibility of enhancing and extending their extra-curricular provision, particularly through the medium of Welsh.

This page is intentionally left blank



## **Appendix 2**

### **Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Hirwaun Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 2:30pm**

#### **Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

#### **Present**

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services

Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

10 members of the School Council of Hirwaun Primary School

1 member of school staff

Introductions from Council officers.

ET explained that the Council was proposing to build a new, bigger school at Hirwaun which would replace the current school. The children taught in English at Penderyn would be taught in the new school so that Penderyn primary School would become Welsh only.

The new school would be brand new and would be bigger than the existing school. It would be able to hold 390 pupils, plus nursery age children.

ET explained that the Council believed that there were many good things that a new school could bring, such as:-

- A brand new, modern building;
- New outdoor play and games areas;
- New ICT;
- A bigger school for more pupils to enjoy and more opportunities to make more friends;
- The opportunity for all children to come to the school and access all parts of the school, including those with extra needs (for example if they use a wheelchair);
- More opportunities and nicer facilities for after-school clubs.

ET also explained that there may be some things which concern some children, for example, the children living in Penderyn may have further to travel to school if they come to Hirwaun Primary School, however, there will be school buses provided for them.

Also, some children may prefer being in a smaller school with less pupils.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

ET explained that the purpose of the meeting with the pupils today was for the Council to hear and record what the pupils think about the proposals, as their views are very important to the Council.

To facilitate the discussion ET asked the pupils some questions:-

#### Question 1

Do you think the proposal is a good idea?

#### Responses

- Overall consensus - yes.

Why do you think that it is a good idea?

#### Responses

- If new people start at the school, they will prefer to be in a new school.
- People can learn more and won't want to move from a new school.
- Better resources for better learning.
- Better outdoor space.
- Less stones and concrete in the yard.
- There would be more security, so little children are safe.
- Higher gates and fences to keep safe and to keep balls in.
- Electric doors would be liked in a new school.
- Less glare from the windows on screens.
- Better ICT in a new school.
- Bigger TVs would be good.
- Would like an outdoor classroom.

#### Question 2

Do you like the idea of a new school building?

#### Responses

- Overall consensus - yes.
- Like the new Aberdare Community School.

#### Question 3

What do you like about your existing school?

#### Responses

- Small so not very loud.
- How nice the teachers are.

- Still a good school, even though it is small.
- Not as many people because it is small.
- Classrooms are a nice size, bit would prefer there to be more desks so that you can sit in different places to do different things / have more choice.
- The displays.

#### Question 4

Is there anything that you don't like about your existing school?

#### Responses

- Stones on yard.
- Toilets are not nice.
- The school is cold / there are not many radiators.
- The dinner hall being used for PE and assemblies.
- Too grassy / boggy.
- Old tables and chairs.
- Ground outside is too hard / stony.

#### Question 5

Is there anything that concerns or worries you about the proposals?

#### Responses

- Worried that there will be less equipment.
- Worried that some pupils might not like a bigger school.
- What the teachers will be like.
- Sad that they will be missing being a new school (Years 4 / 5 / 6), but happy that their brothers / sisters will get to have a new school.
- 

#### Question 6

Would you look forward to welcoming new friends and how would you make them feel welcome?

#### Responses

- Show them around the school.
- Ask them to join in games on the yard.
- Introduce them to teachers.
- Show respect to them.
- Be kind to them.
- Make them feel comfortable.

Group discussions were undertaken and the pupils and they were given post-it notes and asked to write their views. The written responses received are listed below:

- Vinyl floor

- Stained windows
- Better glass
- Sturdy walls
- Better security x6
- More resources x7
- New equipment – pens, pencils, laptops, ipads
- Better toys x2
- Your own folder
- Drawing equipment
- Better music player
- Library and computers x4
- More parking x3
- Upgraded bigger dining hall x5
- Room for performances
- Sports hall
- Netball court x4
- Football yard x2
- Sporting courts
- Outdoor sports area
- More sports and outdoor activities
- Football x2
- More obstacles
- Baseball
- Different events and competitions
- Dinner money on finger
- Friday special for dinner
- More food choice x6
- Snacks and drinks for school classes if they are snackish or thirsty instead of going out of class for a drink
- Electric doors x2
- Climbing frame x6
- Sand pit x2
- Swings
- Garden area and green house
- More grass
- Bigger yard x5
- More outside storage x3
- Better white board
- More/better shelters x4
- Rainbow carpet for nursery
- Colourful classrooms x6
- Colourful toilet cubicles x3 – green for boys and pink for girls
- Bigger classes x3
- Outdoor classroom x3
- Automatic lights and stage lights x2
- Vote for new school uniform for year 6
- Screens on rails so it can go up and down

- Better TV
- Loud speaker and bell for announcements x2
- First aid/doctors room x2
- Rooms for people who need more support x2
- Assembly room
- Elsa Room – for worries you can go chat to someone
- Art room x3
- Fruit room
- Staff room
- Relaxing room
- School Council room
- Attendance room
- 2 floors to the building x4
- More events – pet day
- Signs for rooms
- Welcome sigs x2
- Shed for bikes and scooters x4
- Better pegs/cloakrooms x5
- ICT Room x5
- More water fountains
- Softer seats
- Separate desks
- Better tables x4
- Better furniture x3
- Draws on tables
- More trays for extra work
- Better chairs x2
- Benches
- Leaving wall – you sign it when you leave
- Softer play area for the younger ones x2
- 3 play times
- More displays
- More decoration
- Sleep time for nursery
- Heating
- A fort in the reading corner for nursery and reception
- Support staff and children buddies
- Star of the year

The pupils were thanked for their time and input.

The meeting closed at 3:10pm

**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors of Hirwaun Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 4pm**

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

**Present**

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services

Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

Paul Hughes (PH), Human Resources Officer

24 members of school staff and the governing body

Introductions from Council officers.

Esther Thomas (ET) welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the proposal, the reasons for the proposal, the purpose of the meeting and the consultation process and timescales relating to the consultation process and the proposals themselves should they be implemented.

Should the proposals be implemented, it is proposed that:-

- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, no new pupils wishing to be educated through the medium of English will be admitted to Penderyn Community Primary School;
- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, the catchment change to extend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to include the communities of Trenant and Penywaun will take effect; and
- On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building.

ET explained how this proposal was part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme and addressed many of the Council's objectives in relation to this, including -

- Addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium education;
- Expansion of schools in areas of increased demand for educational services;
- Addressing the condition of educational assets;

- Making assets available for community use.

ET referred to the detailed information contained within the consultation document which had been circulated and the consultation response pro-forma contained therein (further copies of both were available at the meeting) and referred to page 5 of the consultation document which outlines how people can make comments.

ET explained that the questions / comments / responses would be recorded for inclusion in the consultation report which would be fed back to Cabinet in January 2019, as would the feedback from pupils. ET stressed that this was a period of consultation and should the proposals proceed to the next stage (statutory notice), objections would be received and recorded at that stage.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

#### Comment

Delighted at the prospect that there is to be a new school. The current school is draughty and full of asbestos. Hirwaun has to have a new school. The current school is in desperate need of replacement. Pleased that it would go ahead even if Penderyn remained as dual language.

#### Response

ET commented that there was also strong evidence for making Penderyn School Welsh only, as there were diminishing numbers of pupils requesting English medium education at Penderyn School.

#### Comment

There are also a lot of new housing developments in the Hirwaun area which are applying for planning permission.

#### Comment

Delighted with the proposals. The children at Hirwaun School deserve a much better building.

#### Response

ET complimented the staff on making the best of the current learning environment and commented that the size of the site meant that there was the space to do exciting things here. Works would be managed to ensure a safe build on the existing live site. The technical team are looking at proposals at present. ET emphasised that no decision has been pre-empted, but certain works are necessary to establish the feasibility and indicative cost of the proposals. Management of space within the existing site will be undertaken in consultation with school staff should the proposals proceed.

Comment

The school is lucky to have lots of space.

Response

LH explained the indoor and outdoor spaces that were provided at the recently constructed Cwmaman Primary School.

Comment

The school was keen to have breakout spaces in any new building.

Response

ET offered the opportunity for staff / governors to view the recently constructed new schools so that they could see what was possible.

Comment

Future proofing and providing flexible spaces was a requirement in light of the Donaldson report / recommendations.

Response

Concepts are shared with school staff at the earliest opportunity and views / inputs sought from all stakeholders.

Question

Would there be any impact on staff?

Response

PH explained that depending upon pupil numbers going forward, there was likely to be an increase in staff numbers at Hirwaun Primary School. The school were just getting a new building. The governing body at Hirwaun School would be encouraged to offer the opportunity for the English medium stream staff of Penderyn Community Primary School to join the team of staff at Hirwaun Primary School.

ET thanked all for their attendance and inputs.

The meeting closed at 4:30pm



**Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Penderyn  
Community Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 2:30pm**

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school  
building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of  
language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

Present:

Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education  
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Non Morgan (NM), School Organisation and Governance Team Leader  
9 members of the School Council of Penderyn Community Primary School  
1 member of school staff

GD made introductions and provided meeting outline to the 9 pupils present (plus teacher).

GD explained that the Council was proposing to build a new, bigger school at Hirwaun which would replace the current school. The children taught in English at Penderyn would be taught in the new school so that Penderyn primary School would become Welsh only.

The reasons for a Welsh Medium Primary in Penderyn were outlined:

- i. Pupils would be totally immersed in Welsh medium
- ii. More after-school activities delivered in Welsh
- iii. Whole year groups to be formed (no longer a need for mixed age groups)
- iv. School transport provided for pupils to attend Hirwaun English Medium school from the Penderyn area.

Questions and answers

Will there be English in the new school?

GD confirmed there would be English lessons.

Are we a good school?

GD advised that Estyn have said it is.

How do the community benefit from this change?

GD advised that Penderyn will remain as a community school but pupil numbers are smaller in English than Welsh.

Why do you want to move us?

GD shared the Welsh Government plans for to increase Welsh speakers in the future therefore the Council have to make sure schools are big enough.

English pupils also need state of the art schools and the new school in Hirwaun will be like this.

Is it more likely that pupils would learn Welsh better being around other Welsh learners?

GD agreed but added language immersion does help.

Would the Welsh Unit be going to English Comprehensive?

That is down to parental choice.

Why turn it into a Welsh School?

GD explained pupil numbers and class structures – so pupils of same age would be in classrooms together.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

GD suggested that any good ideas to be written on the large sheets of paper provided, or post it notes.

GD added - if there are any worries or concerns these should also be written on the large sheets of paper provided, or post it notes.

The School Council showed the officers 'Save our School' posters they had designed.

The School Council gave a presentation – 'Negative things about Penderyn Primary School turning Welsh'.

The written responses received on the large sheets of paper and post-it notes are listed below:-

- Improve new closes
- New sports facilities
- Making new friends
- Lovely opportunities in Hirwaun
- More Welsh speakers in this school
- More Welsh speakers
- I think this is a good idea because the new school is next generation
- New children that have just started our school will not have a change to settle properly in Hirwaun Primary
- Only half of the community can use the new school
- Moving schools ☹
- Leaving our friends

- This is a bad idea because kids got siblings in the Welsh
- Children that have settled in Penderyn Primary School would not be settled so quickly in Hirwaun Primary School
- I think this is a bad idea because children like this school
- Young siblings not being able to experience Penderyn school like it is now
- People might not want to leave
- I think this is a bad idea because half of the community will work here and we need to go to a new school and we like this school
- Less people in the school
- Save our school – let the English stay x5

The pupils were thanked for their time and input.

**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors of Penderyn  
Community Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 4pm**

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school  
building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of  
language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

Present:

Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education  
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Non Morgan (NM), School Organisation and Governance Team Leader  
Ellen Williams (EW), Human Resources Officer  
29 members of school staff and the governing body

GD thanked the School Council for their contribution.

Introductions from Council officers.

Gaynor Davies (GD) welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the proposal, the reasons for the proposal, the purpose of the meeting and the consultation process and timescales relating to the consultation process and the proposals themselves should they be implemented.

Should the proposals be implemented, it is proposed that:-

- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, no new pupils wishing to be educated through the medium of English will be admitted to Penderyn Community Primary School;
- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, the catchment change to extend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to include the communities of Trenant and Penywaun will take effect; and
- On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building.

GD explained how this proposal was part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme and addressed many of the Council's objectives in relation to this, including -

- Addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium education;
- Expansion of schools in areas of increased demand for educational services;
- Addressing the condition of educational assets;
- Making assets available for community use.

GD referred to the detailed information contained within the consultation document which had been circulated and the consultation response pro-forma contained therein (further copies of both were available at the meeting) and referred to page 5 of the consultation document which outlines how people can make comments.

GD explained that the questions / comments / responses would be recorded for inclusion in the consultation report which would be fed back to Cabinet in January 2019, as would the feedback from pupils. GD stressed that this was a period of consultation and should the proposals proceed to the next stage (statutory notice), objections would be received and recorded at that stage.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

AR explained the different type of buildings and future proofing new builds for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

GD opened up the meeting for questions.

GD explained that officers cannot talk to individuals but can arrange for Human Resources to attend separately.

GD referred to page 18 of the consultation document and apologised that the first sentence was not worded correctly and was not meant to offend any staff. This was to explain a reduction in pupil numbers in English – Estyn recognised this.

#### Question

Query regarding the covenant – was it prescriptive Welsh and English?

#### Response

AR to check and the findings will be included in the Consultation Report.

#### Comment

A new build doesn't ensure a high standard of learning. Her son is in St. Johns – Welsh is stronger.

#### Response

GD noted the School Council also acknowledged this. GD further explained that data tells us that the need for Welsh is increasing and English is decreasing. Therefore, the Local Authority have to meet targets in the WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan). Data also tells us pupils would be entitled to free transport.

#### Comment

Parents are not happy with pupils moving to a Red school.

#### Comment

GD advised that a Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) was in place – which means that the school is being given support to help with improvements. The Local Authority work closely with the Central South Consortium to improve standards.

Question

Staff asked is this not a Community School? Is the Local Authority isolating English parents? Penderyn is a healthy school with pupils walking, this won't continue if pupils moved to Hirwaun.

Response

GD explained that all factors needed to be looked at. Penderyn will remain a Community School but a Welsh school.

Comment

The Local Authority changed the catchment area and that's why numbers reduced.

Response

AR explained there is still parental choice.

Comment

Staff feel Welsh and English is being segregated – never been this way.

Response

GD explained that the English stream pupil numbers are very low – can have a negative social effect. Need to prepare pupils for Secondary school and life skills.

Pupil transition is easier in bigger groups.

Comment

Staff didn't agree.

Response

GD explained that you can't focus on a small number, but need to look at big picture. AR added that there is still parental choice.

Comment

Staff feel that the Local Authority are removing that choice.

Response

GD outlined that pupil numbers and demand tells the Local Authority that English numbers are diminishing, therefore we have to look at what is viable.

Comment

Staff feel English pupils don't come here due to catchment changes.

Response

AR emphasised that parental choice is always a factor.

Question

22 pupils in the village surely have the right to be educated in their village?

Response

GD pointed out that Hirwaun is located only 1.5 miles away.

Question

Fundamental message – denial of choice from the community. Pupils in Hirwaun chose to come to Penderyn for English education. What other options have been considered? Proposed that Penderyn catchment change to possibly increase in English Department. Quoted September figures.

Response

GD and AR can only use published figures.

Question

Cut off point in document, September 2019 for nursery admissions – Doesn't a 12 month notice period need to be implemented?

Response

This is a for a catchment change.

Comment

A two year period will exacerbate the pupil number issue.

Response

GD explained forecasting numbers may change but looking at long term plan.

Question

Projections – if the proposal goes ahead then numbers fall how difficult would it be to re-introduce English back/bilingual school.

Response

AR explained that a new statutory proposal would have to be undertaken. Also, WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) target – to review dual language schools was outlined.

Question

Why do so many pupils in Hirwaun chose education out of catchment?

Response

GD commented that building conditions and facilities in Hirwaun may be detrimental.

Question

If the 102 pupils in Hirwaun that chose education outside of catchment and the new 90 houses to be built all went to Hirwaun would there be capacity?

Response

AR replied that there would - this has all been taken into consideration.

Question

If you can put transport for pupils from Penderyn why can't you do it the other way around?

Response

AR explained that English medium pupils currently pay for transport to Penderyn. The Transport Policy is very fair in RCT. Parents from Hirwaun may be putting children into the Welsh Unit in Penderyn due to free transport – reinforced parental choice.

Question

Will capacity be met for English demand?

### Response

GD explained that the Local Authority review surplus places on a regular basis.

AR explained the matrix used to calculate trends for new housing estates.

### Question

Difficult when you take something away - very hard to put it back – still wants the Local Authority to explore English medium education being available at both schools. Response

GD commented that a judgement has to be made on the information / data available which shows that the English stream is not viable.

### Question

Rhigos being left alone with very small numbers – why is that school not included in these proposals? Removing parental choice – detrimental to the community.

### Response

GD explained that there will be a community school but a Welsh medium school – demand isn't there for English medium education.

### Question

Why not Rhigos?

### Response

GD outlined the need for the Local Authority to look at 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools and the WESP and put forward informed proposals – staff need to make comments on the consultation.

### Comment

Catchment area changes – getting pupils numbers for English medium of 19/20 per year – feel that if the changes hadn't been made the school wouldn't be in this position now.

### Question

Ring fencing – will staff be slotted into Hirwaun?

### Response

EW advised that Human Resources (HR) are willing to visit and discuss on an individual basis. There is a need to see how many additional staff Hirwaun would need. HR would work with the staff at both schools. HR will speak to staff individually to see how we can meet their needs. Redeployment would also be an option.

AR added that EW and the HR team have an excellent track record and RCT want to keep excellent staff. Opportunities are available. There are really good staff here – that is not disputed.

### Comment

Staff should be guaranteed jobs in the new Hirwaun School.

### Response

AR stated that no promises can be made as staffing is based on pupil numbers.



Question

If offered another position and a member of staff didn't accept, could they have redundancy?

Response

EW advised that this was dependant on circumstances.

Question

Why are Hirwaun having a parents meeting but not Penderyn – would the Local Authority re-think?

Response

AR advised that this consultation affects Hirwaun in the majority.

Comment

There is no bus service in Penderyn – location affects parents that don't drive.

Question

YGG Aberdar – change of catchment do existing pupils transfer?

Response

No, they stay where they are – admissions criteria will apply when the changes are applied.

Question

There could be an issue if a parent has a pupil in Penderyn but can't admit a sibling into Penderyn in September 2019 – what happens?

Response

Parents need to write in as part of the consultation.

The staff and governors were thanked for their time and input.

This page is intentionally left blank

**EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, 2018.**

**DRAFT MINUTES.**

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services explained to Members the purpose of the report. He informed Members that the report provides the opportunity for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to engage in the formal consultation process, in respect of 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Programmes – Proposal to Improve Education in the Greater Pontypridd Area and Proposals to Improve Education in Cynon Valley.

On a number of occasions, Members of the committee have sought the opportunity to contribute and comment upon future 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools proposals being considered by the Council as part of Band B Programme.

It was explained that on the 20<sup>th</sup> September and the 3<sup>rd</sup> October Cabinet agreed to initiate a formal consultation process in respect of proposals for improving education in the Cynon Valley and improving education in the Greater Pontypridd Area.

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services explained to Members of the committee the format the meeting would be conducted in order to be consistent with the public meetings being held by the Council. It was explained that consultation would be presented as two separate items starting with the Cynon Valley Consultation first then moving on to the Greater Pontypridd Consultation. It was explained that the Scrutiny's views, alongside the schools and wider stakeholders engagement would be presented to Cabinet as part of the formal consultation process, before Cabinet determine whether to proceed or not with the next stage of the School Organisation Code.

The Director of Communication and Interim Head of Democratic Services invited the Director of Education and Inclusion Services and officers to conduct the consultation.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services thanked the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for participating in the consultation and explained that the views of the Committee are sought in relation to the School Organisation Proposals for Hirwaun/Penderyn.

Members were informed that the reasons for the proposal is that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to:

- Improve and increase education provision in Hirwaun by investing in a new school for Hirwaun Primary School.
- Improve Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community

School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium primary school.

The changes will be achieved by the construction of a new school building on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School. The new school would have a capacity of 390 pupils (plus nursery). The new school would replace the current school buildings on the existing site.

Penderyn Community Primary School would become a Welsh medium community primary school with the capacity for 231 pupils (plus nursery). It was explained that as part of the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School to solely Welsh medium, it is also proposed to amend and extend catchments to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (currently in the Welsh catchment for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places in the locality.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services presented the consultation document in detail. At the end of the presentation, it was explained that the meeting is now open to any person present to inform officers of their views, which as indicated, will be recorded, and because this is a consultation, it may or may not, be possible to respond to all questions raised at this time, but all questions would be logged and formally included in the consultation report to Cabinet.

The Chair thanked the Director of Education and Inclusion Services for the overview of the proposal and explained to Members that the meeting does not have the jurisdiction to make any decisions but it provides an important opportunity to comment on the proposals and for the observations of Members to be reported back to Cabinet when they received the wider consultation feedback.

In respect of the improving education provision in Hirwaun by investing £10.4m in a new, school for Hirwaun Primary School, Members put forward their questions and observations.

A member explained that she had personally acted as a scribe in a recent meeting organised by Councillor Graham Thomas last Friday at Penderyn. This was not a formal Council meeting.

A Member asked in respect of the Hirwaun and Penderyn area and the concept of Welsh Education along with the Welsh Government plan for more Welsh speakers by 2050 had there been any pre-consultation with the community to take into account their views within the area.

It was explained that in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) the Council has included in its plan to increase the number of children being taught through the medium of Welsh and specifically included in the plan is to:

- Provide new and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity.

- Consideration of making dual language schools into full Welsh medium schools.

The School Organisation Code is very prescriptive. The Code clearly states that it is not a requirement to hold any meetings to discuss proposals but we convene this as we deem it good practice. However, to adopt a consistent approach we do not hold pre-consultation meetings.

A Member questioned the maintenance figure of £1.9Million and asked how as a Local Authority we got to that situation. Members were informed of that, the school is a CLASP type construction and was built in the late 1960's. The buildings are difficult to maintain due to the management of asbestos and they have come to the end of their useful life.

A member enquired whether the Council has to pay for demolition costs? It was explained that all costs, including the demolition and asbestos removal costs, are included in the overall project costs.

Another Member complemented the proposal and thought it was a well thought out proposal.

In respect of the Transport issue, a Member asked with regards the provision of transport how much extra pressure would be put on school transport. It was explained that this is unclear at present, in respect of the English medium provisional numbers will fluctuate. In catchment pupils resident in Penderyn attending English medium stream will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School as the walking route is deemed unavailable.

In respect of Transport provision a Member expressed concerns as to whether there was sufficient public transportation to and from Penderyn. A Member commented that the bus service from Penderyn is an hourly service, which could be a serious issue for parents especially if they do not drive. If parents need to get to the school in an emergency this could be of concern.

Majority of Members felt strongly that the transport situation needed to be looked in greater detail. Officers explained that the Education Department collaborates with the Highways transport team and will raise the issue with the private sector transport company.

The Chair asked how can we make the Penderyn Welsh Medium School Proposal a positive one to the Communities of Hirwaun and Penderyn? The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained that some parents feel strongly about removing the English stream however parents are already making a choice of choosing Welsh medium with only three pupils registered for English medium provision this year. However, there is positive feedback and the large capital investment in the community is seen as a real opportunity for the wider Cynon Valley schools in the area. We need to focus on equality and ensure all pupils have fair access to good education facilities and opportunities.

The Chair asked if the school would be able to accommodate any future housing development with the area and if this had been taken into consideration when devising the proposal. It was explained that the Council strategically manages its school places and inputs into the Local Development Plan and regularly monitors new and proposed housing development in the area. A Member also explained that there is a proposal for Heads of the Valleys road duelling. There is possible development there and we hope that along that corridor it will bring employment to the area. To have a 21<sup>st</sup> Century school would be very positive for the area.

The Chair thanked the Officers and as there were, no further questions put forward on the Cynon Valley proposal asked Officers to proceed with the next consultation document to consider the Greater Pontypridd Proposal.

Director of Education and Inclusion Services,  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon,  
Rhondda Cynon Taff,  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Rhondda Cynon Taff, Consultation on a proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

Further to your consultation commencing regarding the above. I am a parent of 2 children currently attending Penderyn Community Primary School that would be affected by your proposal.

As a parent of 2 of the 54 children being taught through the medium of English, and 2 of the 22 that live within the "Penderyn catchment" taught via the English medium I would like to comment as follows:

1. Your statistics show that 23% of the children are taught through the medium of English, and 41% of these are from the Penderyn catchment. Your consultation report however does not quantify the percentage of children being taught through the medium of Welsh that live outside the Penderyn Catchment area.

As there are 2 buses that provide transportation to children outside of the Penderyn catchment area I am aware that the vast majority of children being taught through the medium of Welsh live outside the Penderyn catchment. Penderyn school is named "Ysgol Gynradd Gymuned Penderyn" / "Penderyn Community Primary School" for a reason, the school is part of the community and fundamentally provides education to children who live in the Penderyn local community. Children that attend the school from outside is an added extra, fundamentally the school is in the community for the community.

2. My children attend the school in their direct community, your proposal will mean having to move the children to another school outside their community. As a former pupil of the school I am saddened by the fact that 22 children and countless numbers of children in the future will be deprived from going to their

local community school. Whilst your proposal will mean a huge number of children being taught through the medium of Welsh will get taught in a proposed "lack of community school". Your actions will mean that Penderyn school will have less children from the "Penderyn catchment" and will become a school disconnected from the community within which it sits.

In addition, my children will lose part of their identity and affiliation with the local community if your proposals are accepted and executed.

3. As a parent of 2 of the children being taught via the medium of English I would question why they are being positively discriminated against and why they can not be taught via the medium of English in their local school. English is the primary language of 88% of Rhondda Cynon Taff residents (as noted in the R.C.T Welsh Language promotion strategy) and despite this fact my children are being discriminated against to the point where they can no longer attend the school in their village / community. This is wrong and such discrimination should not be allowed in 2018 when the whole world is becoming more accepting of differing cultures, religions, genders and languages. Integration is key to long term success in all walks of life.
4. The recent Estyn report issued in 2018 assesses the current performance of Penderyn Community Primary School as follows:

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

In summary Penderyn Community Primary School is rated good in 4 out of the 5 categories assessed, with an adequate/needs improvement rating in the 5<sup>th</sup> category.

Hirwaun Primary School's inspection in 2018 was as follows:

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Adequate and needs improvement
Teaching and learning experiences	Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement



In summary Hirwaun Primary School is rated good in 1 out of the 5 categories assessed, with an adequate/needing improvement rating in 3 categories and unsatisfactory / needing urgent improvement in the final category.

Therefore why do Rhondda Cynon Taff believe that it is acceptable to move my children from a school performing well (Penderyn) to a dysfunctional school (Hirwaun) because of the educational language we have decided our children should be taught through. The only logical conclusion that I am drawn to is that Rhondda Cynon Taff do not consider the quality of education of children via the English medium as being important. Your proposal is further discrimination against children being taught through the medium of English and will detrimentally effect their education and future prospects in life.

5. Unfortunately not all children can cope with being taught via the medium of Welsh, and, despite best efforts, some children have to move from the Welsh to English classes. Currently there are 6 out of the 54 children in the English medium side of the school who fall into this category. By separating the schools in the future would mean these children would either continue to struggle (as they do not want to leave the school) or would need to leave their school to find an education route that may suite better. This would create a situation that is unsatisfactory and would create significant upset, stigmatization and upheaval for children. Children who fall into this "transferring of education language medium category" need support and understanding rather than discrimination and becoming outcasts or failures at a young age in their local community.

As a former pupil that still lives in the local Pendeyn community, with 2 children attending the school I am deeply upset by the current proposal and strongly object to the motion of creating a welsh medium only school in Penderyn.

In summary I believe that your proposals will create a disconnect between the school and the local community within which it sits, and are nothing short of discrimination against pupils being taught through the English language. Your proposal will mean that my children and countless in the future will receive a sub-standard education outside of their village because they are taught through the medium of English. Your proposal will also in future ostracize children from their school and community if they get into educational difficulty.

In a country where diversity and inclusion is being encouraged (including Rhondda Cynon Taff as an employer) I can not understand why in the education arena diversity and inclusion is not encouraged. There is a big world out there and our children should be encouraged so see the world through many lenses. Your proposal will drive introverted opinions and objectives which will not help the growth of our children in the future.

Finally as a full paying taxpayer and council tax payer I believe that my children should fundamentally attend their local school and be provided with the best education possible. I received a good education and am now a director of a major infrastructure company in England, I expect the state to provide my children with the same opportunity I was given. I feel that your proposal will unfortunately fall way short of this request.

Yours sincerely



**UCAC**  
Undeb  
Cenedlaethol  
Athrawon  
Cymru

**Yr ymgynghoriad ar y cynnig i godi  
adeilad ysgol newydd ar gyfer Ysgol  
Gynradd Hirwaun a'r cynllun  
arfaethedig i newid statws cyfrwng iaith  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Penderyn**

Rhagfyr 2018

**UCAC** | yr undeb sy'n diogelu athrawon a darlithwyr Cymru

[www.athrawon.com](http://www.athrawon.com)

## **Yr ymgynghoriad ar y cynnig i godi adeilad ysgol newydd ar gyfer Ysgol Gynradd Hirwaun a'r cynllun arfaethedig i newid statws cyfrwng iaith Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Penderyn**

Mae Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC) yn gwerthfawrogi'r cyfle i ymateb i'r ddogfen ymgynghori gan Gyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Mae UCAC yn falch gweld dyhead Cyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf i geisio creu mwy o lefydd addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y sir ac yn cadw at yr hyn a amlinellwyd yn eu Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg drwy *"ystyried troi ysgolion cynradd dwy iaith yn ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg"*.

Rydym yn cytuno gyda'r hyn a nodwyd yn y ddogfen ymgynghorol y bydd cyfle i ddisgyblion ardal Penderyn gael trochi addysg lawn yn y Gymraeg mewn ysgol cyfan gwbl Gymraeg. O ganlyniad bydd rhagor o ddisgyblion yn cael eu haddysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg a bydd hyn yn cynyddu'r cyfloed i ddisgyblion a staff yr ysgol. Bydd cynyddu'r nifer o ddisgyblion cynradd sy'n cael eu haddysgu yn y Gymraeg yn yr ardal hon o ganlyniad yn cynyddu nifer y disgyblion a fydd yn mynd ymlaen a'u haddysg yn y Gymraeg i Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun. Bydd hyn yn cyd-fynd gyda nôd Llywodraeth Cymru o gael miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050.

Cydnabyddir bod ad-drefnu ysgolion fel hyn yn fater cymhleth a bod amrywiaeth barn a theimladau cyfion o du disgyblion, rhieni, staff ysgol a'r gymuned ehangach.

Os bydd y cynllun arfaethedig yn cael ei gymeradwyo gan Gyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf mae UCAC yn gofyn am sicrwydd llawn na fydd unrhyw ddiswyddiadau gorfodol ac y bydd ymgynghoriad llawn gyda staff ac undebau llafur y ddwy ysgol am unrhyw newidiadau staffio. Mae'n rhaid i'r Awdurdod gydweithio'n agos gyda'r ddau gorff llywodraethol er mwyn sicrhau y cyfyd cyn lleied o ansicrwydd ag sy'n ymarferol bosib.

**UCAC**  
**Rhagfyr 2018**

**Public Meeting Penderyn School Re-organisation.**  
**14<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**  
**Consultation Response.**

**Notes from meeting at Penderyn Community Centre**

**14/12/18**

**Meeting to discuss with residents, changes in Penderyn Community Primary School**

**Cll Graham Thomas chaired meeting**

**In attendance – Cllr Helen Boggis on behalf of Vikki Howells AM**

**21 residents in attendance.**

Graham outlined proposed changes of School and explained to attendees that this meeting in no way replaces consultation and residents should still make representation via the consultation. Relevant information re contact/email/consultation document left with venue for addition to notice board.

Residents queried why so many children attend English Medium education at Penderyn Primary School from outside the catchment and primarily from the Hirwaun catchment area. It was considered that this was because of poor education provision at Hirwaun Primary as indicated by the last Estyn report placing Hirwaun Primary in red category while Penderyn achieved yellow category resulting in parental choice for Penderyn Primary School.

It was further noted that a total of 102 English Medium pupils from the Hirwaun catchment attended schools outside the Hirwaun catchment and this did not include faith schools. It was considered that this was a direct reflection of the standard of Education at Hirwaun Primary School.

A question was raised "who/why was the decision made to chose Hirwaun and not Rhigos for the site as there would have better match "like for like" at that site.

Reference was made to the education code and the statement that when children are moved there "should be like for like" provision at the alternative

school. Rhondda Cynon Taf are in breach of this code within the current proposals.

When pupil numbers were considered in the original bid for funding were children from Penderyn part of the calculation. If so, this should not have been done as the parents at the meeting stated categorically that "they would not send their children to Hirwaun Primary because of the educational standards at the school and would exercise parental choice to send their children elsewhere".

There was opposition to the Authority stopping the enrolment of English Medium pupils from September 2019.

Comment was made that Penderyn Primary Community School could no longer be called a community school when those living in the community can no longer send their children there for English Medium education.

A complaint was made that a request to meet with Headmaster had been refused.

The meeting was of the opinion that if a 30 name petition was presented for a meeting with the Headmaster and School Governors then this would have to be granted. A 70 name petition was presented to Cllr Graham Thomas together with a letter of response to the consultation. Both were handed to Rhondda Cynon Taf on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

Complaint was made that teachers had been told by the school that they were not allowed to attend this public meeting as it was only for the community. The meeting was informed that no such communication would have come from the organisers of this meeting.

A request was made for Vikki Howells A.M. to contact Welsh Government Minister Kirsty Williams A.M. regarding the proposals. This would be communicated via Vikki Howell's office in attendance.

A comment was made that many Welsh Medium pupils attend Penderyn Primary School because of the availability of a free bus and many continue their education through English Medium when transferred to Secondary Education at 11 years of age.

Further comment from a parent that "their daughter benefited from an education that mixed with children from Welsh Medium education and vice versa". This cross benefit would be lost at Penderyn Primary School  
Another comment indicated "that the smaller classes were actually a benefit at Penderyn Primary School"

Reference was made that when the new school was built that there was a clause or covenant that the school would have to retain both English and Welsh Medium education at the school. The meeting was informed that Cllr Graham Thomas has already pursued this question when raised previously and had been informed by Rhondda Cynon Taf that there was no such clause. This needed re-affirmation as part of the consultation.

A question was raised as to why the catchment for Welsh Medium had been extended to Penywaun when Welsh Medium provision at Cwmdare was much closer to that community.

As stated above parents will not send their children to Hirwaun Primary School for English Medium education and would send their children to other schools using parental choice.

The only other option left to Penderyn residents would be to send their children to Welsh Medium at Penderyn school if education within their community was the prime consideration. Would Penderyn Primary School have the capacity to implement this option given the increase in catchment to include Trenant/Penywaun.

Further comment was made that imposing a red category school when current education is a yellow category is in contravention of regulations/code.

A suggestion was made to change the catchment boundary of English Medium at Penderyn School to provide sufficient English Medium numbers for both Hirwaun and Penderyn Schools. If the boundary can be changed for Welsh Medium education then the boundary can be changed for English Medium education. If part of Hirwaun was included then that would be nearer to Penderyn Primary School than Penywaun is for Welsh Medium education. Within this proposal it was further noted that 102 pupils from within the current English Medium catchment of Hirwaun Primary school do not attend that school

Community view from the meeting is that Penderyn Primary School should continue education through the medium of English.

Public service buses only run at one per hour, parents without their own transport would not be able to collect their children in an emergency.

Penderyn School would lose diversity and inclusion.

Some children move between both mediums currently for additional support, Penderyn will lose this capacity on site.

Pupils with additional needs will suffer within larger class sizes at Hirwaun Primary School.

A question was raised as to whether Rhigos Primary School had the capacity to take the children from Penderyn Primary as parents would not be sending their children to the new Hirwaun Primary School.

One parent asked. " I Have 2 children, one in reception and one due to start in sept 19. How do I collect both at same time? Not prepared to move one child a year early as the other will miss friends etc".

A comment was made that " A health visitor informed residents of this change over 3 yrs ago."

A further observation was made that Hirwaun Primary was already a red school and now more pressure would be placed on teachers at the school by transferring more pupils to the school.

No consultation has taken place to date with children while children are included within the statutory stakeholders listed in the consultation document. Does this contravene regulations?



①  
It was only the beginning of September that anyone knew about the change of Penderyn School being turned into a Welsh School. Even the parents were not informed until children came home with letters in their school bags. I think this has been done underhanded as this must have been put in place at least 2 yrs ago.

As a member of the Community I think every household in the village of Penderyn should have had a letter through their door informing them of what was happening, as this is a Community School and we are the Community of Penderyn. Not everyone has a computer to see what is going on. I don't have one so a friend of mine printed this form out for me. It is not acceptable. This is a community school and as always been bilingual.

Why should children of the village be sent outside the community to be taught when we have our own perfect school. Also they are still taking English speaking children in until Sept 2019, which is not fair having to move them to a different school by 2022.

At the moment Welsh speaking children can come up from Hirwaun free but the English have to pay this is discrimination.

Most children who are sent up from Hirwaun are only here because (a) Penderyn is a very good school. (b) if they put them in the Welsh unit they have free transport.

Most children in the Welsh unit their parents

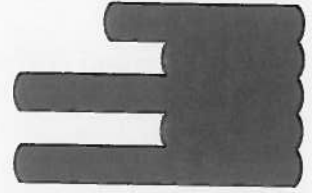
cannot speak or understand Welsh also many have had to take them out of the Welsh and put them in the English because they are struggling and falling behind

I have spoke to a couple of parents who have gone to put their child in the English only to be told to put them in the Welsh and if they don't cope you can put them into the English. This is only done to keep the number in the Welsh unit up. The headmaster is all for the Welsh. at concerts he speaks mostly in Welsh then afterwards a few words in English. He thinks because there are so many children in the Welsh unit all their parents who attend can understand Welsh. The answer is they cannot and ~~are~~ they do not understand a word he is saying.

If they want a Welsh school build one in Hwlws to again the one that's proposed to be built in 2022. If the shoe was on the other foot I wonder if the Welsh side would be so acceptable.

Why would you want to send your child from Penderyn school that is doing exceptionally well to somewhere that is not. The children that are already being taught English in Penderyn should be able to see their time out here until it is time to go to the senior school it is not acceptable that they have to be moved away with 1 or 2 yrs left.

This is the only school in all of R.C.T that will not be taught through the medium of English. Penderyn school has always been bilingual and should stay that way.



Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
Rhondda Cynon Taff  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2021.

I have 2 children at Penderyn Community Primary School and another child who would be due to start in 2021. These plans will adversely affect them, and the other 20 children in the Penderyn catchment area who are taught through the medium of English. For this reason, I would like to make the following points:

1. Penderyn Community School is a community school, therefore, should provide education primarily to the Penderyn Community, who, according to your statistics (22 children from the Penderyn catchment area attend the English side which is the majority of the children in Penderyn) would like to be taught through the medium of English.

If these plans go ahead, the community of Penderyn will be damaged by this proposal and our children will not be mixing with those few who are taught in the medium of Welsh. The proposal says it "supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 ..." but it does not support the needs of the local people actually living within the community of Penderyn. We should not be forced to send our children to a school outside the community just to meet government targets. We are talking about the lives of our children, they are not just a number. The effect on the children being forced out if this goes ahead has clearly not been taken into account.

You say "It is considered that the overall impact on the local communities of these proposals, with improved and extended school facilities will be a positive, beneficial one." This statement would not be true for my family and the others who have chosen for their children to be taught in English. It will be divisive. The children will no longer all be mixing, the parents/carers will no longer be meeting at the school gates. The village will be divided into Welsh and English instead of being one community. Instead, we will be losing our community school and children from outside of the catchment area will instead be coming into our village for school while our children are sent to a school which is struggling. This brings me on to my next point.

2. Hirwaun Primary School has recently been rated as 'red' when it was inspected by Estyn. Out of the 5 areas that were inspected only 1 was judged as good, and the teaching and learning experiences were judged as 'unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement'. I do not want to move my children from a school which was judged as 'good' in 4 out of the 5 areas, and rated as 'yellow' to a school which is clearly struggling. A new building is not going to improve the teaching at Hirwaun because the staff and pupils make the school, not the building. It is discrimination to force the children who live in Penderyn and who want their children to be taught through the medium of English to go to a school which is not performing well. Our children should be able to attend their local school and be taught in English since it is the first language of the majority of residents.

In the constitution you have the seven core aims and it says "We consider that this proposal benefits the children in these communities in accordance with the seven core aims..." however, I disagree.

The children from Penderyn will have to go to a school which is not within walking distance, therefore, will not "enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation." They will not get the benefits of walking to and from their local school with parents and other children from school, and they are being victimised by being forced to leave their community to go to school.

Dual language supports integration and understanding where they can "...have their race and cultural identity recognised." Segregating pupils promotes ignorance of the culture of others.

Another of the core aims is to "Have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being." which is not being met with this proposal as our children will not have their community meeting their physical or emotional needs because they will be rejected by their own school purely because they learn in English.

The transfer to another school will not be 'simple' as was stated. It will be very stressful for those children and parents involved and parental preference is to keep Penderyn Community Primary School a dual language community school.

The apparent benefits that Hirwaun Primary School would offer are not adequate. A new school building which will take more pupils will not "improve educational outcomes and provision" because children learn best in a smaller place where they feel confident and secure. There is a reason why people pay for their children to pay for private education where the classes are smaller.

It is portrayed as a negative that the children in Penderyn are being taught in mixed year groups, however, it is beneficial to the children as they learn from their peers and can help others learn too. My eldest has benefited from this setup as he was able to learn from the older children and therefore achieve more than he may have done if he was just being taught the curriculum for his age.

3. Penderyn Community Primary School apparently has an “English medium stream which is becoming unviable with difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff ...” however I can not see how this is true. It seems to me that catchment areas have been changed to get the decline and also, if free transport was not just offered to those children learning through the medium of welsh then the decline of those being taught in english would most likely not be happening. This, again, is discrimination; offering free transport if you will send your children to be taught in welsh but not if you send your children to the same school to be taught in english.

In regard to the staff, the teachers who my children have had, are of high quality and have been there for years, proving to me that you are happy to put untrue statements into this proposal to get the result you desire.

If the demand for more places is there, then why not make Hirwaun Primary School a dual language school when it has the new building and leave Penderyn as it is. The demand for english places could increase too, the projections have been cleverly put together to make them say what you want. The catchment for welsh is larger than for english, therefore, why not increase the catchment for those wanting their children to be taught in English.

This proposal would have a long term, negative, impact on families in Penderyn, not just short term, and it is only in terms of the welsh provision that it could be said that there are educational advantages.

If it is so easy to extend catchment areas, why not extend the catchment area for the English stream of Penderyn Community School? This would solve the (alleged) problem of declining numbers.

“numbers have fallen to just 54 in the english stream ... only 22 pupils actually live within the Penderyn catchment area”

22 is a lot for a village, that is the majority of children in Penderyn being taught in English. The catchment area was reduced so why not extend it again. Also, you do not mention how many of those being taught in welsh are from Penderyn and how many are from outside? Playing with numbers again.

4. Free transport is not a suitable option for such young children. It will be traumatic for both parents and children and it is not fair on them. As a parent of very young children, I want face to face contact with the staff who teach them.

The possibility of having to send them to school on a bus is completely unreasonable. I should not need to use free transport for my children when there is a 'community' school in my community within walking distance. How can you expect a 3 year old to go to school on a bus every morning. What if parents don't have a car and for some reason e.g. illness or appointment, a child needs collecting early? How are we expected to get to Hirwaun? We bought our house just before our 5 year old started school , and one of our criteria was for there to be a school in walking distance because I don't always have a car and I need to be able to take my children to and from school. My children should not have to go

through this when there is a brilliant school in the village we live, where I can speak to the teachers if I need to, and can easily do the school run.

On top of this, not everyone will use the 'free transport', resulting in more traffic on the roads with children being driven out of the village to school and children from outside the village being driven in for school. As a resident, I do not want more traffic on that road, it is busy enough as it is.

In summary, I am all for building a new school for Hirwaun, but keep Penderyn dual language. If welsh is needed then make Hirwaun Primary a dual language school. I know my children have benefited from the amount of welsh they are picking up from it being dual language. A dual language school promotes understanding and tolerance.

Segregation promotes intolerance and ignorance. Our children should be experiencing inclusion and this does not encourage it. Until Hirwaun has reached the same standard as Penderyn, I don't think we should even have to consider moving our children as that would mean sending them to a school where they will have less chance of doing well. Penderyn Community Primary School should remain first and foremost, a school for the community where parents can choose for their children to be taught in either English or Welsh.

This proposal will completely disconnect the school from the community.  
I strongly object to Penderyn Primary School being made a welsh medium only school.

Yours sincerely,

**From:** [REDACTED] Clerk Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council.  
**Sent:** 17 December 2018 14:09  
**To:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** Hirwaun Primary/Penderyn Primary Schools consultation

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Sir/Madam

The consultation for the construction of a new school building for Hirwaun Primary, and the proposed change in language medium status of Penderyn Primary was on the agenda to be discussed at our Community Council meeting last week.

Unfortunately, once our Cllrs who sit as school governors declared a prejudicial interest (four out the eight attending) our meeting was no longer quorate and the consultation could not be discussed. Our legal advisers confirmed that if a Cllr has a prejudicial interest (i.e. is a School Governor not appointed by the Community Council) then they would not be able to take part in any discussions.

Cllrs would like it placed on record the reason as to why we could not respond to the consultation.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]  
Executive Officer to Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council

Hirwaun Village Hall, High Street, Hirwaun, CF44 9SL  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

***For information on our Privacy Policy please refer to [hirwaunandpenderyncc.org.uk](http://hirwaunandpenderyncc.org.uk)***

[REDACTED]

Director of Education and Inclusion Services,  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon,  
Rhondda Cynon Taff,  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Rhondda Cynon Taff. Consultation on a proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

Further to your consultation I am led to believe that Penderyn School is subject to a restrictive covenant that is specific around the education of children through English and Welsh languages.

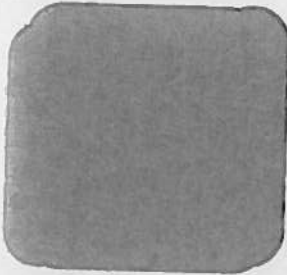
Please could you provide confirm if there are covenants in place for Penderyn School and if so under the freedom of information act 2000 provide a copy of such documentation.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

RECEIVED  
29 NOV 2018





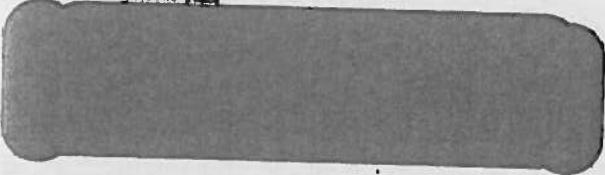
**Amrwyf Cysaili,**

Dw i am ddatgan fy nghefnogaeth lwyr o greu Ysgol Cyfrwng Gymraeg newydd ym Mhenderyn yn y dyfodol agos. Charwydd y twf yn y Gymraeg yng Nghwm Cynon mae eisiam dathlygu strategaeth giir i ddiwallu anghenion y boblogaeth.

Credaf hefyd bod eisiam darpariaeth yn ardal Aberpennar - bydd hynny'n lleddfu ar brinder lleoedd yn Ysgol Gymraeg Abertynon ac Ysgol Gymraeg Aberdâr.

Er mwyn cynyddi y posibilrwydd o wneud dim llwyr o sêmau Gymraeg yng Nghymru mae'n rhaid darparu a chynllunio nawr. Dylai'r Gymraeg fod yn drysor y gallwn ni gyd ei rhoi.

**Yn ddiidwyll,**



Dnewch chi gwelwch eu bod  
chi wedi dechreu fy llythyr  
os gwelwch yn dda.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 10 December 2018 13:09  
**To:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** penderyn primary school

**Follow Up Flag:** [REDACTED]  
**Flag Status:** [REDACTED]

I am a parent of a child who attends penderyn school, also live in penderyn and I am very unhappy about the consultation of penderyn school becoming all welsh.

I moved to the area due to such a good report on the school Estyn reports are far better than hirwaun school.

I am very annoyed by the fact we in a small but nice community of penderyn will have to travel to take our children to a school in the next village.

we as a small village are becoming more and more with the younger generation moving to the area , so as for we can only attend our village COMMUNITY school to speak welsh is appalling.

good luck to hirwaun needing a new school as the school is old and run down but please take into consideration that we as parents want our children to speak English not welsh in our local school..

this is discrimination against us and our children and the fact that some children have been taken from welsh to English in the past because they were struggling has to be taken into consideration..

if the intake for English was throughout the year not only September maybe the English department would improve because they can take welsh children on over the year but not English ( another discrimination act..)

so I as a parent would like u to rethink what u are doing to our children in our community that will have nothing in the future no shop, two pubs close by but nothing for our growing community and children .. and now not even an English school..

I know a lot of people younge and older who went to welsh school but no longer use it into there adult life... have u even took this into consideration....

look forward to a reply

[REDACTED]

Adran Addysg,  
Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Amwyf Syr,

Hoffwn i gynnig fy nghefnogaeth i gynllun Rhondda Cynon Taf o newid ysgol  
gyrnadd Penderyn i fudi yn ysgol gyrnadd Gymraeg.

Er mwyn sicrhau 1,000,000 o siaradwyr Gymraeg yn y dyfodol mas'n anghorheidol  
darparu'r gwasanaeth fydd yn galluogi'r llywodraeth gordd â'r her yma.

Fel adnaws Gymraeg wedi yn dyddio'r iaith mewn ysgol Saesneg ei chyfrwng, dw i'n  
gallu tystio i ba mor anodd yw hi i lwyddo creu awyrgylch Gymraeg sy'n arwain at  
siaradwyr Gymraeg.

Roedd fy mab wedi mynychu ysgol Gymraeg tan yn 16 oed ond wrth symud i  
Benderyn treuliodd ei flwyddyn olaf yn yr adran Gymraeg yn ysgol gyrnadd  
Penderyn. Roedd y gwahaniaeth mewn darpariaeth yn amlwg ac roeddwn i'n falch  
bod ei amser yn y fath sefyllfa wedi cwtogi i un flwyddyn yn unig.

Er bod yr athrawon yn gwneud eu gorau glas, dydy ysgolion dwy ffrwd ddim mor  
llwyddiannus.

Mae cynnydd yn y gafwaf am addysg Gymraeg yn amlwg ac mae Menter yn  
Mhenderyn a dosbarthiadau Gymraeg i oedolion yn cafnogi hyn.

Yn gywir,

\* A wnaech chi gadarnhau eich bod chi wedi  
darbyn y llythyr yma.  
Diolch

**From:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** FW: Addysg Gymraeg ym Mhontypridd

**From:** XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
**Sent:** 11 December 2018 23:20  
**Subject:** Addysg Gymraeg ym Mhontypridd

**Annwyl Gaynor Davies**

**Ysgolion yr Unfed Ganrif ar Hugain**

Yn dilyn darllen y ddogfen uchod, hoffai [REDACTED] noli rhai cwestiynau am eich bwriadau ar gyfer addysg Gymraeg, sef osau ysgolion Pont Siôn Norton a Heol-y-Celyn ac adelladu ysgol newydd sbon ar safle presennol Heol-y-Celyn. Croesewir y buddsoddiad hir ddisgwyliedig hwn mewn addysg Gymraeg ond mae gennym bryderon am yr argymhellion presennol:

Bydd rhaid i blant deithio yn bellach er mwyn cyrchu addysg Gymraeg, yn enwedig plant yng nghymunedau Cilfynydd, Coed y Cwm, Ynysybwl a Glyncoch.

Mae galw mawr am addysg Gymraeg yn ardal Glyncoch ac Ynysybwl ond eto bydd yr ysgol newydd wedi ei lleoli saith milltir o'r cymunedau hynny. Tra'n croesawu'r cynnydd mewn capasiti, mae'r un mor bwysig cael mynediad hygyrch a dirwysr at ddarpariaeth newydd.

Mae polisi Llywodraeth Cymru wedi rhoi pwyslais ar gynyddu mynediad at ddarpariaeth blynyddoedd cynnar a chynradd cyfrwng Gymraeg yng nghymuned y plentyn.

Mae clybiau brechwast a chlybiau ôl-ysgol yn elfennau hanfodol o fewn ysgolion modern ac mae rhieni presennol Ysgol Pont Siôn Norton yn poeni am orfod teithio mor bell ar gyfer y cyfleusterau hyn ar ddechrau a diwedd pob dydd. Gallai hyn arwain at fwy o rieni gogledd Pontypridd yn dewis addysg Saesneg.

Hoffem gael ymateb i'r pwyntiau isod:

Gan fod y cynlluniau ar gyfer safle Heol y Celyn yn dal i fod yn rhai ffurfiannol, a yw'n bosib pwysu arnoch i ddwys ystyried y lleoliad mwyaf addas ar gyfer agor ysgol Gymraeg yn yr ardal. A oes unrhyw bosibilrwydd adelladu mewn man mwy canolog i'r holl blant y bydd yr ysgol newydd yn ei gwasanaethu? Neu, a ellid gwario ychydig yn llai ar yr ysgol newydd ac ystyried agor dosbarth meithrin Gymraeg mewn ysgol arall fel bod ysgol Gymraeg arall yn tyfu'n organig mewn ardal arall ym Mhontypridd? Mae Cyngor Caerdydd wedi gwneud hyn yn llwyddiannus ar sawl achlysur. Mae nifer o syniadau yr hoffem gael y cyfle i'w gwyntyllu gyda chi.

Noda Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg y Cyngor fod bwriad i greu 6,054 o siaradwyr Gymraeg ychwanegol o fewn y sir erbyn 2021. Dywedir hefyd fod Llywodraeth Cymru'n nodi pa mor hanfodol yw'r system addysg. Mae hwn yn darged clodwiw iawn ond nid ydym yn gweld sut y mae amddifadu cymunedau pwysig ym Mhontypridd o ysgol Gymraeg yn mynd i helpu gwreiddu'r targed hwn.

Mae [REDACTED] yn croesawu'ch cyhoeddiad i droi Ysgol Penderyn yn ysgol Gymraeg ac yn teimlo bod y cynlluniau ar gyfer Ysgol Dolau hefyd yn addawol. Fodd bynnag, byddem yn croesawu petaech yn fodlon derbyn dirprwyaeth ar ran [REDACTED] drafod sefyllfa'r ad-drefnu yn ardal Pontypridd.

Edrychaf ymlaen at glywed oddi wrthyich.

Yn gywir

XXXXXXXX

21st December 2018

**Proposal to Construct a New School Building for Hirwaun Primary School and the Proposed Change of Language Medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, from 1st September 2021**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the above mentioned proposal. My son and his family live in Penderyn, and they have two children in the English stream at Penderyn Community School, with a third due to start there in 2021. This proposal would exclude them from their own community school.

I strongly object to this proposal on several grounds.

1) The proposal begins by pointing out that numbers in the English stream at Penderyn Community School have fallen and are expected to continue declining. I would suggest that this is due to the fact that the catchment area for the English stream is not only much smaller than the Welsh catchment area, but it has been reduced in recent years - presumably in order to provide this misleading statement. It seems it is easy to increase a catchment area, since it is proposed for the Welsh stream, so why not increase the catchment area for the English stream? I notice that only the catchment area for the Welsh stream is shown on a map - where is the catchment area for the English stream? it should certainly be shown for comparison.

The proposal notes that there are only 22 pupils in the English stream from Penderyn village. It does not say how many in the Welsh stream are from Penderyn village, a number which would be necessary in order to make a fair comparison. Perhaps because the majority of pupils in the Welsh stream are bussed in from other areas? The result of the proposal would be that most of the pupils at the school will be brought in from other areas, while the children actually living in the village are bussed out of the village. This is clearly a ridiculous situation and is also discrimination against the English speakers. The

school is called Penderyn Community School, so it should serve Penderyn community. Penderyn community contains both Welsh speakers and English speakers, therefore the school should serve both Welsh speakers and English speakers.

When the document describes admissions criteria, it uses the phrase ***"preference will be given to children living nearest the school."*** The children living in Penderyn village are those living nearest the school, and they should be given preference, not suddenly told they must get on a bus and go elsewhere. Parental preference is mentioned too - but parental preference is for there to be an English stream at Penderyn school. Are parents really expected to put a 3 yr old on a bus every morning - traumatic in itself - when there is an excellent school in walking distance? The fact of the transport being free completely misses the point. For example, what kind of relationship can parents develop with teachers if they never see them? Yet with such young children these relationships are essential. What happens if a child becomes ill at school? What about after school clubs? How do they go and play with the new friends they've made? There is no free transport to deal with these things.

The proposal states that the school ***"has difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff"***. I should like to be provided with details of this claim as it does not seem to be based on evidence. None of the people I have spoken to feel that the English stream is taught by low quality staff who keep changing. The opposite is true, staff are excellent, popular with both children and parents, and have been there for years. It is an extremely damaging and negative statement which should certainly be backed up with facts.

2) The document quotes from the **UN Convention of the Rights of the Child**. I would draw your attention to core aim 3. ***"enjoy the best possible health and be free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation."*** There are two aspects here. Firstly, at present my grandchildren walk to school, it is very good for their health, and I would point out that more exercise and physical activity for children is recommended by the government. This proposal would replace the brisk walk, twice daily, with sitting on a bus - clearly detrimental to their health. Secondly, ***"abuse, victimisation and exploitation"*** are far more likely in a bigger, less personal school such as that proposed in Hirwaun. It is not an

issue in a small, friendly school like Penderyn. Therefore both aspects of core aim 3 are contravened by this proposal.

Core aim 5 states that children should have their *"....cultural identity recognised"*. In a dual language school like Penderyn, the two cultures, Welsh and English, are recognised. The children mix, get to know each other and learn to understand each other's culture. This proposal would take that away from both the English stream that moves to Hirwaun and the Welsh stream left behind. They would no longer mix, and this segregation would promote ignorance and misunderstanding, an "us and them" mentality. Hence this aim too is contravened by the proposal.

Core aim 6 states that children should have *".... a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing."* But the community of Penderyn will be damaged and divided by this proposal, with separate Welsh and English communities instead of one village community. Thus this aim is also contravened by this proposal.

Therefore the proposal is shown to be against the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child as it fails several of the core aims.

3. The proposal claims that the changes will improve educational outcomes including *"the social and emotional development of children."* I strongly disagree with this claim insofar as the children in the English stream are concerned. Children learn best when they feel confident and secure, and this is best achieved in smaller classes in smaller schools. The teachers at Penderyn know all the children in the school and are able to interact with parents who are taking their children to and from school. The document describes the move to Hirwaun as *"a simple transfer"*. There is nothing simple about it. Moving from a small friendly school to a big impersonal school with larger classes will be extremely traumatic and detrimental to their wellbeing.

A constant theme of the document is *"21st century education"* and the benefits that the children will allegedly receive by transferring to Hirwaun. But a *"state of the art"* building is no guarantee of a better school, the atmosphere and learning opportunities have much more to do with the staff and the children than the state of the building. Therefore the children will be transferring into a much worse environment, as Hirwaun school is known to be

struggling. There is a degree of hypocrisy in these statements of benefits for the children who have to move - do not those being educated through the medium of Welsh also require a 21st Century education? Of course they do, and they will receive it at Penderyn Community School! The school was only built twelve years ago (ie. in the 21st century), and if it were not able to provide a 21st century education, it would not be retained as a Welsh medium school either.

4) It is claimed that the demand for school places (Welsh and English) is set to increase due to development in Hirwaun village. Surely the logical answer to that is to make Hirwaun school dual language. Let the children of the different cultures mix and learn to understand each other! The proposal claims that *"the impact on the local communities ... will be positive and beneficial."* I strongly disagree. The effect on the community of Penderyn will be divisive and destructive. The children will no longer be mixing at school, the parents will not be meeting and chatting at the school gate, the teachers will know very little of the children's backgrounds and home situations. The change in language medium status at Penderyn School may support the Government's Welsh Language strategy - but it doesn't support the needs of the local community, which will be damaged and divided by this issue. This proposal is from the department of Education and Inclusion Services, but apparently there is no inclusion for English speakers in Penderyn, they are being excluded from their own school.

In conclusion, I find that this proposal is full of sweeping generalisations which have no basis in fact, and figures which have been manipulated to show what the proposal wants them to show, rather than compared and considered honestly. We are talking about real people and real communities here, and surely this should be more important to the local council than hypothetical numbers of government targets. Hirwaun school seems to need help, by all means build them a new school, and make it dual language. There is no reason to change Penderyn school as it is performing well. A simple change to the English catchment area would be fair, and demolish the (alleged) problem of the decline in numbers.



**In summary, I am completely opposed to this proposal. It would divide the village of Penderyn and severely disadvantage parents who wish their children to be taught through the medium of English.**

**Yours faithfully,**

**[Redacted signature]**

## **Proposals to re-organise school provision in the Hirwaun and Penderyn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf**

### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposer is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, and the proposal relates to the construction of a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School (Hirwaun PS) and a change of language medium status - to Welsh medium only - at Penderyn Community Primary School (Penderyn CPS) from September 2021.

Overall, the proposal is likely to have a beneficial impact on the standard of education provision in the area.

### **Description and benefits**

The proposer has given a clear description of the proposal and arrangements for responding to the consultation.

---

Estyn, Llys Angor/Anchor Court, Heol Keen/Keen Road, Caerdydd/Cardiff, CF24 5JW  
Ffôn/Telephone 02920 446446  
ymholiadau@estyn.llyw.cymru • enquiries@estyn.gov.wales  
www.estyn.llyw.cymru • www.estyn.gov.wales

Mae Estyn yn croesawu goheblaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Bydd goheblaeth a dderbynnir yn y naill iaith neu'r llall yn cael yr un flaenoriaeth. | Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

The proposer has made suitable reference to: the schools' performance data and trends; information about the condition of the estate; current and projected pupil numbers and attendance; recent Estyn reports. Both of the schools affected by the proposal have been inspected within the past year, and the proposal acknowledges the judgements of Adequate and needs improvement, and Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement that were awarded at Hirwaun PS. It notes the relatively poor condition of the school buildings at Hirwaun PS.

The proposer has set out its rationale for changing Penderyn CPS to a Welsh medium-only school, both in terms of a trend of increasing numbers of pupils attending its Welsh medium stream, and in respect of the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

In relation to the change of catchment, the proposal sets out the priorities for allocating pupils a place according to the authority's school admissions policy. Pupils studying in the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS would transfer automatically to provision at Hirwaun PS without any additional application process.

The proposal addresses transport for pupils within the proposed changed school catchments appropriately. Pupils living in Trenant and Penywaun (within the expanded catchment area for Penderyn CPS) who wish to receive Welsh medium education would be eligible for free transport to school at Penderyn CPS. Pupils living in Penderyn (within the expanded catchment area for Hirwaun PS) who wish to receive English medium education would receive free transport to Hirwaun PS.

The proposal addresses potential staff changes as a consequence of closing the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS. Staff below SLT level would have the opportunity to apply for new posts at Hirwaun PS before they are externally advertised, and these posts would initially be 'ring fenced' to former Penderyn CPS teachers.

The proposer has carried out a community impact assessment, an equality impact assessment and a Welsh-medium impact assessment. These impact assessments conclude that the proposed changes would have positive, beneficial impacts on local communities, and would have no significant negative implications for any groups of pupils at the existing schools.

The proposer identifies a few disadvantages to the proposed changes. These include the perceptions by parents that a smaller school may be more appropriate to their child's needs and increased travelling distance for some pupils in some communities. The proposer has mitigated the increased travel for these pupils by providing free transport for those pupils affected.

The proposal includes consideration of demographic changes in the area in the near future, including housing developments and future development at the site of the

former Tower Colliery at Hirwaun. These are likely to lead to an increase in demand in both English- and Welsh-medium provision.

The proposer has considered alternative options, including maintaining the current language status of the two schools, and replacing the old buildings at Hirwaun PS 'like for like'. However, it has concluded that these would not address the increasing demand for Welsh medium provision, the local demographic changes or the potential benefits to quality that having larger single-language provision at the two schools could bring.

The proposal includes consideration of the risk of disruption to pupils at Hirwaun PS during building works. The proposer notes that these risks will 'be mitigated by the detailed and thorough project management arrangements that will be put in place', although does not give any detail of these arrangements.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposal sets out the perceived benefits. They include, for the construction of an English-medium school at Hirwaun: an extended, enhanced environment in a modern, purpose built school, all pupils being taught in same-age-group classes, improvements brought about by increases in scale to pupils' and teachers' opportunities. For Penderyn CPS, the benefits identified include: total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school, the creation of a 'critical mass' of Welsh medium learners, more opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh and improved recruitment and retention of staff.

The potential benefits identified by the proposer appear to be a reasonable assessment of the consequences of the proposed changes.

Director of Education and Inclusion Services.

21st Century schools Team

Ty Trevillick

Abercynon

P.O.T

CF45 4UQ.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing regarding <sup>the following</sup> ~~information~~ ~~concerning~~

"Rhonda Evans Taff, consultation on a proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community School from 1st Sept 2021."

I am a parent of a child who is currently attending Penderyn Community School and I have also got a child who will be attending the school as of 2019 both of these children will be ~~aff~~ affected by this proposal.

I am a resident of Hirwaun and choose to travel the school run outside of my village so that my children are taught in a school that ~~could~~ <sup>my child can</sup> provide ~~the~~ education in the language ~~language~~ <sup>language</sup> I choose (English). There was a considerable <sup>amount of</sup> ~~benefit~~ <sup>benefit</sup> in the run up to my first child attending school as to where we as parents thought our child should be taught. The reasons for choosing Penderyn Community School as our first option was solely down to the <sup>ESOL report</sup> ~~statistics~~ <sup>information</sup> ~~on~~ <sup>I may add</sup> ~~which~~ you have included <sup>one</sup> ~~in~~ your proposal. Consultation booklet which I received at the meeting on 27th Nov 2018.

I would like to add that this is not something I consider to go in your

## Penderops Community School Inspection 2018

Inspection Area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing + attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching + learning experience	Adequate and needs improving
Parent support + guidance	Good
Leadership + management	Good

## Hindon Primary School Inspection 2018

	Adequate + need improvements
	" " "
	Unsatisfactory + needs urgent improv
	Good
	Adequate

There in black and white shows no appeal as a parent of a child currently attending Penderops Community School <sup>to the extent of Hindon</sup>. I for one would be very concerned if my child attended a school which received a report as holding the above information cannot.

I believe that RC1 thinks that it would be acceptable to pull 54 pupils which <sup>will</sup> include my own children from a school that is performing at a standard of Penderops into a school that <sup>is only accepting in one category</sup> ~~is only accepting in one category~~. Surely on the fact that, as a parent <sup>of</sup> ~~my~~ <sup>of</sup> children to be taught in the English language! I as an English taught pupil myself have achieved gone on to achieve all goals an education has brought it has led me on to achieving my own businesses in many fields. So therefore why would I want

anything less for my children in a school I believe <sup>strongly</sup> my children can achieve. I understand that it is well worn. However having a new school and my problems does not let these at all, but as a parent I am highly disturbed by the proposal of the removal of children that are achieving excellently in a perfectly modernized school to be up and routed for selfish greed goodness.

The children in question (Pondara English department) will be thrown into a class of 38 plus pupils where they are currently in classes of 18 plus pupils and as a result of this they will most definitely be looked over and this is not acceptable in my eyes as a parent.

Notwithstanding to the meeting I attended along with other parents it was explained that the <sup>benefit</sup> ~~benefit~~ would be <sup>only</sup> ~~only~~ for the benefit that <sup>yes</sup> ~~yes~~ that ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~community~~ <sup>community</sup> will have a brand new school place. Consider that to provide for one community <sup>you are</sup> ~~you are~~ <sup>adding</sup> ~~adding~~ another community apart. Pondara has a limited amount of facilities at present and you as a Council <sup>that</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>removing</sup> ~~removing~~ yet another thing (English Language School) is acceptable.

To conclude this letter I am most definitely ~~writing~~ <sup>writing</sup> this proposal to go ahead as I as a parent, my children and their classmates and also ~~understand~~ <sup>understand</sup> as a Community will not benefit from this at all.

18.11.27 [REDACTED] Hirwaun school proposal

**From:** XXXXX  
**Sent:** 27 November 2018 16:50  
**To:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** Hirwaun school proposal

Hi I attended your consultation today and spoke with a lady from education and feel that there are still a lot of questions to be answered.

My son is currently in year 2 at penderyn. If the proposal gets through he will be due to move from penderyn school at the start of year 6.

Can you please tell me why the welfare of the children currently in penderyn primary hasn't been considered?

Why can't there be the option of them staying there until all the children move onto comp but not have no intake from now on?

Have you done any research into how moving schools actually effects a child's well being and education?

I look forward to your reply.

XXXXXXXX



**From:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** FW: Penderyn Primary school

-----Original Message-----

**From:** XXXXXXXXX  
**Sent:** 02 December 2018 07:42  
**To:** Director, Education & Lifelong Learning <[Director.Education@rctcbr.gov.uk](mailto:Director.Education@rctcbr.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Penderyn Primary school

**To:** director of education

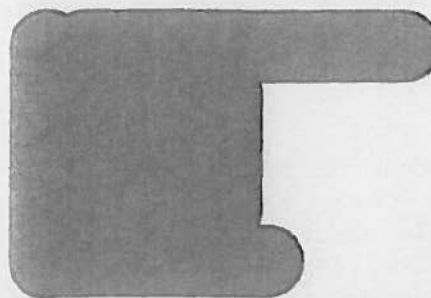
Re proposal to move English children from Penderyn Primary to Hirwaun primary

I would like to express my concerns to you regarding moving children from Penderyn Primary school to Hirwaun primary school. My son is currently in year 2 at penderyn, he is a very happy 7 year old, who absolutely loves going to school. He has friends in both welsh and English departments. Since hearing the news of this being proposed it has caused my son and us a lot of distress and also a lot of other families. My son says on a daily basis, I don't want to move schools, I like my friends and teachers and school. He thrives on routine and familiar surroundings. Can you look at these children bearing in mind they are little human beings that need stability their not just a number or a statistic, please think if this was your child or grandchild before you rip their little world apart. I believe you should never have taken them at penderyn if you thought you'd be shipping them out.

I think someone within rct needs to look into how this will effect these children long term before they make the decision to move them.

Regards  
XXXXXXXXXX

x18 of this letter  
received.



Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
Ty Trowthick  
Abercromby  
CF40 4UQ

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed Plan for Hirwaun Primary School

At a meeting at the school on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018,

I was appalled when I was informed of the proposed plan for accessing the Primary School at Hirwaun whilst the development was taking place. A process that I was informed would be in place for a matter of twenty months.

The proposal was to close the main entrance to the school and all school traffic would be directed through Glannant Street and Longfield Court with a view to ALL pupils accessing the school through this side gate.

I object very strongly to this proposal, the reasons are:-

1. Glannant Street is very narrow congested road with residents on the Left hand side of the road already having to park on the pavement to allow vehicles to travel through the street. This proposal could result in emergency vehicles being unable to access properties within the vicinity at certain hours during school periods.
2. This road is accessed at present by a percentage of parents delivering and collecting their children from the school. The road is continuously blocked twice a day by these vehicles as there are no parking areas and parents have been known on a regular basis to block the driveways at Longfield Court and refuse to move to allow residents to exit their driveways.
3. There is only one access road to Glannant Street off the main Brecon Road. This road also suffers from parking on both sides of the road resulting in traffic entering Glannant Street in the middle of the road with a poor view of traffic trying to exit the street. This has already resulted in collisions and many near misses.
4. I am also very concerned for the parents and pupils that walk to the school as I believe that increasing the traffic flow on these already congested side streets would put their safety into question.
5. The aforementioned entry off Brecon Road is just meters from the brow of a hill with its inherent limited visibility.
6. This proposal coincides with the expected access and exit difficulties linked to the proposed dualling of the A465 with access to Aberdare on the A4059 being disrupted by the removal of the present roundabout and the installation of a bridge. The junction off Brecon Road to access Glannant Street is just some 150 or so meters from this major junction. I

I therefore request that further investigations be made with a view to look at different options to accessing the school during the build, the residents are already undergoing difficulties with school traffic and this proposal would only exacerbate the present situation.

Yours faithfully



WRITTEN FEEDBACK FOR THE PROPOSAL TO EXTEND HIRWAUN PRIAMRY SCHOOL AND CLOSE ENGLISH MEDIUM STREAM I PENDERYN

No	Agree with proposal	Comments	Additional Views
1	No	My child attends Penderyn Primary. I feel that it will unsettle and upset him to move schools half way through Primary.	
2	Yes	Yes we agree fully with the proposal of creating a purely Welsh Medium school at Penderyn. Figures show that the number of pupils in the Welsh medium stream of Penderyn have increased over the last four years while the numbers in the English stream have decreased. There is no valid reason to keep the English stream open in Penderyn which is stopping the expansion of Welsh Medium education. Making this a purely Welsh medium school will fully immerse the pupils in the Welsh language and would contribute to the Cymraeg 2050 goal.	We would urge RCT Council to do this with all of their dual language schools, as RCT has a huge contribution to make towards the Cymraeg 2050 target.
3	No	<p>do not agree with the proposal to change the dual language status of Penderyn. We do not agree with transferring English medium pupils to Hirwaun. This is because</p> <p>a) it does not support developing Welsh as a core language for all. It creates an enclave of Welsh rather than sharing Welsh language expertise with English stream peers.</p> <p>b) it suggests moving pupils from a school categorised as Yellow to a school categorised as red - how can this be educationally justified?</p> <p>c) it is likely to result in job losses for the English medium staff currently employed at Penderyn . This is not acceptable.</p> <p>d) the proposal implies that pupils will be better accommodated. Pupils at Penderyn are currently in fantastic accommodation - there would be no benefit to them at all.</p> <p>Dual language schools are incredibly important in giving value to both English and Welsh languages in both communities, it increases the opportunity for Welsh to be normalised for all rather than being a separate</p>	<p>The statement in the consultation document that there is difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff at Penderyn in the English medium stream is both insulting and untrue. The English medium staff at Penderyn have been in post for 10 plus years. They are highly qualified and experienced and the implication that they are in some way deficient is unacceptable. There may be an issue at Hirwaun in terms of recruitment and retention but it is not their staff who are under threat in this manner. The view that more parents are choosing Welsh medium education needs to be considered in the wider aspect. Parents in Hirwaun may well be considering Welsh medium as they can get their children in to Penderyn via the Welsh stream and have free transport rather than having to attend Hirwaun or to attend the English stream and provide their own transport as they would be out of catchment area.</p>

		<p>clique. It gives the opportunity for second language welsh learners to improve their Welsh by having excellent Welsh medium skills within the same organisation</p> <p>We have no objection to the building of a new school for Hirwaun as it is very much needed, it is the tacking on of the closure of the English stream at Penderyn that we object to.</p>	
4	No	<p>I think and feel that the upheaval of moving the children from Penderyn to Hirwaun will affect them and unsettle them which can/will lead to health issues. A lot of the children have to travel further.</p>	<p>The loss of jobs for the English side staff which some have been there many years will raise unemployment. The new ALS has proven big community schools don't work.</p>
5	No	<p>Children like routine and familiar surroundings. To totally unsettle them with a change of school and teachers is unacceptable and I feel that their thoughts need to be taken into account and they should be given a choice.</p>	
6	No	<p>I have two children at Penderyn English and I feel that moving them will affect their education as they don't deal well with change of environment and teachers.</p>	<p>I feel that children from the village of Penderyn should have the option to send their child to Penderyn even if they're not Welsh speakers and want their child to learn through English language.</p>
7	No	<p>Community school - all should be able to attend. Poor quality teaching at Hirwaun. Lack of diversity and discrimination against medium of English.</p>	<p>Children taught through medium of Welsh are not all local. No options for children who struggle with Welsh. Community identity will suffer. School in Penderyn will no longer be a local school for all children.</p>
8	No	<p>We do not want Penderyn to close the English department as our children are settled and are happy here. If we wanted to send our children elsewhere we would have.</p>	<p>My child has additional needs and I am not sending him to Hirwaun school.</p>
9	No	<p>Penderyn community school is a small school in which children are looked at and not overlooked by the staff!</p>	<p>I have a child already in Penderyn who is doing really well and a child due to attend in April who I believe should have a chance to attend the same school as sibling!</p>
10	No	<p>As a resident of Penderyn I think my child should attend his local school and shouldn't have to travel some 4 miles to increase the number at Hirwaun.</p>	<p>The pupil to teacher ratio at Penderyn is low but is an advantage to some pupils including my son with additional learning needs. Moving him from his local school is of no benefit to the residents of Penderyn including myself. I fail to understand that there are many pupils attending Penderyn school that are not from the catchment area and I assume that they travel several miles to attend our village school. To make use of the pupil to teacher ratio also having asked</p>

			a number of parents regarding the closure of the English section. If the languages were reversed i.e closing of the welsh section the parents would move their children to the English section. I think that this proves that the language is not important and a sound education is at the top of parents agenda. The English section provides all of this to our community. I think that children should attend their local school, not travelling several miles to receive an education. Penderyn school for Penderyn residents.
11	Yes	New school is well overdue although I will be sorry to see my old school go!	
12	Yes	The new school looks and sounds fab. My concern was disruption to pupils while work was going on and class sizes were going to be 50 children. Glad to hear that there will be no disruption and class size will be max 30.	
13	Yes	The school is well overdue a makeover.	
14	Yes	Think it will be good for the children to have a new building.	
15	Yes	The school needs a refurb and for everything to be under one roof. It desperately needs updating and have newer resources for the pupils.	
16	Yes	Hirwaun school is in a bad state and is beyond its intended lifespan. The children of Hirwaun deserve to be educated in a purpose built 21st Century Building.	
17	Yes	Hirwaun primary has needed to be rebuilt for many years. Our pupils are being taught in a draughty asbestos building. We have waited many years for a new school.	Hirwaun village is growing at a fast rate. New houses are being built, this means that there will be more children of school age to accommodate.
18	No	I am all for an improved school building for Hirwaun, but not for the English medium of Penderyn to be closed - letter attached.	Letter attached – letter was acknowledged and response to be included in consultation report.
19	Yes	Welcome investment into the Hirwaun/Penderyn area and am in full support of WM education in the area.	I urge RCT to continue to expand WM education provision to provide the younger generation with increased skills and to help achieve Cymraeg 2050.
20	No	I do not agree with the proposal to change the dual language status of Penderyn Community Primary School. I do not agree with transferring English medium pupils to Hirwaun. This is because: a) It suggests moving pupils from a	The statement in the consultation document that there is difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff at Penderyn in the English medium stream is both untrue and insulting. Staff within the English medium have been in their current positions for in excess of ten years and are highly

		<p>school categorised as Yellow to a school categorised as Red – How can this be educationally justified?</p> <p>b) Penderyn Community Primary School is as the name states a community primary school built to serve the community of Penderyn how can this be if it becomes a Welsh medium school as not all parents wish for their child to be educated solely through the medium of Welsh?</p> <p>c) It does not support developing Welsh as a core language for all. It creates an enclave of Welsh rather than sharing Welsh language expertise with English stream peers as found to be good practise with Estyn inspectors.</p> <p>d) It is likely to result in job losses for the English medium staff currently employed at Penderyn. This is not acceptable.</p> <p>e) The proposal implies that pupils will be better accommodated. Pupils at Penderyn are currently in fantastic accommodation – there would be no benefit for them at all.</p>	<p>qualified and experienced members of staff and the implication that they are in some way deficient is unacceptable and hurtful.</p> <p>Dual language schools are incredibly important in giving value to both English and Welsh languages in both communities, it increases the opportunity for second language Welsh learners to improve their Welsh by having excellent Welsh medium skills within the same organisation.</p>
21.	No	<p>The proposal is extremely divisive for the village of Penderyn. It is discriminating and damaging in the way it segregates children according to language.</p>	<p>I have attached a 5 page letter [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Penderyn is a small village community containing both Welsh and English speakers. The proposal wishes to remove the English speakers and send them to a failing school at some distance from their homes.</p>
22	No	<p>Understandably Hirwaun School is in much need of investment but I don't feel it is right for residents of the community ie the village of Penderyn to not be able to send their children to the 'community' school for English education.</p>	<p>Appalled that it is assumed parents of English department children will move to Hirwaun when based on the latest Estyn report it's a RED category school and Penderyn is yellow. Who in their right minds accepts this transfer although it's continually stated it is 'parental preference' where you decide to send your child. Surely there should be an automatic transfer to a 'like for like' school, thus a yellow school.</p> <p>A new building and infrastructure is lovely but this doesn't mean the standard of education will thus improve.</p> <p>I believe there has been an encouragement into the downturn in numbers for English medium at Penderyn school. The incentive of 'free transport' for Welsh taught children, but not for English! Furthermore the Head teacher, and this is from personal experience, does try to push the Welsh</p>

			<p>medium side of the school. We however, were certain that it was the English medium that we wanted but it is quite likely that other parents would have been swayed.</p> <p>At the moment my child is in a mixed year group which in total is only 18 from nursery to year 2. We have found that a small class size and mixed ages has only been beneficial to our child. At the meeting at Hirwaun school on the 27.11.18, however, I was reassured that even in a class of 30 pupils for example, but of similar ages my child will receive the same level of teaching as now. I am not a teacher but common sense says the pupil teacher ratio does affect teaching. I don't believe for one moment that my child will have teaching that matches what is received at current, when there are so many pupils in class.</p> <p>My point to end on is this: There is no way that I will be sending my child to Hirwaun school. Furthermore, I believe that having to uproot a child for the last two years of juniors could massively impact their development and their schooling should be allowed to finish at Penderyn 'Community' School. My child said that she wants to stay in Penderyn with her friends and teacher. Doesn't her point count?</p>
23	No	<p>I agree that Hirwaun need a new primary school, but I do not agree that Penderyn school should change to a Welsh only school.</p>	<p>1. "In recent years the number of pupils in the Welsh language stream has increased...while numbers have fallen to 54 in the English". The reason for this is that those pupils attending Welsh have free transport, English don't. A considerable number of pupils attending Welsh from outside Penderyn only do so as they get free transport. If the English had free transport also the numbers would be drastically different. Another reason for this is the change in catchment area back in 2009 which resulted in many pupils not being allocated places in the English unit as they were now 'out of catchment'. This was done very secretly and in an under hand way and will never be acknowledged by yourselves.</p> <p>2. "Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school". I disagree that this would be an advantage and in fact think it would be a disadvantage. To be in a dual language school is of benefit to all pupils currently in the school. The English unit pupils have an increased knowledge of the Welsh language while the</p>

			<p>Welsh unit pupils still have conversations and socialise with their friends in the English unit, as it would be once they leave school and enter the world of work.</p> <p>3. "The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of educational provision..." I do not agree. Both my children have attended the English unit of Penderyn school and have had an exceptionally high level of educational provision which would not be improved by moving schools.</p> <p>4. Estyn information on schools. Penderyn school is a 'yellow' school with 4 goods and 1 adequate. Hirwaun school is a 'red' school with 1 good, 3 adequate and 1 unsatisfactory. Surely this information speaks for itself. No parent of an English unit pupil is going to choose Hirwaun school!</p> <p>5. "A continually decreasing English medium stream... difficulty recruiting and retaining high quality staff" This is totally FALSE. Please check your facts! The English medium staff are of exceptional high quality and have been at the school for at least the last ten years.</p> <p>Conclusion: As you mention continually throughout the report this is only happening to help the Welsh Government achieve their targets by 2050, even if it is discriminating against those pupils who do not go to Welsh medium education. Closing a 'community school' will have a detrimental effect on the village of Penderyn. Surely a Welsh only school was not considered when the new Penderyn school was built. Would the funding have been received for a Welsh only 'community school'?</p>
24	Yes	No comment	No comment



## **Appendix 4**

### **Hirwaun Consultation Public Event – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

Written feedback by members of the public during consultation event:

- I don't want to move schools
- Will there be a new access gate?
- Will the woodland area near the main entrance still be here? (please!)
- Plans are fantastic and as a school we can't wait.
- Will there be small private spaces/rooms for intervention? Such as ELSA/THRIVE?



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**24<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2019**

### **PROPOSAL TO RE-ALIGN LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RCT**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR J ROSSER.**

**AUTHOR:** Ceri Jones (01443 744004)

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of the proposal to realign the mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) and to re-invest the funding to meet the identified needs of pupils.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached consultation report, which includes details of items of correspondence received during the consultation exercise and notes of the various meetings held.
- 2.2 Note that Rhondda Cynon Taf will maintain its current level of significant financial investment in its Learning Support Class (LSC) provision whilst realigning its current provision to address identified gaps in existing provision.
- 2.3 Agree to progress the following proposals to realign the mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) by issuing the appropriate statutory notices.
- 2.2.1 To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ysgol Nant Gwyn;
- 2.2.2 To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Treorchy Comprehensive School.
- 2.2.3 To re-designate the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Darran Park Primary and Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant Primary to become

Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs;

- 2.2.4 To relocate the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Penrhys Primary School to Maerdy Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2. In discussion with the parents of the one child affected by this proposal, alternative provision will be made available.
- 2.2.5 To relocate the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4
- 2.2.6 To relocate the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Caradog Primary School to Cwmbach Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2.
- 2.2.7 To close the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Caradog Primary School – 8 pupils would access specialist placement at Cwmbach Primary School
- 2.2.8 To close the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Heol y Celyn Primary School – no pupils would be affected by the closure
- 2.2.9 To close the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Penrhys Primary School – no pupils would be affected by the closure;
- 2.2.10 To close the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties in Penywaun Primary School – no pupils would be affected by the closure;
- 2.2.11 To close the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Pontygwaith Primary School – no pupils would be affected by the closure;
- 2.2.12 To close the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Heol y Celyn Primary School – the class would have only 2 pupils in 2019 and in discussion with the pupil's parents, alternative provision would be provided for the two pupils;

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code) so that an improved continuum of SEN provision can be achieved in RCT.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of Cabinet held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018, approval was given to begin a process of formal consultation on a proposal to realign the of mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, and was introduced on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018. These arrangements stipulate that a Consultation Report must be prepared prior to the publication of any statutory notices which will progress the proposal. It further states that this Report must be published within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 in this instance.
- 5.2 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix 1 for your attention. A number of key issues that were raised in the consultation feedback have been identified as key issues or recurring themes to which the LA has provided a collective response which is detailed in the 'Summary of Key Issues' section 6 of the Consultation Report. For details of correspondence received together with the responses given to the points raised in this correspondence please refer to Appendices 1a & 1b. Information in respect of meetings held to discuss the proposals, with copies of the notes taken at these meetings that outline the main areas of discussion are included Appendix 1c and 1d.
- 5.3 It must be noted that there has been a good response to this particular consultation process; 200 completed questionnaires, 87 letters, 2 petitions: 186 signatories from concerned residents of Penrhys Primary School and 2271 signatories from Hafod Primary School (of which 1173 were formal signatures and 1098 were submitted via an online petition) and a limited number of e mails were received. Approximately 100 School Council representatives attended meetings with Access & Inclusion Service staff and approximately 160 parents attended open evenings held to provide further information.
- 5.4 The table below reports the number and type of responses received for each individual proposal within the consultation document:

Proposal	Number of Responses				Disagree
	Questionnaire	Letter	Email	Petition	
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	0	0	1	0	1
Penrhys Primary School	66	76	0	186 signatures	328
Penywaun Primary School	0	0	0	0	0
Pontygwaith Primary School	0	0	0	0	0
Heol y Celyn Primary School	0	0	0	0	0
Caradog Primary School	2	0	0	0	2
Hafod Primary School	132	10	7	2271 (1173 formal signatures 1098 online petition)	2420
Darran Park Primary School	0	1	0	0	1
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	0	0	0	0	0
Treorchy Comprehensive School	0	0	0	0	0
Generic responses to the proposals	0	0	3	0	0

## **6. THE STATUTORY PROCESS**

6.1 The statutory notices for this proposal will refer to the:

- Closure of the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- Closure of the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Penrhys Primary School;
- Closure of the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties in Penywaun Primary School;
- Closure of the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Pontygwaith Primary School;
- Closure of the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- Closure of the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Caradog Primary School (transferring to Cwmbach Primary School);
- Relocation of the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Caradog Primary School to Cwmbach Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2.
- Relocation of the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Penrhys Primary School to Maerdy Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2;
- relocation of the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4
- Re-designation of the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Darran Park Primary and Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant Primary to become Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs;
- Opening of a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ysgol Nant Gwyn;
- Opening of a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Treorchy Comprehensive School.

The Statutory Notices will, if agreed, be published on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019. If any objections are received, in accordance with the aforementioned Code an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, possibly in April 2019, for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Welsh Language and Community Impact Assessments are not required for these proposals. An Equality Impact Assessment was published on the Council's website together with the consultation document that outlines the proposal in detail. Copies of both reports are attached as Appendix 2 & 3 to this report.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 If the proposal to realign LSC provision within RCT is authorised to proceed, resources will be re-directed to address the identified gaps in existing provision. In closing some provisions redundancy costs may arise. However, the Council seeks to minimise these costs by redeploying displaced members of staff wherever possible. It is therefore not possible at this point in the process to identify any possible redundancy costs.

The enhanced provision in key settings will be central to supporting the needs of some learners on dual placements who may require more enhanced support to meet their needs when in mainstream and support to manage very challenging behaviour within LSC provision for learners with severe SEBD.

The funding will also be used to develop outreach opportunities from our special schools so as to enhance the capacity of mainstream and LSCs to effectively meet the additional learning needs of learners in the early years.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with SEN should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with them receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty calls for; the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources.
- 9.2 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 also requires the LA to ensure that SEN provision is kept under review. Sections 1:20 and 1:21 of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002) also requires LAs to evaluate the effectiveness of school funding arrangements in supporting and raising the achievement of children with SEN.

## **10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 10.1 The proposals will ensure that two of the Council's three key priorities will be met. These include
- Economy: Building a strong economy
  - People: Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone
- 10.2 The proposals will ensure that some of the Council's most vulnerable pupils will have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes. The redirection of valuable resources from SEN settings which have surplus places will enhance opportunities for providing successful inclusion in local community schools. The proposals will ensure more efficient and effective use of Council resources which promotes the development of social inclusion and positive outcomes for learners.



This will also have a beneficial impact on transport costs and on carbon emissions.

- 10.3 Organising services so that they are focussed on early intervention and prevention is a key statutory requirement of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act and a key element of the Council's Corporate Plan. These proposals will ensure there is renewed capacity for early intervention and prevention thus minimising the need for statutory processes and intervention.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, to agree to its immediate publication and to give officers approval to publish the appropriate Statutory Notices to progress this proposal.



**PROPOSAL TO RE-ALIGN LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS  
PROVISION WITHIN RCT**

**CONSULTATION REPORT**

January 2019

## Consultation Report

### Proposal: to re-align Learning Support Class provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf

#### 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 19<sup>TH</sup> October and 21<sup>ST</sup> December 2018 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

#### 2. Who did we consult?

A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of the following schools: Heol Y Celyn Primary; Penrhys Primary; Penywaun Primary; Pontygwaith Primary; Caradog Primary; Cwmbach Primary; Maerdy Community Primary; Hafod Primary; Darran Park Primary; Llantrisant Primary
- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Ysgol Nant Gwyn, Ferndale Comprehensive School, Aberdare Community School, Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School, Porth Community School and Treorchy Comprehensive School
- Other Governing Bodies of neighbouring primary and secondary schools
- School Council
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Minister for Education and Skills
- Assembly Members for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Pontypridd and Cynon Valley
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- Teaching and Support staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities First Partnerships
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Neighbouring local authorities

### 3. What did we consult on?

The proposals consulted on included:

**Closing key LSCs due to no confirmed placements, diminishing numbers or poor access for learners with physical or medical needs. It was proposed that the following closures take effect from 31st August 2019 at:**

- 3 Foundation Phase LSCs for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Pontygwaith Primary School, Penrhys Primary School and Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- 2 Key Stage 2 LSCs for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Caradog Primary School and Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- 1 Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties (SEBD) in Penywaun Primary School.

**Relocating key LSC provisions to ensure cross phase provisions in single sited, accessible school buildings. It was proposed that the following relocations take effect from 1st September 2019:**

- 2 Foundation Phase LSCs for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Penrhys Primary School and Caradog Primary to relocate to Maerdy Community School and Cwmbach Primary School respectively so as to create a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2;
- 1 Key Stage 2, the LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders at Hafod Primary School to relocate to create a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 3/4 at Porth Community School.

**Re-designating LSC provisions to ensure a better match of provision to meet identified need. It was proposed that the following re-designations take effect from 1st September 2019:**

- 1 Foundation Phase LSC for Complex Learning Difficulties in Darran Park Primary School and 1 Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant Primary School to become 2 Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs.

**Developing new secondary LSC provisions. It was proposed that two LSCs for Key Stages 3/4 are established in September 2019:**

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Treorchy Comprehensive School
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in Ysgol Nant Gwyn

### 4. The consultation process

All stakeholders identified in section 2 were sent paper or electronic copies of our consultation documentation. All written feedback received are detailed in Appendix 1a and summarised in Appendix 1b. Consultation meetings were held for the staff, parents and pupils of the effected schools, the details and dates of these meetings are attached as Appendix 1c. Summary notes taken during a range of consultation events are detailed in Appendix 1d. These provide a record of questions raised, comments and statements made, with responses provided where appropriate.

## 5. Summary of responses to consultation

The table below reports the number and type of responses received for each individual proposal within the consultation document:

Proposal	Number of Responses				Disagree
	Questionnaire	Letter	Email	Petition	
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	0	0	1	0	1
Penrhys Primary School	66	76	0	186 signatures	328
Penywaun Primary School	0	0	0	0	0
Pontygwaith Primary School	0	0	0	0	0
Heol y Celyn Primary School	0	0	0	0	0
Caradog Primary School	2	0	0	0	2
Hafod Primary School	132	10	7	2271 (1173 formal signatures 1098 online petition)	2420
Darran Park Primary School	0	1	0	0	1
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	0	0	0	0	0
Treorchy Comprehensive School	0	0	0	0	0
Generic responses to the proposals	0	0	3	0	0

There has been a good response to this particular consultation process in relation to two of the proposals. This included 200 completed questionnaires, 87 letters and 2 petitions. The latter consisted of 186 signatories from concerned residents of Penrhys Primary School and 2271 signatories from Hafod Primary School (of which 1131 were formal signatures and 1098 were submitted via an online petition). A limited number of e mails were also received. Approximately 100 School Council representatives attended meetings with Access & Inclusion Service staff and approximately 160 parents attended open evenings held to provide further information.

## 6. Summary of Key Issues Raised and LA Responses

A detailed analysis of the consultation responses received are provided in Appendix 1b. The key themes emerging from this analysis are detailed as follows:

Issue raised	LA Responses
Distance / Travel time for pupils being relocated	Distances and travel times fall within the parameters outlines in the Welsh Government Learner Travel Guidance. Transportation to school would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting.
Impact upon pupils	The change in provision has some implications for a relatively small number of pupils who currently attend LSCs. To minimise any potential negative impact upon individual pupils, parents will be provided with the opportunity to discuss whether they wish for their child to attend the nearest comparable specialist provision or to remain in their current mainstream schools with a bespoke package of support.
LSCs currently hosted by smaller mainstream school settings are deemed to provide better provision	The LA has a number of LSCs that have been successfully based in large school settings over many years where high quality provision is made for pupils in the LSC. This includes small group inclusion opportunities, both educational and social, and where all of the benefits of having a LSC are equally evident, valued and effective in both large and small school environments. The size of the school has not been a key factor in determining whether a LSC for pupils with ASD/CD is successful or effective. There is no evidence to suggest that pupils in the LSCs find larger school settings overwhelming or that there is a detrimental impact upon the educational progress or wellbeing of the pupils.
Transition of current LSC pupils to new LSC settings	The proposals will minimise unnecessary transition for pupils with significant needs, provide continuity in their educational placements and ensure that a higher number of specialist LSC provisions provide equity for pupils in LSCs so that they remain in one setting until transition to secondary provision in line with their mainstream peers. Robust transition plans will be put in place for any pupils directly affected by the proposals, which will be planned collaboratively with parents and staff and involve additional support from specialist members of staff from Access and Inclusion.
Re-deployment of staff and changes of terms and conditions of employment	Guidance from HR and how the process would proceed with Trade Unions was outlined to staff. Should the proposal be accepted further discussions will be held with all staff, HR and Trade Union representatives following the statutory notice period. Staff were satisfied with the proposed arrangements.
Inclusion of SEN pupils within mainstream settings	There is an expectation that pupils in all LSCs will have mainstream inclusion opportunities. This forms part of the LA's monitoring protocol for LSCs. Pupils who currently attend LSC provision in the mainstream schools to which the relocations are proposed are fully included in school activities, both curricular and extra-curricular including school trips, concerts and presentations. The LSCs are integral to the ethos of the host schools and families and pupils are treated equitably alongside mainstream peers. The relocation of LSCs will ensure that a higher number of LSCs will be based in fully accessible and high quality educational environments that have benefited from significant investment from the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation Programme.

Criteria for Specialist Placement	The consultation does not include a proposal relating to specialist placement criteria.
Closure of mainstream settings	The consultation relates to LSC provision and does not include the proposed closure of any mainstream settings.
Rationale for change	<p>This is based on:</p> <p>Data analysis of current and projected pupil need to ensure that the number of LSCs with surplus places is addressed and to realign provision in line with identified needs.</p> <p>The opportunity to enhance the number of specialist LSC provisions within mainstream settings to minimise unnecessary transition for pupils between specialist settings in different schools which would provide equity for pupils in need of specialist provision to remain in one school setting as is generally available to mainstream peers.</p> <p>To ensure that a larger number of LSCs and their pupils access specialist provision in school settings that have benefited from significant investment from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation Programme</p>
General agreement with need for Key Stage 3/4 provision	Responses recognised the need for additional Key Stage 3/4 provision within RCT
Loss of LSC provision from within current school setting and loss of teaching staff	<p>The LA recognises how much the LSCs and their pupils are valued by their host school settings proposed for change and how much they have added to the inclusive ethos of the schools. However the proposals aims to enhance LSC provision within the LA as outlined in the rationale for change.</p> <p>It is pleasing to note the positive comments on the quality of provision. There will be opportunities for the LA to retain LSC specialist staff when implementing the realignment of LSC provision. Redeployment opportunities can also be explored where required.</p>
Discussions about individual pupils' provision	These issues will be addressed with parents on an individual basis (where appropriate). Clear options are outlined in the consultation document and will be discussed further should approval be given to progress to statutory notice. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice or alternative specialist provision appropriate to individual need should parents not wish for their child to access the designated LSC.
Concerns regarding the quality of relocated LSC provision where LSC provision has currently	The LA has no evidence to suggest that the mainstream schools to which the LSCs are proposed to relocate will not be able to provide high quality, inclusive educational and extracurricular opportunities to the pupils in the LSCs. The schools currently successfully host LSCs and the proposed relocations would merely enhance their LSC provision.

<p>been considered to be effective</p>	<p>The proposed mainstream host schools have strong leadership teams whose performance will be scrutinised and challenged in accordance with established quality assurance processes within RCT and the wider Central South Consortium. Access and Inclusion also has well established Quality Assurance processes for monitoring and challenging the performance of all of its individual LSCs and this process would continue following the proposed relocations of provisions.</p>
<p>Reducing funding for specialist provision</p>	<p>The proposals do not involve any reduction in funding for LSC provision across RCT. If the proposals proceed, funding will be redirected to establish provisions that address growing need and to improve the quality of specialist provision within RCT.</p>
<p>Changes to capacity for LSCs proposed to relocate to Maerdy and Porth Community School</p>	<p>The consultation does not include a proposal in relation to changes to the capacity of the LSCs.</p>
<p>Meeting the SEN / ALN of LSC pupils in relocated provisions</p>	<p>All pupils will continue to have IEP's in line with the requirement of the SEN Code of Practice. There will be no change in practice in relation to ensuring that the IEPs are implemented appropriately. The LA has a robust quality assurance process to ensure that this is the case in all of its LSCs.</p> <p>The pupil's statements of special educational needs will continue to be implemented before, during and after the relocations, if this proposal proceeds. A robust transition plan will be put in place to support the pupils to transition to their new setting by staff experienced in supporting pupils with additional learning needs though it should be noted that many pupils will have had a much shorter transition process from their previous mainstream school into their current LSCs. Any plans will be shared with parents.</p> <p>The proposed relocations will ensure that pupils will be able to have cross phase provisions within settings that have well established LSC provision. The proposal will also create enhanced opportunities for collaborative working between the LSCs within different phases which will benefit both pupils and staff in sharing expertise.</p> <p>There will be no reduction/anticipated change to the support provided by external agencies /professionals. However, a cross-phase provision provides the opportunity for the LA to provide more consistent input from services such as Educational Psychology Service, by potentially allocating all provisions within the setting to one educational psychologist for continuity.</p>
<p>Additional benefits of relocation of Hafod CDU to Porth Community</p>	<p>Relocating to Porth Community would enable pupils to access subject specialist staff and specialist subject facilities e.g. science rooms, design and technology, PE facilities. Also specialised facilities as noted above will be accessed during year 5/6 as part of the inclusive middle</p>



	school. It is the intention that pupils within the LSC will have access to these facilities in line with mainstream peers. These resources will also enhance opportunities to facilitate extra learning for pupils throughout FP and KS2 who are more able and talented.
Concerns regarding access to the wider community in Porth compared to current location in Hafod Primary	There are a number of local amenities that can be accessed by pupils in Porth Community. Some will be accessed by foot and others will require transport as is the case for the majority of schools in RCT.

A response was received from ESTYN which in line with School Organisation Code is to be presented in full below

## **7. Estyn's response to the proposal from Rhondda Cynon Taf regarding learning support centres which will take effect during September 2019**

### **Introduction**

*This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.*

*Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.*

*Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.*

*This consultation proposal is from Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council. The proposal contains four elements, which include the closure of some learning support centres (LSCs), the relocation of others, and the re-designation of others. In addition it is also proposed to put in place some new provision. These proposals are to take effect during September 2019.*

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

*This is a complex proposal which attempts to realign current learning support provision with identified need within the local authority, and to expand services through the addition of some new provision.*

*The proposal contains four elements. These are*

- *the closure of identified LSCs due to no confirmed placements, diminishing numbers or poor access for learners with physical or medical needs;*

- *the relocation of some LSCs to ensure cross phase provisions in single sited, accessible sites;*
- *the proposed development of new provision and*
- *the re-designation of some LSCs to better match provision to identified need*

*It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to improve the current standards of educational provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in the English medium sector.*

### **Description and benefits**

*This is a broad strategy to improve provision for pupils with SEN educated in RCT, and which encompass provision in early years, Foundation Phase, and key stages 2, 3 and 4. The strategy is concerned with addressing a range of needs, e.g. putting in place early intervention and preventative approaches, avoiding unnecessary transition across schools, the creation of capacity for outreach support from special schools for mainstream provision and the reduction of surplus places.*

*The proposal sets out clearly the current legislative basis for the provision of SEN support for those pupils who need it, and describes the commitments made by the local authority to ensure all pupils eligible have appropriate access. The proposal makes a good case for not staying with the status quo, based on analysis of undertaken by the local authority. The outcomes of this analysis indicate that:*

- *there is significant surplus capacity in primary sector*
- *there is insufficient provision in the early years sector*
- *there is insufficient provision in the secondary sector*
- *the current distribution of provision across the local authority means some pupils must make unnecessary transition between schools at the end of key stages*
- *some LSCs would benefit from relocation to fully accessible schools that have benefited from the 21st Century School Modernisation and investment.*

*The proposal sets out clearly each of the four separate elements to the overall strategy and provides a clear commentary regarding the specific locations of the current provision to be changed, along with an analysis of the impact of each one.*

*The proposal includes an assessment of the advantages and the disadvantages arising from the implementation of the strategy. However, the analysis does not explore in enough detail the disadvantages identified, rather the weight of the text sits with the presumed advantages and mitigating factors. Although the premise that there are few disadvantages is probably sound, it is difficult to say for certain that this is so, due to the lack of detail in this part of the proposal.*

*The proposal identifies clearly the transport implications arising from the strategy. It is expected that the strategy will achieve a reduction in the demand for transport, due to more easily accessed provision linked to the areas where there is greatest need. In addition the local authority has clearly committed itself to providing transport for those pupils who will need it.*

*The proposal does not provide any detailed analysis or commentary on the implication of these changes for Welsh medium education provision or whether or not there is a need for Welsh language support for pupils with SEN. All schools affected by the strategy are English medium, except for one, which is a bilingual school.*

*The proposal sets out clearly the financial implications of the strategy and some of the benefits from closing provision where there is either no demand or minimal demand.*

*The proposal identifies the staffing implications arising from the strategy. As staff are contracted to work across the local authority, there are no specific issues for redundancy identified from the closure or changed location of any specific piece of provision.*

### ***Educational aspects of the proposal***


*The proposal appropriately considers the likely impact of the strategy on education standards, provision and leadership. It takes into account the impact of each of the four proposed changes within the strategy for each individual school where there is an expected impact. This analysis makes clear reference to the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspections on these schools, but does not reference intelligence from the Regional Consortium's categorisation of these schools.*

## **8. Conclusion**

The feedback received from stakeholders has been used to inform the final proposals presented to Cabinet. The recommendation is that this report is published and at the appropriate time a statutory notice be published.

**Scanned consultation responses, letters and emails**

DRAFT



Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Education Directorate,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon,  
CF45 4UQ

December 12<sup>th</sup> 2018

Dear Gaynor Davies,

As part of the Consultation on the document "Review of Learning Support Provision within Rhondda Cynon Taff" I am writing to express my opposition to the Local Authority proposal to relocate the KS2 Communication Disorder Class at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School from September 2019.

I have 23 years' experience as a Special Needs teacher. I have been the Class Teacher in Hafod Primary CDC for 21 years and I was the teacher when the class was established in 1997, the first of its kind in RCT. In that time I have worked closely with children with ASD, their families and other agencies. I have experience of developing bespoke programmes in response to a range of pupil needs including, social communication, sensory integration, literacy difficulties and positive behaviour management. In Hafod Primary I am fortunate enough to be part of a dedicated and close knit staff team. Support staff, mainstream teachers, a leadership team highly experienced in ALN and a supportive community all work together to ensure our pupils in the CDC have a wide range of opportunities for inclusion with their mainstream peers.

I understand the main points from the proposal to relocate the KS2 CDC from Hafod Primary to Porth Community School are as follows: To create a cross phase ASD/CDC provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4 enabling pupils to have "seamless transition" between key stages. To provide new, modern facilities and resources that are fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and which are fully accessible to comply with the Equality Act (2010).

I am sure the management team in Porth Community School are committed to welcoming and establishing a KS2 CDC/ASD class. I appreciate that such cross phase provision may have some benefits for staff to share information and cascade skills. It would also provide a familiarity of provision for those pupils who may transition right through from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. Pupils would also benefit from modern facilities and resources from 21<sup>st</sup> Century team investment.

However, in serving the interests of our pupils I would like to highlight the following features at Hafod Primary in response to this proposal: the support of the whole staff team and the community, school size and organisation of classes, supported inclusion, transition and ease of access on foot to local amenities to develop social communication skills.

Hafod Primary is such a small school and it has a leadership team highly experienced in ALN. The whole school staff is led by this commitment and vision. All the staff know the children in the CDC and we work closely together as a team. The Head teacher, mainstream teachers and support staff frequently provide incidental support to CDC staff and pupils. Information is shared readily and extra support can be mobilised and provided quickly. This has proved invaluable in response to more challenging situations on numerous occasions. The staff in the CDC always know we can call upon the help of other staff at the drop of a hat.

It is worth noting at this point that the majority of pupils which transition to Hafod CDC from other provisions are from mainstream classes (2/3 of the total number of pupils in the past ten years). Several of these children over the years have come from provisions where their engagement in the education process and their self-esteem has come to be "fractured" or "broken". The unique characteristics of Hafod Primary, its staff team and community has enabled pupils to slowly "re-build" in a small, familiar and low arousal environment. The fact that these pupils have settled and transitioned to various KS3 provisions is thanks to the support of parents, whole school staff and the community not just to the staff in the CDC. Shifting the CDC away from Hafod Primary will mean cutting ties with such a valuable resource.

At Hafod the CDC is in close proximity to other areas of the school, resources and other staff including the Head teacher's office. I have enclosed pupil's work "School Survey". This illustrates the distance in steps and in time from the pupils' classroom "Dosbarth Coch" to other areas in the school. This helps to alleviate anxiety for many of our pupils who experience difficulties with transition times throughout the school day. This factor is also invaluable in developing pupil confidence, independence and self-esteem.

The ALN Code of Practice states, "*Pupils must be supported to participate in mainstream education and in National Curriculum as fully as possible wherever feasible.*"

Our smaller cohort numbers and mixed year mainstream classes mean we are able to offer flexible and adaptable frameworks for inclusion taking into account any difficulties with sensory integration. This is demonstrated year after year in both academic and social inclusion for our CDC pupils. At present in Hafod Primary one member of staff provides supported inclusion for both a year 5 and year 6 pupil in the same mixed year 5/6 mainstream class for maths. One staff member is often released to support a small group of CDC pupils for other academic or social inclusion in either Year 3/4 class or year 5/6 class. This leaves enough cover in the CDC for remaining pupils.

Pupils integrate as a whole class incidentally throughout the day and also for special events and workshops. Pupils in the CDC are always representative members on the School Council, Eco Committee and Criw Cymraeg. The strong PTA at Hafod is supported by many parents and people in the local community. Our CDC pupils are fully embraced by the wider community as well as the children and staff in the school. Competitions and events are arranged by the PTA and our pupils in the CDC take part alongside their mainstream peers.

I hold no disrespect for Porth Community School and I do not doubt the commitment of its management team to welcome and support a CDC at KS2. However I am concerned that the

frequency, quality and range of supported inclusion the pupils have in their current setting at Hafod will be greatly impaired if the proposal goes ahead. A large 3-16 provision with straight year classes averaging 30 pupils in size and a situation whereby the CDC would straddle two different timetables between lower school (years 3 /4) and middle school (years 5/6) would impact on the logistics of arranging effective supported inclusion for our pupils. With the best will in the world there is a limit to which staffing resources can be stretched across two different timetables. I have already raised my concern with Access and Inclusion on this issue and so far the following response has been received *"Timetabling issues should not be a problem as this will be a discrete key stage 2 provision."* I need clarification on the implications of this for pupil inclusion. In planning for supported pupil inclusion which timetable do we follow then? If we have a year 4 pupil who can integrate for maths and a year 6 pupil, which one do we prioritise for supported inclusion opportunities? These are the issues we will have to contend with as a staff team.

I am not suggesting that inclusion at Hafod is perfect. Every model has room for improvement. I wish to highlight though that the unique size of the school and class structures enables us to develop more flexible and adaptable frameworks for inclusion than can be offered in any large 3-16 provision, with straight year classes which average in size 30 pupils and where the KS2 CDC class would straddle two different timetables.

The proposal emphasises the importance of creating such cross phase provision under one roof to achieve "seamless transition" between key stages. However in the past 10 years out of the 30 pupils which have transitioned to Hafod CDC 10 children have come from a Foundation Phase ASD/CDC or other LS provision as opposed to 20 children from a range of mainstream provisions at Foundation phase and KS2. This trend means the advantage of "seamless transition" outlined in the proposal does not apply for the majority of pupils.

Leaving these figures aside I view transition between schools positively. Pupils that experience such change with good support have the benefit of learning the essential life skill and strategies to help adapt to new people and environments. When year 6 pupils prepare to leave our CDC they are encouraged to reflect upon their previous experiences of leaving their Foundation Phase provisions. Year 5/6 pupils are often selected to be buddies for new pupils entering Hafod CDC. This responsibility develops self -esteem and empowers them to view their own pending transition positively. Our recent LA Supportive Review (June 2018) states that pupils in Hafod Primary CDC are well supported in transition from Foundation Phase to our CDC and also from our CDC to KS3 provision.

As all pupils eventually leave school I believe they need to have relevant experience of major change to draw upon to help them transition to adult life. This learning curve is even more paramount for our pupils with ASD and social communication difficulties. It is also worth remembering that the CDC at Hafod Primary is not the only CDC in RCT that does not have cross phase provision on the same site. In our initial meeting it was noted that Hafod Primary has been selected for relocation based purely on its proximity to Porth Community School.

Hafod Primary is unique in that it boasts ease of access to local amenities. This is unsurpassed by many other schools, including Porth Community School. The geographical location of

Hafod Primary allows pupils to reach a range of local amenities safely on foot. The Heritage Park, Barry Sidings Countryside Park and Café, Trehafod train station, McColls shop, the football field, Trehafod Village Hall and the Taff Trail are all within safe walking distance of the school. We provide inclusive opportunities for pupils to develop their social communication skills in the village; an environment and community within which they feel safe, are familiar with and are part of.

I have enclosed pupil's work "*The Seven Wonders of Trehafod*" to illustrate the range of local amenities which are a stone's throw from the school. The children have timed how long it takes to walk to these amenities and have also illustrated and described some recent visits. The added advantage of being able to go on foot means we often embrace many integrated trips with our mainstream classes in Hafod Primary.

If the proposal goes ahead the pupils would have a new classroom and modern facilities but a relocation to Porth Community School ultimately means a relocation to the outskirts of Porth. No longer will our pupils have ease of access on foot to a wide range of inclusive opportunities within the local community which supports development of their social skills. No longer will they be part of that community. In my opinion it is essential the authority keeps this CDC provision in Hafod to enable us to preserve and continue to develop such inclusive opportunities for our pupils.

Prior to 1997, two parents campaigned for the rights of their own children with ASD to have opportunities for social and academic inclusion with mainstream children in a mainstream setting. They were successful and our late Head teacher [REDACTED] was instrumental in securing this provision at Hafod Primary. Thanks to many other parents, local authority investment and the commitment of schools, inclusive provision for children with ASD has expanded and developed throughout RCT.

In Sept 2016 numbers increased by 25% in Hafod CDC from 8 to 10 children in as it has done in other provisions across the authority. In our initial meeting with Access and Inclusion on November 13<sup>th</sup> it was noted there is no "ceiling" on class numbers and it was suggested that numbers of 11 and possibly 12 could become the norm in ASD/CDC classes. If this materialises it would mean a 50% increase in such Learning Support class sizes since September 2016. In light of this I welcome the establishment of a KS2 CDC provision in Porth Community School in addition to the CDC class at Hafod not instead of it. A parent queried why there could not be a KS2 provision in Porth and one in Hafod in the meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup>. It was pointed out that statistics and data analysis project there will not be an increase in need for more places for children with ASD in the authority.

As the proposal does not include plans to provide more places for ASD/CDC pupils, there now exists a gap in such provision at Porth Community School. On paper relocating Hafod Primary CDC now seems the obvious solution to bridge the gap as it would create cross phase provision from Foundation Phase through to KS4. Although this is in the initial proposal stage, it does feel very much like a *fait accompli*.

It is with great sadness that I write this letter as I believe the real cost of this proposed relocation will be paid for by the pupils whose interests we are supposed to serve. The CDC is



integral to the whole school and community. This is reflected daily in the level of whole school support and inclusion within school and the wider community. The authority may view the proposed relocation as a paper exercise but all of us at Hafod know we are on the threshold of such a significant loss for pupils, parents, community and staff.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. In the interest of our pupils I hope you are able to reconsider the proposal to relocate Hafod Primary CDC.

Yours Sincerely

A redacted signature consisting of two thick black horizontal bars. The top bar is shorter and wider, while the bottom bar is longer and narrower, together forming a stylized signature.

2000

2000

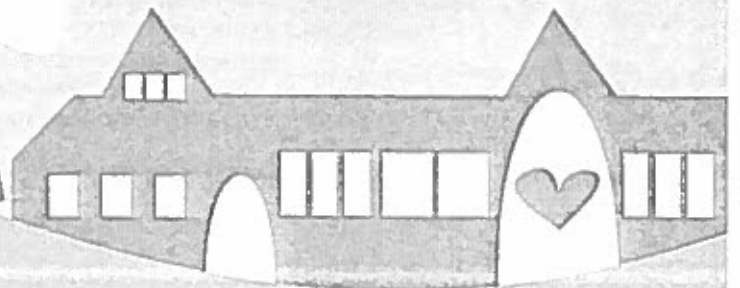
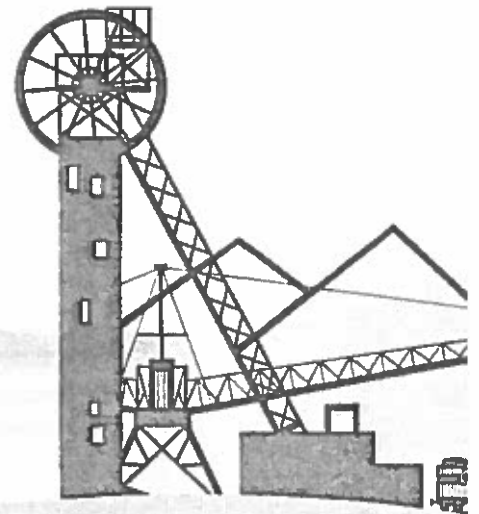
# SAVE DOSBARTH COCH



## HEART OF HAFOD PRIMARY

21

YEARS OF  
ACHIEVING  
& BELIEVING



Response to proposal by [REDACTED]  
Parent of Hafod Primary KS2 LSC pupil

**Proposal 2:**

**The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:  
Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod  
Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross  
phase provision from Foundation Phase to KeyStage 4**

Do you agree with the proposal? (please circle)

YES

NO

NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

No evidence that the proposal will work and be a 'better' provision for my son. I have many concerns and queries. I am a worried parent and need my worries considered and questions answered please. SAVE OUSBARTH COUNCIL

Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

Please read booklet supplied as part of my response - additional information. After this was written I finally had the opportunity to visit Porth provision. Headteacher was welcoming and fully understood why I had concerns [PTO]

Please indicate who you are

(e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

PARENT OF CDU PUPIL (HAFOD PRIMARY CDU)

Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.  
Please forward completed questionnaires to the below address no later than 5pm on the 21st December 2018.

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice)

and the Council's data protection pages here: [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).

Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, CF45 4UQ or by fax to 01443 744024, or email to [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)

The facilities were new but my concerns and questions still remain. I was surprised to hear 'we need excellence to be excellent' ~ which reflected that the proposal is benefiting the school, not the pupils (as a priority). We have been promised that the children will be OK and are wanted ~ but I am still not convinced the relocation is in best interest for my son.

An excellent provision has been selected to fill the gap of a new provision for them to benefit, yet it will be affected greatly; relationships broken and disruption for our children, not to mention and not understanding why this has happened. An excellent provision with disruption and 'excellence' could potentially be destroyed - causing problems for my son ~ this could result in an adequate provision. Why can't there be two CDUs and Hatfield Primary transition to KS3 CDUs as normal, along with other RCT CDUs?

I don't believe Poth can be like Hatfield. The facilities are great but very hospital like! - in fact, I thanked the headteacher for the opportunity and told her that she will do her best if LA decide that the proposal will proceed - a comfort. I am so happy with Hatfield Primary provision - my son has improved tremendously. I am worried that this will be detrimental to his learning - setting him back the longer it takes to get him the support he has. Please consider my concerns ~ I must support an excellent school - so much to thank them for!

Ms Gaynor Davies  
Director of Education and Inclusion Services,  
Access and Inclusion Service,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon, CF45 4UQ

Subject:

Consultation response and objection to: Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019: Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

Dear Ms Davies,

I am distraught on hearing the proposal plans to relocate Hafod Primary CDU to Porth Community School. I specifically chose to place my son at Hafod Primary's CDU (Dosbarth Coch) due to its outstanding reputation. Within the first few weeks of my son attending Hafod Primary I was amazed at the community involvement and support of all staff, students and families. There is 100% integration and remarkable opportunities offered to pupils inside and outside school hours. Everyone is friendly and know each other, helping when needed no matter what pupil or class – one big school family. My son is happy and thriving in a small, nurturing learning environment, with excellent support and provision for his individual additional learning needs. My son was branded by healthcare and educational professionals as a "complicated case" – within one month of attending Hafod Primary CDU, my son could write his name and the teachers immediately understood him even though he had no diagnosis. For the first time in years I had no battle, minor concerns and no anxiety. I am apprehensive about this proposal. My son did not receive diagnosis until May this year – so there has been considerable years of worry and stress.

Dosbarth Coch (KS2 CDU Hafod Primary) has been achieving for 21 years and already provides and exceeds the proposed advantages for the CDU relocation to Porth Community School. A large new school with no previous experience/ history with Key stage 1 & 2 CDU provision is a concern. It's not only about the size of the school, as reported – we are all aware it's a very large and a new provision – this is a fear, but there are many other issues and disadvantages if this proposal should go ahead. Porth Community School is yet to prove it is a provision of high standard and suitable for my son and his additional learning needs. Aberdare Community School Estyn inspection report (May 2018) is deplorable.

Unfortunately, I have heard and read more bad comments than good, and therefore clearly aware that the school is still experiencing problems after the merger. I am extremely disappointed that it took a considerable amount of time to secure a visit to view Porth Community School. Unfortunately, Access and Inclusion have let my son down several times over the years (requests for visits, testing, occupational therapy referral, and ados assessment delay in 2018). We need evidence and we need to see the provision deemed more 'beneficial' than Hafod Primary. I also have a younger son that has just started Hafod Primary – I chose to send him here not only to be with his brother but because it really is an excellent educational provision – with proof that it is successful. My nephew also attends the school and my sister selected Hafod Primary over the early negative experience that I had with my son in Porth Infants – the first year or so was traumatic (diary kept, son excluded from first concert when music was his strength, removed from class frequently for being 'disruptive', separated in yard which continued into older classes for his 'safety', etc).

Hafod Primary have a proven track record of successful transition and 21st century modernisation and investment does not mean the 'best' duty of care for my son and other Hafod CDU pupils. Please listen to the parents of Dosbarth Coch pupils and Hafod Community – we are happy and want our children to stay! How can it be proposed best with no care plan yet put in place, viewing arranged days before consultation ends, empty promises and questions unanswered. Dosbarth Coch pupils have full inclusion, wonderful opportunities – supported by dedicated staff, voluntary PTA group and a loyal community. Any person if given the choice will choose 21 years of experience over a new build. We are being treated unfairly, not being heard or considered and there is clear evidence that this proposal seems to be a 'done deal' and 'unjust'. The LA representatives clearly stated to a considerable number of concerned parents that 'only one CDU provision can exist'. Surely two will be a great benefit in RCT education. If cost is not the issue, why can't there be two CDU provisions?

Not all Hafod CDU pupils choose to progress to Porth – plus, how can you have cross phase transition from KS2 to KS3 which is a much larger provision (3 classes for KS3/ KS4 as reported by councillor in newspaper)? If other school KS2 CDUs are transitioning to Porth KS3 then why can't Hafod CDU remain open and transfer as normal from Hafod Primary? As mentioned, we have a proven track record of successful transition and all pupils experience transition in their lives. Same site move doesn't reflect that it will be an effective one! The only advantage we believe Porth Community has is a "new build" and built in readiness to have SEN facility (plans 2016 – clearly labelled). The problem has been caused by RCTCBC and 'sufficient time' not considered for transfer. I have no current concern of KS3/ 4 as it's an existing provision, and benefitted from funding and development. My son has had the opportunity to meet [REDACTED] from Porth Community School several times – whom he is already very fond of and he is aware that this teacher is from the 'big school'. LA representatives said in the consultation meeting that 'too long to transition is detrimental' – We all disagreed! Not enough time is certainly detrimental!

I have given your proposal careful contemplation and have formed my own report detailing exactly how I feel, my concerns and how it will affect my son, family and others of Hafod Primary. I hope that all points are taken into consideration and I appreciate it may be repetitive in parts, but I need to comment on each section in detail, in comparison to the consultation report received. Over the years I have fought for my son to have the best start in life and education that he needs. I have experienced struggles, communication breakdown, stress and great anxiety – whilst working full time and being the best mother I could be. I am against this proposal for appropriate reasons. If this proposal proceeds it will affect my son and detrimental to his well-being and education and I am not prepared to let this happen. LA were not helping by keeping Porth Community SEN provision a 'secret' – To receive a letter informing of a visit, just days before consultation ends is outrageous. This should have been a priority by LA and arranged early consultation without having to be asked and chased for permission to visit.

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]  
Parent of Dosbarth Coch pupil  
KS2 Hafod Primary CDU

---

## Summary of concerns

- Visit refusal/ delay to view Porth community School.
- Move to a large provision that is still struggling from merger.
- No care plan in place during consultation
- No evidence that Porth is a suitable provision – yet to be inspected by Estyn. Aberdare Community School (after RCT investment) – very poor report (adequate and needs improvement).
- Significant impact on Hafod Primary School and community.
- Porth Community schools (prior to merge) have no history or experience of KS1/ KS2 CDU. KS1 pupils were gained via closed provision by RCTCBC.
- Full integration concerns.
- Hafod CDU Staff jobs at risk – LA confirmed that they may not be able to transfer with pupils if proposal proceeds.
- Council created this problem – SEN classrooms labelled on 2016 Porth Community School plans – undemocratic. LA have had years to prepare us of proposal and therefore opportunity for two years required for transition.
- Not enough time for transition – unjust – welfare of child not considered.
- Detrimental to my son's wellbeing/ learning and the family – new routine/ issues.
- Classroom size concern and separated yard at Porth Community School (visit will allow us to view)
- Transport concern for my son – confirmed by LA possibly not eligible for taxi after relocation.



---

# Questions and continued concerns

Following Consultation meeting 13.11.18 with LA representatives.

ONE:

**Is the relocation essential? What evidence do you have that Porth Community School KS2 CDU will be a "better" provision than Hafod Primary CDU? Previous schools before merge to form Porth Community School, had no CDU provision and therefore no experience and not specialised in providing support for ASD/ CDU pupils. KS1 CDU pupils were gained at Porth from September 2018, due to closing a provision, KS3/4 provision cannot be used as a benefit for the gain of Hafod Primary CDU pupils, as this is a separate school on the site – the concern is KS2 provision in this proposal. LA representatives in the meeting held at Hafod Primary 13 November, mentioned a current headteacher of Porth Community School, having experience of working in a SEN provision – but this person will not be available daily for or directly involved for KS2. Why is this being used as an additional advantage? Experience and development at comprehensive level, doesn't mean that KS1/ KS2 will work effectively – so LA in meeting should not use this to ease anxiety for Hafod Primary parents and staff concerned – we need "evidence" that this WILL work. LA representatives also mentioned that relocations/ closures for LSC provisions in RCT happened a few years ago and was very successful – but this was to a super school that has now received a bad review. They kept repeating 'we will try', 'we will strive' – if it has been done before successfully – why haven't we got definite answers/ evidence provided and why are there clear issues/ concerns for relocation?**

National Autistic Society Statistic:

*"63% of children on the autism spectrum are not in the kind of school their parents believe would best support them."*

Reid, B. (2011). Great Expectations. London: The National Autistic Society, p18

We are parents that are happy with current provision for our son and therefore within the minority of 37% and extremely lucky to have this excellent ASD/ CDU provision – that is already meeting advantages proposed for relocation and more! I was so overwhelmed with how the school welcomed my son, becoming part of a wonderful community – that I made the decision to send my youngest son to Hafod Primary, over the new Porth Community School. There is no evidence that this proposal will work – give us evidence, facts and figures that Porth is best for my son – hence the persistence to see the provision.

TWO:

LA representatives confirmed, when questioned, that "only one CDU Unit can exist" – it will be impossible to keep two CDU provisions in the area. It is proven that ASD diagnosis is late, places in SEN provision are difficult to secure and high demand for them – why close a successful CDU. LA representatives disagreed and said that Hafod Primary CDU is not 'closing' – but proposed to 'relocate'. This is incorrect. . . if this proposal goes ahead Hafod Primary will no longer have a CDU provision – it will be closed. **Why was Porth Community School built and plans viewed, clearly displaying 'SEN classrooms' when there was no CDU provision before school merge, and is no KS2 provision currently? This has clearly been decided upon in preparation for 21st century modernisation and investment at Porth Community School planning and long before this proposal. This determines a 'done deal' and therefore holding this consultation proposal for this relocation is 'undemocratic'**

### THREE:

LA representatives confirmed in meeting that the employment of Hafod Primary CDU staff is at risk, if proposal proceeds to relocation. This is a concern – there is a very short time for pupils, parents and staff to adjust, late visit only offered by request, no care plan issued in preparation as promised (in the proposal consultation document provided) and this is imperative for effective transition/ continuity 'helping my child settle'. Parents were informed in LA meeting and I personally informed via email from [REDACTED] that there is an empty KS2 class, so therefore no pupils and no staff present. No reason why the existing Hafod Primary CDU staff can't transfer if proposal should go ahead – Hafod Primary CDU are not 'merging' with another CDU into Porth provision – so no 'fight' for employment. **Why are the Hafod CDU staff jobs confirmed 'not safe' by LA?** This is suspicious, as I were refused a visit when asked and parents did not have clear answers to their concerns – repetitions of proposal and using 'significant years' at comprehensive level CDU as an advantage. I am fully aware of how the comprehensive unit was as I attended Porth County Comprehensive School. I have heard it has developed and improved. . .but it needed to as I had a friend in the unit who couldnt leave at break time for her safety but friends were not allowed in (too small). I have no concerns for the comprehensive level of CDU provision – I have heard good comments and children/ parents seem happy in this level. The uncertainty of Hafod Primary staff employment, portrays a high possibility that staff are already secured ready at the new provision, if this should go ahead.

### FOUR:

**How many places will be available in the KS2 provision at Porth Community School?** Hafod CDU have always achieved full places until September 2018 and have an exceptional status. I am concerned that the class size (number of places) could possibly increase in the future, if this proposal goes ahead, due to 'cross-phase provision' aim – and therefore to the larger provision at KS3/4. **If other KS2 CDUs in Rhondda Cynon Taf exist and pupils' transition into KS3 provision in Porth Community School, why can't Hafod Primary CDU remain open and do the same?** Hafod Primary CDU have a proven track record of successful transition. **Will there be a risk of other closures of RCT CDU and therefore resulting in a large class at Porth Community School in the future?** ASD children need routine, continuity and a small nurturing learning environment to thrive – exactly what they have now and more in Hafod Primary – why tear this apart? The welfare of my son has not been considered in this proposal and nothing has been done in this first month of the proposal to reassure parents, support children and staff or show the "best" provision – that is operating and has benefitted from more £120m of 21st Century Schools funding. I don't understand why the provision was being "protected" and "hidden away" from parents that are eager to see if it really is the best provision for their children. Many parents were not satisfied overall that our questions were answered in the consultation meeting – I appreciate there was a lot to get through in a short time and grateful that the meeting exceeded the time allocated. We appreciated that the meeting did go on for longer as planned, it was intense for all and we had many queries to go through – but was disappointed that Lisa Carter confirmed that any questions we have or if we are not satisfied with answers, can be asked again but we will not receive an answer until after the consultation process ends – hence my list of concerns and questions which I need answered please. I feel that the meeting cleared up some queries but certainly not all – there was a lot of repetition of what we already knew in the proposal consultation document and no assurances– no clear, constructive verification that this is the best decision.

### FIVE:

**Will the CDU children have ALN met at Porth Community School provision?** Examples are: flexible staff, split breaks, individual needs of a child, all staff knowledge of ASD and CDU pupils/ SEN training, IEPs and targets, full school integration, involvement and daily communication with parents, increased involvement by LA, more educational psychology visit and advice available if required, on-site professional ALN support and more. **Can you tell us what the CDU children will have at Porth Community School provision, that is "greater" than what Hafod Primary is already providing?** Hafod Primary are already meeting proposed advantages and a proven successful ASD CDU provision and has been for 21 years.

SIX:

Parents and teachers should have been offered a chance to see the provision asap following the proposal announcement. It took several high priority emails to secure which should not have been the case. The LA have a 'duty of care' to our children - considering this could be starting September 2019. I have the following other concerns:

- I worry greatly about the move to a large provision, facilities unknown and Porth Community School is still experiencing problems after merge. I understand 'safety' for ALN pupils but the plans seem that the CDU children are restricted to one area of the school. At Hafod, all staff are aware of all pupils needs and the CDU pupils have the confidence to walk around the school, fully integrate, feel safe and comfortable.
- No Estyn report for Porth Community School/ no evidence that this is best provision and will work. Aberdare Community School's Estyn inspection report is poor with four counts of 'adequate and needs improvement' and one count of 'unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement' – an disgrace considering it has had part of £120m investment for the better. Porth Community School should be proving itself before considering disrupting an excellent CDU provision with a good Estyn report for a number of years.
- Porth Infants, Llwynceilyn Infants and Porth Juniors did not have a CDU provision prior to merge. My son attended Porth Infants and his needs could not be met – delayed by LA with Educational psychologist visit limit, referrals waiting lists for external healthcare services (educational psychology, S/L), severe communication breakdown where Headteacher (who was also the ALNCo) did her best I believe, but struggled to meet parental communication needs and my husband and I continually asked for involvement in IEPs (as SEN Code of Practice states) or know more about work completed in school with our son – we couldnt be accommodated. All these issues caused anxiety to us as parents – both working full-time. My son was happy in infant school but his learning suffered significantly. My son had no ASD diagnosis until May this year, and as parents, we had to chase healthcare and LA professionals, communication needs could not be met. Headteacher had to 'fight for support' in panel – not enough gained, resulting in parents applying for Statement of SEN to secure Hafod CDU provision. My son could not be set in provision with no diagnosis – described as a 'complicated case'. We had to listen to the consultant paediatrician and understood his reasons for not diagnosing at that time – but my son still had significant learning difficulties and SEN to be met. An educational Psychologist wanted to move my son to another provision after he started Hafod Primary and I completely disagreed as he was instantly doing well. The same Ed Psych delayed my son for Occupational therapy involvement by a year! I had to chase and piece the puzzle together which was wrong considering the Ed Psych suggested the referral at first review.

SEVEN:

Will my son continue to be eligible for transport to and from the proposed provision? The consultation report states "All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate setting". I have noticed it only states 'to' the provision not 'from' which is a concern and it was confirmed in the consultation meeting by LA representatives that my son may not qualify for transport in relation to 'distance' set out in the 'Council's Learner Travel Policy'. . . but my son is a pupil affected by a proposal if it goes ahead – and therefore according to your consultation report is eligible for transport. I have a younger son attending Hafod Primary (nursery) to consider also and therefore not possible to make a variety of journeys in one day to two educational provisions and we are both full-time working parents. Transport for my eldest son to his provision is imperative for his safety, it's what he is used to and is a requirement for his ALN. Hafod Primary is the best educational provision we could wish for both sons – I will not consider moving my youngest child to Porth Community School when we are happy with current school provision and I specifically chose Hafod Primary for both sons to attend. This "problem" has been 'created' by the Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, so why should my children be disrupted and separated due to this proposal, if it proceeds.

Comments on the:

## Educational Case for the proposal to re-align LSC

Hafod Primary CDU are already meeting and exceeding the advantages of implementing the proposed relocation of KS2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders to Porth Community School (3-16 provision).

- Hafod Primary have enhanced focus on mainstream LSC provision which provides improved life chances for most vulnerable learners
- Hafod Primary CDU have ten allocated places, and filled these until this academic year (slight reduction). Will the proposed provision hold ten places? Is the provision suitable for 10 pupils? A number of us have heard that there are concerns at Porth as the classroom is "not suitable for" ten pupils and they have a separate small yard – with a fence. Rumour or fact - it is a concern and we could explain why we haven't had our visit granted. LA representatives informed us in the consultation meeting that Porth Community School are happy to accept the provision. Porth were happy to give us a visit when I requested it but had to seek permission from LA – still waiting for this to be resolved. If 'cross-phase transition' is an advantage and aim... does this mean the class numbers could potentially get larger in the future also? With the mention of 'reduction in surplus places' then surely large number of places, for cross-phase provision to KS3/4 is required? Will it only be Porth Community pupils transitioning to Porth Community provisions KS 2/3/4 levels? Statistics prove that CDU places are in demand due to delayed diagnosis and years of waiting on assessments, opinions and reports. Wouldn't it make more sense not to close a successful provision, but have an 'extra provision' and keep Hafod Primary CDU open to provide two RCT ALN pupils appropriate access for their needs when required that will both hope to transition to Porth Community KS3. I understand there are large numbers at KS3/4 CDU at Porth Community School (three classes split due to severity I believe) so where do all pupils transition from into KS3 – surely not just from Hafod Primary? What schools are involved at the stage of transition –KS2 CDU to KS3 CDU? We have a proven successful transition track record for KS2 to KS3.
- Hafod Primary CDU already provide excellent support and provision and do their best to raise additional funds to benefit the pupils in ways that build confidence, achievement and enjoyment with full integration. Why is 'redirection of resources to areas of identified need' an advantage!? This does not apply to Hafod Primary – we are not an area of identified need – he has a history of achievement and excellent provision. If the new Porth Community School is an area of 'identified need' then there is a major problem, when it's a new educational provision that has just benefitted from part of £120m of 21st century school funding!
- Hafod Primary CDU already have 'efficient and effective use of LA resources', and have excellent working relations with LA/ external services to support ALN/ CDU pupils. LA representatives confirmed in consultation meeting that the relocation wasn't a 'cost-saving exercise' and when questioned if two provisions can be available – they replied 'not possible - only one CDU provision can exist' – so there is no hope to keep the two. This signifies that the decision of relocation is made and offering a consultation is unjust. Surely, it's not an efficient and effective use of LA resources and an 'increase' in placement costs to create an empty classroom with no pupils to go in it? I have viewed the Porth Community School building plans and they clearly label SEN classrooms – so it's been a plan for a long period of time. The council has created this problem and the school has been built allocating an area for ALN provision. KS1 pupils are present, purely because they were gained from closing a provision (Ysgol y Eos) and relocating to Porth Community School? How long did Ysgol y Eos have for proposal/ transition? Did parents fight to keep it? Was it a successful CDU provision? Why did the pupils start with other Porth Community pupils, when our children have less than a year – for the process to occur with potentially allowing our children, parents staff and pupils weeks to adjust, transition and be familiar with a new environment and possibly new staff! This is unfair and welfare of Dosbarth Coch children not considered.

- Hafod primary CDU have been providing 'appropriate continuum of provision which is well matched to pupils' primary needs' for 21 years – successfully!
- Hafod primary CDU are already 'in compliance with one of the underpinning principles of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales that all pupils should access mainstream education where possible'. There is 100% integration for CDU pupils at Hafod primary CDU – they are included in whole school activities and extracurricular activities. My son previously attended Porth Infants School – where there was very poor community involvement – parental attendance to assembly once or twice a year and a Christmas concert. Christmas pantomime trip at a cost, no involvement in sports tournaments, urdd, no community events/ pta group to raise funds for school, limited summer club for children outside of school (summer period only) and two occasions of no summer trip. I am hoping the Porth Community School is 'Community' by name and nature – I can only base on past history, comments and experience from the merged schools to form new 'super school'. I can see from the Porth Community Website – letter for parents – that some activities are being held, so schools prior to merger have improved opportunities for children – but Hafod have been offering activities and a whole lot more and pupils are not disadvantaged in any way. I have noticed since discussion in the LA consultation meeting that Porth Community have displayed 'Breakfast club' as 'TBC' – this was one of our queries also as this is a beneficial and successful at hafod primary – giving children a nutritious start to the day and helping families cope with working commitments/ allowing children to arrive on time and enjoy before lessons. Porth Infants to Hafod primary was an 'instant difference' – as a parent not from the local village, I was amazed by how welcoming the school was and what opportunities all children had – small family schools (whether old or new) are precious – children feel safe and enjoy learning – I believe this will not be met in Porth Community School. The 'new build' is the only advantage it has over Hafod primary. . . the school is special and the best provision for both my children. Porth Infants School struggled to meet my son's needs before entry to Hafod Primary – and I don't think it is fair that Porth Community should gain our CDU with the concern that the experienced staff are not safe to relocate is a great worry. If Hafod Primary CDU had difficulties and wasn't able to meet the needs of ASD children, then the proposal would make sense – we have proof that the CDU operates successfully and all are happy – why is this even being considered!?
- Hafod Primary CDU have an outstanding reputation and good Estyn reports for many years. The CDU has evidence of excellent 'educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to effectively meeting pupil needs. As mentioned, Porth Community School have no experience or history of KS1 and KS2 CDU provision – prior to merge or present – LA kept commenting 'we will strive' which was worrying – anyone can 'strive' but it is unfair to Hafod Primary CDU children to be used as 'guinea pigs' with the hope that it will be successful. There is a possibility of fail with no evidence that it will work. The responses in the meeting signified 'empty promises' so how can there be 'improved' educational outcomes. Parents need to know that duty of care/ plan is in place. This is rushed, not thought out and this proposal has caused great anxiety to all children, parents and staff of Hafod Primary. Aberdare Community School have had 'Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement' for 'wellbeing and attitudes to learning' and overall summary 'adequate and needs improvement' – this is a disaster after benefitting from £120m RCT educational investment. With the risk of having new teachers and same aim as a fellow RCT supper school "Strive, Believe and Achieve" – this is dreadful.
- Hafod Primary CDU provide excellent continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils and have a proven track record of successful ALN provision. Relocating a class does not reduce the number of transitions SEN pupils make between school phases. The pupils will always experience 'transition' whether going from Hafod to Porth, or Porth to Porth! It's a part of life. This takes care and time. LA reported 'too much time to transition will have a negative affect' – I totally disagree! My son has had the opportunity to meet and talk to comprehensive CDU teacher [REDACTED] since arriving in Hafod Primary and a familiar friendly face is what will help my son when he transitions to comprehensive. This proposal and very quick transition (for September 2019 start) means that my son may have no familiar face, no time to view facilities and be aware of new surroundings, and parents don't have any certainty that this will be an effective move and is an issue. This proposal and the length of time for decision to be made is detrimental to my son as he and his class mates will have less than 2 months to transition to a totally new learning environment which is not acceptable and welfare of the CDU children not considered.

- Hafod Primary CDU pupils have tremendous support from staff, pupils and benefit from a PTA group and wonderful community – I am concerned that this will not be available in Porth Community School provision – did not exist before so how can an advantage of 'greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in local community schools' be promised.
- Hafod Primary CDU already provide effective local solutions and provision for pupils with significant SEN. Pupils of the same class (KS2) share transport. How will Porth Community School 'reduce transport costs and the LA's carbon footprint' when children of different ages will be sharing transport and if more children are sharing a taxi – then there are more locations involved. Transport will still be the same – it's still getting a CDU child to and from a provision. I noticed that journey 'to' not 'from' is mentioned in Consultation proposal. As mentioned in my concerns list - my son lives in Porth – LA when questioned have informed me that my son may not be eligible for transport due to 'Council's Learner Travel Policy' – depends on distance. However, the consultation policy also states "All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate setting". This is a personal concern – my son will be affected and therefore IS entitled to transport.
- Hafod Primary are already 'ensuring that LSC provision is situated within education settings' and are 'accessible and appropriate for the needs of pupils with wide ranging needs, including physical and medical needs. Staff, pupils and Trehafod community exert themselves to ensure this and has operated this way for 21 years. It would be nice for LA to visit Hafod Primary to see how the school operates and attend an event maybe?
- Hafod Primary are always aiming to 'improve the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils. The school building maybe old, but the pupils have what they need to succeed and the PTA group operate to raise funds to help get what the children need – the pupils are not disadvantaged in any way and are happy with whole school provision. The recent autumn fair raised over £900 for Hafod Primary and all the children will benefit from a free school trip to the theatre in January – outstanding!

Comments on the:

## Financial implications of the proposal

LA confirmed in meeting that the closure of 'Hafod Primary CDU' to relocate to Porth Community School wasn't a 'cost saving exercise' – which the majority in the meeting clearly disagreed.

I don't agree that this proposal will be a 'positive impact' on pupils with SEN for Hafod Primary – cannot comment about other areas of RCT. Why couldn't funding be directed to an existing successful provision – Hafod Primary CDU. Why does a merge/ new build have the right to "claim" eight children with ASD diagnosis and ALN just because it's a new build and new school? Why tear the heart out of a good school to fill a gap and gain funding? Hafod Primary have worked hard – they have built relationships, meeting ALN successfully, excellent communication with parents of CDU pupils and give these children a 'family environment' to learning which is what they need. I have heard that the new Porth Community School is a modern, hospital setting and this could be unsettling for ASD children also. Parents of Dosbarth Coch pupils can decide for themselves when visit is granted.

Comments on the:

## Likely impact of the proposal on school pupils

The relocation will certainly impact on Hafod Primary CDU pupils. Consultation report promises that “suitable arrangements will be put into place in consultation with all involved to ensure that appropriate provision is made for any learners affected by the changes”.

It has been a battle to secure a visit so how can we rely on Local Authority to put sufficient plans in place? LA representatives were questioned in consultation meeting and they kept re-enforcing “we will strive” and repeating the proposal consultation notes – what we already know! Where is the ‘additional support plan’? Where is our visit? Where is the ‘duty of care’ for the CDU pupils and the parents? We asked about these in the meeting and was re-assured that a plan would definitely be in place for this to run “smoothly” if relocation should go ahead. I expect there will be a large amount of responses and it is wonderful to see how much support our campaign ‘Save Dosbarth Coch’ has. People may not be directly affected by this proposal but there are people who know a child with ASD, understand difficulties that families have been through – fighting to gain support and agree that Hafod CDU should remain where it is – as the heart of Hafod Primary School. It is unfair that the CDU children/ parents will not have sufficient time to adjust – and considering the relevant procedures / processes and reports to be discussed, written and published! It took weeks for RCTCBC to report on 34 responses out of 2154 papers issued for the re-alignment of LSC RCT Phase 3! The consultation report clearly states: “Person centred planning will be undertaken in consultation with parents, carers and relevant professional and bespoke arrangements put in place if required so as to minimize the impact on pupils and their families”. We have asked for the care plan, we have been refused/ delayed a visit, we have been let down already. . . these arrangements you mention ‘are required’ and we have asked for them.

This section also states that “All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate setting”. I have noticed it only states ‘to’ the provision not ‘from’ which is a concern and it’s been brought to my attention by LA in consultation meeting that my son may not qualify in relation to ‘distance’ set out in the ‘Council’s Learner Travel Policy’. . . but my son IS a pupil affected by a proposal if it goes ahead – and therefore according to your consultation report is eligible for transport. I have another son attending Hafod Primary to consider also and therefore unable to make a variety of journeys in one day. Transport for my eldest son to his provision is imperative for his safety, it’s what he is used to and is a requirement for his ALN. Hafod Primary is the best educational provision we could wish for both sons – I will not consider moving my youngest child to Porth Community School when we are happy with current school provision for both sons – this “problem” has been created by the RCTCBC if the proposal proceeds.

Reflecting on ‘Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people’. Hafod Primary School comply with the core aims:

1. Hafod CDU pupils and all students certainly have a flying start in life;
2. Hafod CDU pupils and all students have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. Hafod CDU pupils and all students enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. Hafod CDU pupils and all students have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. Hafod CDU pupils and all students are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race cultural identity recognised;
6. Unfortunately there are children all over wales that don’t have a ‘safe home’ but have a ‘safe home environment at Hafod Primary’ and an outstanding community which supports physical, emotional wellbeing and a lot more!
7. Hafod Primary pupils are not disadvantaged by poverty. The school staff and community do everything they can to ensure pupils are happy and thriving. 100% integration for all pupils and wonderful opportunities given for them to achieve their very best.

Hafod Primary benefits children in their communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

---

Comments on the:

## Likely impact of this proposal on the staff of Hafod Primary CDU

As a parent reading "Every effort will be made to redeploy any displaced staff to minimize the risk of redundancy" was instantly worrying and absurd – how can this be possible in the case for relocation with immediate effect September 2019?

---

This issue was brought up by concerned parents and community members in the LA meeting, which resulted in the LA stressing the uncertainty that staff may not be able to move with the children if this proposal goes ahead. I personally feel – and share the thoughts of others concerned – that this is an outrage. . . these children need their teachers if relocated to Porth Community School. The staff members of Hafod CDU are not only lovely people, they are experienced, outstanding at what they do, always willing to help the parents as well as the child – in regards to communication/ concerns. The welfare of ASD children has not been considered here and realistically the pupils will have less than two months to prepare for a new learning environment, new routine and this will be difficult enough, but to then discover that they may not have the teachers with them will cause a variety of problems. Nothing in this setting is proven that it will work, no care plan in place as yet and we are towards end of consultation. From having a visit refusal/ delay – we have been informed that there is an empty classroom . . . in readiness for the KS2 LSC pupils to relocate . . . if there is an empty class, then there is no pupils and no staff. How can staff members jobs not be safe and how do you expect to get all this in place so quickly? If there is a risk of uncertainty and job loss, and a visit refusal/ delay, then it seems that staff have already been set ready at Porth Community School for KS2 LSC provision. If this is the case – the consultation process is void – undemocratic.

The parents of Hafod CDU pupils all have a different background/ battle/ communication issue, etc. and for our family personally, this stopped instantly when my son started Hafod Primary CDU. I experienced one other school, some parents and children of Hafod CDU experienced a lot more and we all share the same opinion . . . Hafod Primary is 'by far' the best provision we could have hoped for. It may have been that funding was difficult in Porth Infants School, no community involvement, little support and no experience or knowledge of specialist provision/ un-diagnosis for years didn't help. They did try, but I was placing my son in provisions that were not certain to meet his needs, just because Porth Infants could not – with no diagnosis and branded a "complicated case" I would not commit to having him moved around provisions and schools as this would have had a detrimental affect – my son has always been happy in school and has not missed one day in Hafod Primary – 100% attendance. I have always fought for him, I believe I did the right thing for my son, kept on top of all communication – chased health and educational teams, read the SEN code of practice, found out about SNAP Cymru and other support ourselves with no advice . . . kept on top of all . . . which was hard, but it had to be done. I feel so passionate about this CDU remaining in Hafod Primary as they 'have it all and more!' – there is no need for improvement. If all fails – and relocation happens – I will fight for the staff to remain with the children. Health, parental and educational relationships, assessments, communication breakdown and provision cannot have a risk for error, due to this proposal, it is not fair to child and parent that have been through so much already to have the very best for their child. We have that in Hafod Primary CDU, for it now to be potentially snatched away.



---

Comments on the:

## Likely impact of this proposal on the local community

The proposal will have significant impact on the local community! Hafod Primary school are fully supported by the local community and Trehafod is a lovely village. Local people are concerned that if the CDU relocates, this could lead to a possible school closure in the future.

My son came from Porth Infants and I was a pupil who attended Porth Infants, Porth Juniors and Porth Comprehensive – they did not have ‘community involvement’ – just the basic concerts where parents would attend – if these happened at all! Parents at Porth Infants when asked for feedback in its last years asked for a ‘text message service, a newsletter, extra events, trips. . . it couldn’t be done’. They had one or two sponsored walks in four years my son attended to raise money for equipment, but that was it. The staff wanted the very best and struggled but it may have been very difficult for them. A small old school – which I believe children were disadvantaged due to poverty and struggled for support. My son raised £200 for a sponsored walk one year on his own, and total amount for whole school was under £300.00!!

Hafod Primary have a very supportive and voluntary PTA group which are dedicated to the children in the village to have the very best in education – funds are raised through learning and enjoyment. All staff are supportive of CDU and all pupils included in whole school activities and extra-curricular activities. I was overwhelmed when my son started Hafod School at how much the community was involved and the benefits and opportunities available for my son. It was a pleasure to see and my son absolutely loves this school. I can honestly say that this school cannot be matched for its support and provision. As one lady said in the LA meeting “you take Dosbarth Coch out of Hafod Primary. . . you are breaking a community” . . . and she is 100% correct.

---

Comments and additions to the:

## Disadvantages of the proposal

The LSC re-alignment will certainly cause disruption and uncertainty but this cannot proceed for a 'period of time'. If there has been 'previous experiences that demonstrated minimised difficulties due to being managed successfully' – then this should benefit this proposal, if it should go ahead.

---

LA are not helping at the moment with no definite answers to queries, worries and plan of action to support issues in preparation. What does the 'bespoke package of support' involve? I assume this happened previously to help pupils, parents and staff. The care plans need to be carefully considered to adhere an individual pupil's needs – this needs to involve parents, current CDU teachers and not just be reading their SEN statements – hence the concern and how this will be impossible for a September 2018 start if proposal goes ahead! What support will be offered also to the remaining school pupils, staff and pta group/ community of Hafod Primary if the move should go ahead? It will have a damaging affect also, for example; friendships, children not understanding why this has happened, etc. The consultation report states: "The re-location of some LSC provision aims to provide more continuity for our most vulnerable learners to access cross phase specialist provision, reduce unnecessary transition and travel with the opportunity to provide through provision for all primary ages" – how is this a disadvantage? This is what 'needs' to be in place if relocation happens.

At the moment we are still trying to secure an appointment to view the provision, the pupils will not have continuity as the teachers are at risk of not relocating with the pupils, new environment, new site, new travel arrangements, new faces, new friendships to build, everything new to an ASD child! This will have a negative impact on the CDU pupils and anxiety for parents – which the levels have already increase with the worry of this proposal. If we truly believed that this proposal is best, we wouldn't be against it. The LA should be re-directing resources to areas of need anyway, to benefit all LSC pupils – there is high demand for educational psychology visits, speech and language involvement, occupational therapy advise and behavior support in all RCT schools – these will still be problem areas even with a relocation, and will affect the LSC pupils. These services need investment and improvement as my child suffered due to limited visits, staff not being able to complete reports, make referrals or keep on top of them. Restructure and re-thought of these are imperative not only for CDU but mainstream education – children with learning difficulties and struggles – the long battle I had before diagnosis. Its these areas that parents are unhappy with and report on. The pupils are doing well in the current experienced existing LSC setting – the move will surely cause more problems and still have the difficulties that LSC pupils and their parents have of communication breakdown of the external services and the 'waiting' and 'chasing' for support when required. Hafod Primary has eased this in my opinion as they have dealt with any issues immediately and effectively – and it shows when my son enjoys school and has learning has improved tremendously.

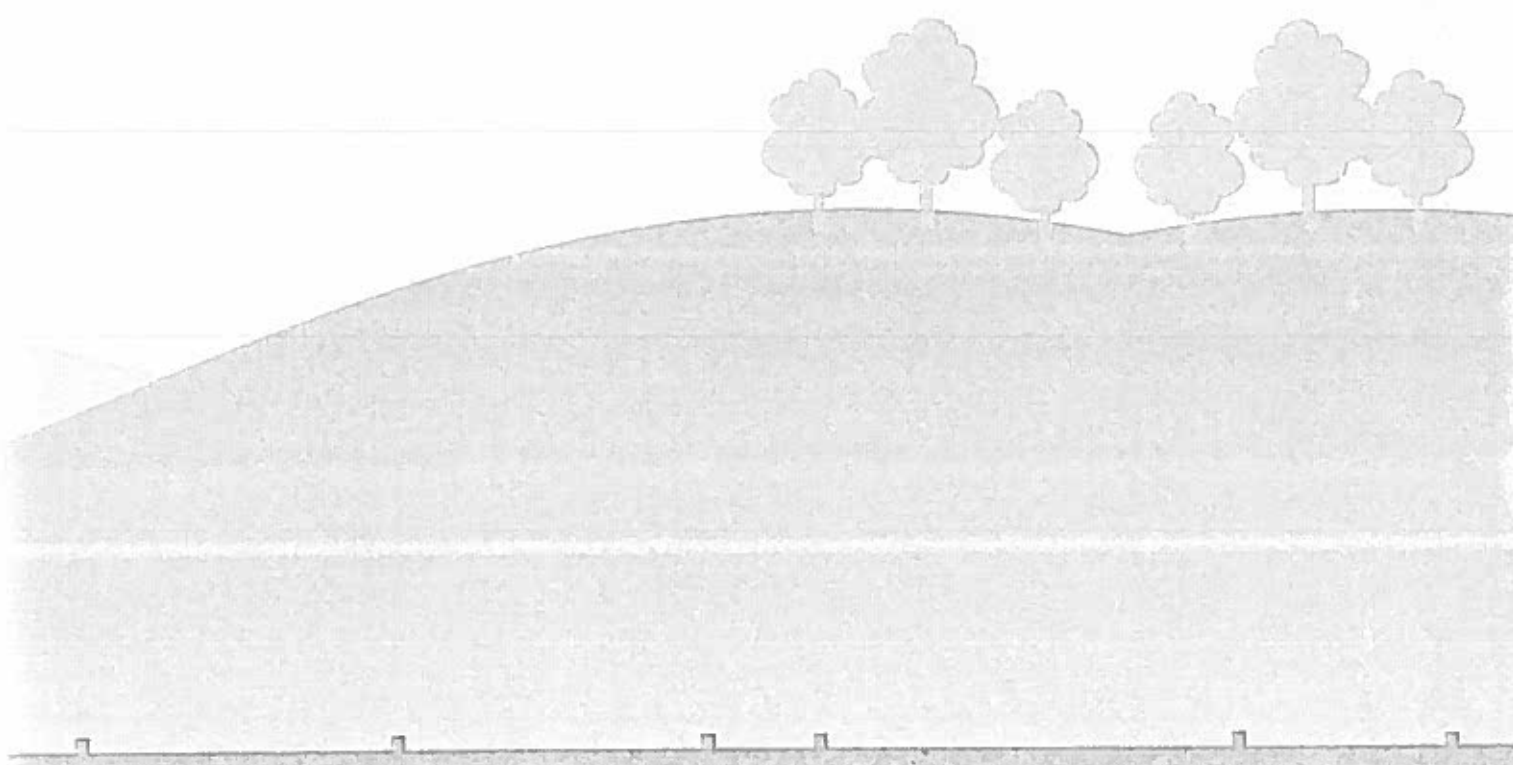
---

Comments on the:

## Alternative options considered by the LA

Porth Community School is a new educational provision, and I am concerned as I have heard more bad comments than good comments. Anyone will agree that children will benefit from new modern facilities, but 21st Century modernisation and investment cannot compare to 21 years CDU experience at Hafod Primary.

The provision has evidence of successful learning of ASD pupils and ALN. The Porth County Comprehensive unit history cannot be used as experience for KS1 and KS2 working well – it's a big jump and still a huge transition between two separate buildings on the same site. KS1 pupils have been gained from relocation or closure from Ysgol y Eos for September 2018 opening of Porth Community School and are also involved in the period of 'limited disruption'. There is no evidence, experience or history that this will be a 'better provision' for my son and I need to reflect on past experience and knowledge of the schools before merge. I hope that all my concerns are considered and sense will prevail, to allow a "complete" experienced and excellent CDU operating as it has successfully for many years.



**Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:**

\*Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

Do you agree with this Proposal?      Yes      No      Not Sure

**Please let us know the reason for your choice:**

As the chairperson of Hafod Primary PTA I am writing as advocate for the parents of the children in the CDC unit, who are unanimously opposed to this relocation. I have been privileged to be involved with the school and its pupils for a number of years and have been continually overwhelmed by the community support that surrounds our children.

Throughout Hafod Primary, our CDC unit is treated no differently to any other class in the school community. They are free to share playtimes and meal times together, be active members of the school council, attend assemblies, festivals, concerts, sports days and school trips – with equal opportunity, but always with the correct support and safeguarding measures to ensure their additional learning needs are being met. In short, our children do not feel segregated or different in any way.

Our community feels a great concern that to move these students only serves to highlight their additional needs and the relocation to such a large and new provision will be detrimental to their progress. There is currently no proof that these larger schools are a successful future model – in fact the evidence so far points to the contrary.

Being part of a smaller community means that we also hear reports that Porth Community School is not meeting parental expectations yet, and that it is far from overcoming initial teething troubles – it would therefore be remiss of us to allow our CDC class to be relocated to an untested and as yet unsettled provision when they are currently thriving where they are.

I have spent many hours with the parents of the children in Dosbarth Coch and each one has a story of how their child struggled until they came to Hafod Primary. You can therefore understand the high levels of stress and disbelief that the proposal was met with, with some parents rightly questioning the logic when they had just moved their child from Porth due to the fact that their child's needs were not being adequately met. We have so far not received adequate proof that this has changed.

Although it may not seem to be the most relevant of issues, it has also been highlighted that Porth Community has yet to establish a PTA group. At Hafod Primary our PTA is extremely active, and the events we run throughout the year are completely inclusive and bring the community together every couple of months. We run discos, pyjama days, movie nights and have gardening groups in the summer months, we carve pumpkins and hold baking competitions and all of this helps to bring our school community together and build confidence in our children, whatever

class they are in. Dosbarth Coch not only participates in every extra curricular activity, but often they come out winning prizes and having the whole school cheering them on. Will they have guaranteed access to the same level of inclusive activities if they are moved? If not then these children will be missing out.

Our CDC parents recently took a tour of Porth Community, where they were assured that the standard of education at Hafod Primary was never in dispute, but it was due to their excellence that they wanted to relocate them for their through provision – apparently in order to be excellent they have to have excellent.

---

It is surprising to me that the Local Authority feel that they will achieve success by separating this unit and just moving it to another place. In order for this to be successful, Dosbarth Coch would need to be treated like a separate entity within Hafod Primary – which it categorically is not. This is like plucking a flower and expecting it to keep on living in a vase. Dosbarth Coch is our flower, but Hafod Primary is the root system. Its inclusive programmes, trained and dedicated staff and tight knit local community ensure that these children thrive alongside their peers.

This relocation not only affects the children in the CDC, but the wider school community. Our children have friendships throughout the school, and to relocate their friends highlights their perceived differences. What message is this sending to our children? It is deeply concerning. Our job is to prepare our children for their life after school, to be inclusive, accepting and kind. We can only do this if we are part of an inclusive and accepting community in our formative years. The rising statistics of ASD diagnoses appear to highlight that more, not less, provision is required.

I urge you to fully consider the repercussions of this proposal. These eight children who are to be potentially relocated are from a long line of children who have thrived within Hafod Primary during the last 21 years. They are good at what they do – in fact from every parent I have spoken to, they excel in ways which they have not found anywhere else. With this being the case, the Local Authority should be listening to these parents past and present and learning what Hafod Primary has achieved and what has made it so successful. They should be striving to replicate this provision, not to close it and relocate it to a new, unsettled and untested provision which is still finding its feet.

Please take the time to research all of the facts surrounding this proposal – because once it is done it cannot be easily rectified, and the parents who are so happy that their children are finally thriving will be demanding answers should the new provision not at least mirror or surpass their current level of care.

Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of pupil at a named school, governor at a named school etc.)

Chairperson of PTA

---

Name (optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.



---

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 21 December 2018 11:35  
To: A&I Service  
Subject: Consultation response to A&I Service Proposals Consultation

I am responding specifically and only to Proposal 2 of the above consultation:

**Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:**

**\*Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4**

2. Do you agree with the proposal? No

Please let us know the reasons for your choice:

I have direct experience of the excellent provision provided by the small communication disorders unit - Dosbarth Coch - at Hafod Primary. My son, now a thriving young man, transferred to the unit by order of tribunal when Cardiff Council, at the end of the 20th century, had no communication difficulties unit provision to offer him within a mainstream setting. Cardiff funded provision and transport for our son at Hafod Primary following order of tribunal which involved expert independent specialist reports by occupational therapists, educational psychologists and speech and language therapists. Those reports concluded that Hafod unit was a model unit for children with communication difficulties, unparalleled in Cardiff and neighbouring LAs. In fact, based on their experience of the Hafod Unit, Cardiff modelled its provisions thereafter on the Hafod exemplar. It is therefore ironic that RCT is now considering these proposals for change.

The diffident, anxious child who found school at Creigiau Primary unbearable settled and blossomed within weeks of arriving at Hafod Primary. The provision is sufficiently small to suit children with communication disorders whereas the new unit will be larger; Hafod school itself is also small, and is ideally suited for children with communication disorders who often have difficulty coping in a larger school setting such as the school proposed for the new unit - Porth school. Younger children of KS2 age children will also find it hard to cope alongside the older age range (16) with whom they will share a unit at Porth. The very size of the current Hafod provision within a small school is integral and fundamental to its success. We question why RCT would close a unit which has transformed the lives of so many children who have benefited from its support.

We question the validity of the claim that the Porth Unit will provide better ease of access for the pupils. Whereas ease of access may be an issue for those with more physical and medical conditions who attend other units under consideration in this consultation, the pupils attending the Hafod Unit are there due to communication difficulties - physical mobility is not always an issue, but the atmosphere and size of the unit they will be comfortable in is key to their ability to cope. What is more, it is not clear whether the unit at Porth will specialise in communication difficulties, or whether it will cater generally for a wider range of difficulties and therefore struggle to match the specialism and communications expertise provided by the current Hafod unit. It would be a retrograde step to be a unit of for all disabilities and master of none - the very reason why our son was ordered by tribunal to Hafod (as the Cardiff Units failed to specialise on communication, but catered for a range of physical disabilities).

We would willingly support our son to attend a meeting with the A&I Service for you to question him regarding his time at the Hafod Unit. He has insisted that we respond to this consultation to ensure that you are fully aware of the qualities of the unit prior to taking any drastic decisions regarding its future.

As a family we ask that you take our comments on board and seriously reconsider the proposal to relocate the Hafod Unit to form a larger, less specialist unit in a larger school. We have in our elder son a perfect example of how a very anxious young man who struggled to cope in a school environment and who had very little self-worth was transformed at Hafod Unit, where he was supported to strengthen his academic ability, his speech and communication, his gross and fine motor skills and particularly his music and performing skills. He then progressed confidently to Bryn Celynnog CDU to do GCSEs and excel in music and then now to Coleg y Cymoedd. As best practice in ALN education provision requires a focus on person-centred provision for each individual, we feel that it is the duty of RCT to listen to pupils and their parents who can testify to the individually tailored provision provided at Dosbarth Coch, Hafod school. It would be a tragedy if that person-centred provision were to be diluted and lost in the course of a reorganisation which is obviously focused more on the organisational, rather than the individual level, and in doing so fails to recognise what could be lost if this proposal is implemented. Above all, we question the impact on the current pupils and their parents if the pupils face anxieties as a direct result of a dramatic change to their routine education provision. Those anxieties often have far-reaching consequences.

We would like to be kept informed regarding this issue. Please use our contact e-mail address to keep us updated regarding this consultation and to contact us for further feedback.

*Anfonwyd o'r iPad/Sent from my iPad*



From:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

RECEIVED  
31 OCT 2018  
ACCESS & INCLUSION

To Whom It May Concern,

[REDACTED] and I have been a Teaching Assistant here at Hafod Primary School's Communication Disorder Unit for the last 18 years.

On October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018, I was informed of plans to uproot myself, my colleagues, and the pupils from the Communication Disorder Unit from Hafod Primary – relocating us to Porth Community School.

Having read through the proposal document in full, I can honestly say that I disagree with these proposed changes.

Though this change may make perfect sense on paper in an office far away from our little village school, what's missing from the proposal is an understanding of who we are, and what we do. There seems to be a lack of understanding as to what the success of this class means to the children, and their school.

We at Hafod primary can honestly say that the wellbeing of the children has always been our top priority. Our school is at the heart of our community, and our class - the heart of our school. We nurture our children and provide excellent teaching, ensuring that no child goes without regardless of age, class, or ability.

The mainstream pupils in Hafod embrace pupils in our CD Unit, and no child is treated differently. Our children interact with their peers from others classes, especially at break times and lunch times, and have friends and siblings embedded within the school.

During lesson time, children from the CD Unit are integrated (with support) into mainstream classes when possible. Pupils are also supported on a more individual basis through OT and speech and language sessions.

Our pupils are included in sports, our school council, Crew Cymraeg, school trips, and are included in school talks such as fire safety, road safety, and puberty talks. They all take part in school assemblies, concerts, music events, and art competitions. In addition to all of this, our after school clubs and Llangrannog weekends have been hugely successful.

This school is as much theirs as it is any other child's, and when the time comes for them to move on in line with the pupils they have grown and developed with, the transition to the secondary school of their choice has always been successful.

Though I appreciate Porth Community School offers some fantastic new facilities for our pupils, our class at Hafod is already fully equipped to support the needs of our students. Students are supported with transport to and from school, we have a modern interactive whiteboard, a designated quiet room, a library, access to computers, laptops and tablets. We're also lucky enough to have great outdoor facilities and a lovely big flat yard where pupils play together with no boundaries.

In addition to all of this, our inspection reports have always shown a positive feedback for our class.

Here at Hafod Primary School, we have a warm, welcoming, approachable village school. We hold coffee mornings so that the parents can take the time to interact with one another and see their child's work.

I urge you to give us a visit, and we will show you why we want to stay at the heart of Hafod Primary.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

**Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:**

- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

2. Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes

No

Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice:

Please see attached letter

RECEIVED  
12 DEC 2018  
ACCESS & INCLUSION

Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at a named school, governor at named school etc.)

T/A Hafod Primary School

Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.

After the meeting held at our school on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018, there were many questions unanswered.

The fact that the staff in question weren't even contacted personally, the process was very unprofessionally handled does not give me much confidence.

The fact that you stated nothing would change for us in Dosbarth Coch, and that the timetable and start and finish of Porth Community School was the same in lower and middle school and then to find out on line that this is untrue again gives me no confidence.

The fact that you state that the foundation phase KS1 has been a success (although this is only over a 13 week period) compared to a 21 year success at Hafod Primary, which has concrete evidence from Estyn, well there is no comparison.

The fact that you state there will be no detrimental effect on pupils, I beg to differ.

7.12.18

The fact that all pupils have the right to all inclusive provisions at Hafod Primary

The fact that almost all of the pupils over the 21 years of the CDC unit has come from mainstream classes and are still coming to us from mainstream classes.

The fact that the pupils in Dosbarth Coch come from all parts of R.C.T. and not from the local catchment areas alone.

The fact that our school at Hafod could probably fill our unit many times over with pupils already in our mainstream classes within our school if they were diagnosed earlier.

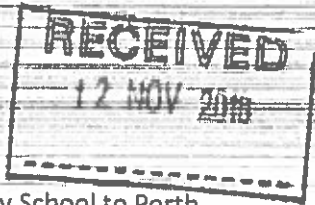
The fact that by doing what you propose is taking the rights of the child and their parents away from choosing what school they would like to attend.

The fact that our CDU will no longer be a CDU, which is desperately needed.

7.12.18

The fact that our pupils in Dasbarth Coch have easy access and inclusion inside school and around the community within walking distance, which plays a vital part of ~~the~~ learning and independence.

This would be taken away from them if the proposal went ahead.



**Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:**

- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

2. Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes

No

Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice:

Please see attached sheets. (3Nº)

Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at a named school, governor at named school etc)

 — PARENT — HAFOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.

---

---

I am against the proposed transfer of the Support Class "Dorbarth Coch" from Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School because of the following negatives.

- ① The children are already well settled in the highly rated and very successful Hafod Primary School.  
The movement of young <sup>ADs</sup> children before their time to the next school will be very disruptive and destabilizing.
- ② Hafod School being a small school and class is the ideal environment for young children with ADs. The larger more ~~more~~ busier Porth school and class will certainly be more daunting to these young children.
- ③ Hafod Primary School and its support class is a highly sought after school for parents to bring their children (usually with pupils on waiting list) and is a vital part of the Trehafod community. The removal of part of this well respected school will certainly have a negative effect on the rest of the school and the close knit Trehafod village.



- ④ Hafod is a far better performing school, as Estyn currently rates Hafod school performance as "Good" whereas Porth school is only rated "Adequate" (The Real School Guide only gives Porth a one star out of five rating)!!!
- ⑤ The RCT report does not show that Hafod's support class, over an acceptable period, has been 100% full for two of the last three years. The report does forecast that Hafod school numbers will increase during the next five years. This indicates that Hafod school does have the children numbers with efficient and projected use of resources.
- ⑥ Hafod school already have the essential school facilities and the RCT report even states that its buildings, "it is in good repair".  
So in Hafod's case, the need for brand new premises are not essential.
- ⑦ Trehafod is ideally and easily accessible to all RCT Valley and Porthymdd Areas. There are no accessibility issues for Hafod school as the report seems to indicate.  
However Porth School, with its large numbers and near entrance location to the main road can be at start & finishing school times.

④ The RCT report indicates the "LSC relocations to ensure cross phase provision in a single sited, accessible school buildings"

But this single school requirement for both primary and secondary schools LSC children is not essential or ~~necessary~~ <sup>necessary</sup>, especially with the very successful arrangement that already exists.

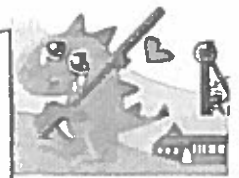
That being Hafod Primary School expertly preparing the Key Stage 2 LSC pupils for later transfer to secondary schools (Aontr or wherever) at the appropriate age.

To relocate Hafod Primary School Support class "Deshants Coch" to another school will <sup>inevitably</sup> result in a backward step for the education of these children.

Please leave Hafod Support class as is.

  
5/11/18

Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:



\*Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

RECEIVED

Do you agree with this Proposal? Yes  No  Not Sure

09 NOV 2018

Please let us know the reason for your choice:

ACCESS & INCLUSION

I believe that Dosbarth Coch is the heart of Hafod Primary. It has been believing and achieving with the pupils in its CDC unit for over 21 years with outstanding results. The small size of the school, and highly trained and dedicated whole school staff, mean that the children flourish and grow in confidence during their time at Hafod.

I believe that reducing transition periods are not a valid enough reason for relocation – the children in the CDC unit at Hafod are always well prepared and have the confidence to deal with transition periods when necessary. If this proposal should go ahead, our pupils will only have 5 months to prepare for a transition that usually takes 2 years – this is unacceptable.

Although Porth Community School is new and state of the art, it is also extremely large and overwhelming to a person with Communication Disorders. The high pupil numbers in Porth lead to overwhelming stimulus on the journey to and from school. This unnecessary stress can be avoided at Hafod Primary.

At Hafod Primary, our CDC unit is completely integrated into the full school population. The children are included in all school activities, both curricular and extra curricular. They share a large yard with the whole school with no restriction and a trained member of support staff at all times. The yard at Porth Community School is much smaller and isolated from their peers. We should be promoting integration, not separation.

The additional learning needs act states “Improve the planning and delivery of support for learners from 0 to 25 with ALN, placing learners’ needs, views, wishes and feelings at the heart of the process”

The children of Dosbarth Coch wish to remain at Hafod Primary – this reflects that their needs are being more than met here, and they have made their wishes and feelings clear. I am writing this letter to be their voice, to see that their wishes are being heard.

**Please let Hafod Primary continue ‘Believing and Achieving’**

Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of pupil at a named school, governor at a named school etc.)

PARENT GOVERNESS AT HAFOD PRIMARY

Name (optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.

[Redacted contact details]

### Consultation Response Pro-forma

In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services', Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, CF45 4UQ or by fax to 01443 744024, or email to [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)

#### The Proposals

#### Proposal 1: The closure of the following LSC in August 2019:

- Heol y Celyn Primary School – Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties
- Heol y Celyn Primary School – Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties
- Penrhys Primary School – Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties (x1 class)
- Penywaun Primary School – Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties
- Pontygwaith Primary School – Foundation LSC Phase for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties
- Caradog Primary School – Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties

1. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes  No  Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Caradog is a fantastic school with complete access & facilities throughout purposefully for my daughter [redacted] in the LSC. The staff are well experienced & very

#### Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Caradog Primary School to Cwmbach Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2.
- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Penrhys Primary School to Maerdy Community Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

2. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes  No  Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Caradog has the facilities to accommodate infants & juniors. They have everything at Caradog school for a smooth transition. Please see additional notes.

#### Proposal 3: The re-designations of the following LSC's from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Darran Park Primary and Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant

Primary to become Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under compulsory school age with significant presenting needs.

3. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

This is not my daughters school.

**Proposal 4: The creation of New LSC provision with effect from the 1st of September 2019:**

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ysgol Nant Gwyn
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at a Comprehensive School to be confirmed following discussions with Headteachers

4. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

This is not my daughters school.

5. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

Please see additional notes.

6. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

PARENT OF A PUPIL AT CARADOG PRIMARY SCHOOL  
KEYSTAGE 2 LSC (REDACTED)

7. Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

[REDACTED]

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 5pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice)  
and the Council's data protection pages here:  
[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).

My daughter [redacted] is a 7 year old girl with quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy. She has attended Caradog Primary School since age 3. I cannot fault the school & staff at Caradog for all that they do for [redacted] & help they have given me with the battles I have faced within school setting. They have been behind me fully & helped in whatever way they can. They go above and beyond in their roles as teachers and support [redacted] all she does. The staff at both the infants & junior units are fully trained in suction, peg feeding, manual handling, epilepsy to name a few to fully look after my daughter. I would say my daughter is the most physically disabled the school has facilitated with very complex needs and yet the school has been fully adapted to make the whole site completely accessible. A lot of money has been spent on the school to make it suitable for my daughter and in doing so makes it suitable for all children with disabilities. The paper the Education dep have provided is completely false saying Caradog is not suitable for medical and physical needs since it has been fully developed for such needs, completely. There is nothing my daughter cannot access. She is wheelchair bound and needs a walking frame.

Caradog school have even gone as far as giving my daughter the head mistresses room to store her equipment (which includes a wheelchair, x panda seat & base, standing frame, walking frame, eye gaze stand) and to have her physio & speech & language therapy sessions in private. My daughter is very happy at Caradog school & enjoys being there every day.

The major benefit at Caradog school is there is both infant & junior units which makes the transition much easier for the children who all find transition hard enough. Having to move to a different school would be detrimental to these children. My daughter did find it hard moving from infants to juniors and has taken 2 months to settle. Moving her to a completely different school would be such a massive change for her that it would certainly affect her health. She needs routine & consistency and having been at a school for 5 years to then have to leave will have major affects on her physically & mentally as well as emotionally.

I couldn't be happier with the setting at Caradog as well as the staff, not just in the unit but the school as a whole.

with my daughter and have major concerns. More importantly, when asked during the visit & after, my daughter indicated that she did not like the school. Her OT and private physio also attended a visit & have sent their recommendations also. Although Cwmbach is a lovely modern school

there are many negative points to make with ~~very few positives. The positives being there is~~

a flat area throughout the school.

However drawbacks to the school are:

- the proposed unit for KS2 is at the furthest part of the school.
- the unit is too small for 10 children let alone a further 9 to join the 5 pupils already there, plus my daughter's wheelchair. There is limited space to move about.
- there is no other room available to facilitate a larger number of pupils
- no storage area for my daughter's equipment a corridor is not acceptable as the pieces of equipment are very expensive and any damage is detrimental to my daughter's development.
- no room available for therapy - a quiet and private environment
- access to the yard from the classroom is very tight for a wheelchair/walking frame, and the ramp to the yard has a drop down the side which is dangerous. There is also no room for transfers from chair to walker to wheelchair and back
- the disabled toilet is 75m away from the classroom which is too far for my daughter



Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:

- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

2. Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes

No

Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice:

[REDACTED]

RECEIVED  
17 DEC 2018  
ACCESS & INCLUSION

Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at a named school, governor at named school etc.)

I am a governor and staff member of Hafod Primary

Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.

[REDACTED]

Mafof Primary School is a small village school right in the centre of Trehafof, it is at the heart of a very supportive community, a very special place and the perfect environment for a child to spend their primary school years. Trehafof is a very accessible village with lots of places to visit and everywhere in walking distance from the school, so all the children who attend Mafof go out on regular visits to the local parks, Barry siding, Heritage Park and the Community Hall, Sports Day is held in the football field. I went to Mafof Primary and so did my children, I am a member of staff and have been a member of a very supportive Governing Body for the past eighteen years.

21 years ago the head teacher at the time had a vision and that was inclusion for all children, she was very dedicated and determined and went out and fought for placing the L.F.A funded Communication Disorder class in Mafof, she was successful and the unit came to Mafof where

It has been ever since, part of Mafof Primary.

I totally disagree with the proposal of the relocation of the Key Stage 2 Communication Disorders Unit from Mafof Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16) provision because for the past 21 years the unit has been part of a Successful Progressive inclusive forward thinking school, a school which puts its pupils first and a school which has been praised by inspectors for its Caring ethos. All children are encouraged to do their best and treat each other with respect thus can be seen everyday during lessons, playtimes and lunchtime. Although the C.D.U. is centrally funded by the local Authority it is very much part of Mafof Primary. The children integrate really well into mainstream classes for maths and other classroom based activities, they join in school and class assemblies, concerts Sports and extra Curricular activities including Weekend trips to Manngwong, where they spend time with their mainstream

Class Friends, Playtime and lunchbreaks are times when all the children in Hafod come together to play and enjoy each others company. Their school day starts in Breakfast Club and all the children in the Communication Disorder Unit attend, they come to school in a taxi, and drinks and toast are available and set out ready for when they get to school, thus is all part of their daily routine.

It is because of the location, the supportive wider community, the small school environment and the very experienced and committed staff who support the children in the C.D.U everyday is why it is so successful, dedicated staff who want the best for all our children in Hafod Primary. A headteacher who has trained in S.E.N, a teacher herself in Hafod with vast experience, the class teacher in the C.D.U who is an excellent practitioner who specialises in S.E.N and two excellent members of support staff who have years of experience working in the C.D.U.

How can it be right to propose to take a class

of children who are settled in their school, who want to stay with their friends away and place them in an environment which to them will be totally alien. Remember many of the children who come to Hafod's CDU have been in mainstream classes in other schools where they have found it difficult to settle. These children experience difficulty with social situations, they need familiarity, they need stability and routine, this is paramount for their development progression and eventual transition. The highly skilled staff in the CDU, along with the headteacher and other familiar staff myself included can provide all of these things in a caring environment. We pass on ideas and share good practice, thus needs to continue and Hafod is the best place for this.


Statistics, Feasibility, 21st Century State of the art buildings don't mean a thing, these children struggle in social situations, they need, routine, continuity and familiarity. You talk about a seamless transition from

foundation phase right the way through to Key Stage 2, 3 and up to the age of 16, but what good is that, if the child cannot settle, there is no evidence to say that it works, but we know that the system we have in Hafod does work and it has for 21 years. The children in the C.D.U are taught well, encouraged to do their best, we build their confidence and most of all they are supported through Key stage 2, that is why the 'seamless transition' to Secondary school works so well in Hafod both in the C.D.U and mainstream.

It was a total shock to be told by the headteacher the proposal of the relocation of the C.D.U, which she received by email not even a telephone call and the upset which it has caused and is still causing. However the parents of the children in the C.D.U and the rest of the school are very rightly opposed to your proposal and are very angry. They are committed in their fight to overturn your proposal and have gained a lot

of support and rightly so.

Then there is the worst scenario to come should the proposal go through, just imagine how the children in mainstream will feel in September 2019 when they have to walk past an empty class, where just eight weeks before it was full of their friends and staff, how does the headteacher explain that because we will have some very upset children. I really do believe that you need to reconsider these proposals because it will tear apart a school and change things, and most definitely not for the best. 21 years of believing and achieving, why propose to change something which works so well, in such a child centered environment; it works so well and needs to continue and the best place for this to work is in Haberdashers Primary School, a school which has been open for over 120 years.

yours faithfully  








Cllr Joy Rosser  
Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning  
Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC  
The Pavilions  
Tonypanyd  
CF40 2XX

Ein Cyf | Our Ref: LW/dg/181210/Hafod

12<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**Re: Dosbarth Coch, Hafod Primary School**

I would like to comment on the proposed review of the Learning Support Provision within RCT, specifically your proposal to relocate the Communication Disorder Class (CDC) based at Hafod Primary School to Porth County School.

I have been persuaded by the arguments made by staff, governors and parents of Hafod Primary School that to remove the unit from the school would be a step in the wrong direction.

Whilst you may think that relocating all provision to the Porth County School would work well on paper, it ignores the very human relations that have evolved at the school over the twenty plus years that the CDC has been based at Hafod.

First is the fact that the children who attend the CDC, where able, integrate with the rest of the school. This can only have a positive outcome for children who attend the CDC and for all those children who meet with the children from the CDC. The children of the CDC are seen as friends by the other children at Hafod.

The nurturing environment at the school is supported by the whole school which, because of their size, is more able to accommodate the needs of the children at the CDC. In the past, parents have fought to be able to move their children from Porth to Hafod CDC. It seems unjust now to force them to go back.

The parent's and community's strong desire to keep the class at Hafod is a compelling case to continue welcoming children to Hafod Primary, and I feel that it truly is up to you as an authority to prove that the provision, the care, and support that the children would receive at the new unit would be better than they currently enjoy. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Leanne Wood AM

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Welsh Assembly Government  
10th Floor, 10th Floor, 10th Floor  
10th Floor, 10th Floor, 10th Floor

National Assembly for Wales

Cardiff City Centre, Cardiff  
Leadenhall Building, Cardiff  
0300 200 0000



Cymru Wales



To: Leanne Wood AM  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Gofynnwch  
Am: Gaynor Davies  
Rhif Est:  
Telephone N°: 01443 744001  
Ffacs:  
Fax:  
E-Bost:  
E-Mail:  
Cylichlythyr:  
Circular:

Fy nghyf: GD/TM  
My Ref:

Eich Cyf: Your Ref:

Dyddiad: 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019  
Date:

Dear Ms Wood

### **Re: Relocation of KS2 Communication Disorder Unit (CDU) at Hafod Primary School**

Thank you for your letter which was received on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2018. Apologies for the delay in responding due to the extended Christmas and New Year closure period

The relocation of the Key Stage 2 Learning Support Class (LSC) for pupils with Communication Disorders/Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School forms part of the Local Authority's proposed realignment of Learning Support Class provision. These proposals, if improved, will enhance the current arrangements to provide more effective and a more equitable continuum of mainstream inclusion opportunities for pupils with a range of special educational needs.

Porth Community School currently hosts one Learning Support Class for pupils with ASD in the Foundation Phase and three Learning Support Classes for pupils with ASD in Key Stages 3 and 4. The proposed relocation of the Learning Support Class at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School will create an all through phase specialist provision for pupils with ASD from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. The proposal will minimise unnecessary transition for pupils with significant needs to transfer from one school setting to another to access Learning Support Class provision for Communication Disorder/ASD and provide equity for pupils in need of specialist provision to remain in one school setting – an opportunity that is generally available to their mainstream peers. The new location will also ensure that the pupils in the Learning Support Class will access a fully accessible cross-phase provision for learners with ASD within a school environment that has recently benefited from £11.6m investment as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Modernisation Programme.

Tŷ Trevithick  
Abercynon, Aberpennar, CF45 4UQ  
Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ

Ffôn/Tel: 01443 744000  
Ffacs/Fax: 01443 744024

**Gaynor Davies**  
Cyfarwyddwr Addyg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant | Director of Education and Inclusion Services

#### **Dewiswch iaith a diwyg eich dogfen | Available in alternative formats and languages**

Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhwch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewls iaith e.e Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog.  
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.

As I am sure you are aware, the initial consultation period has been in process since October and ended on the 21<sup>st</sup> December. There has been an opportunity for all concerned parties to submit their views and queries to the Council in relation to the above proposal. Consultation meetings have been held at the school with the School Council, staff, parents and governors where the process for concerned parties to respond to the consultation was explained. Parents of pupils currently in the Learning Support Class who would be directly affected by this proposal have also had the opportunity to visit the proposed new facilities at Porth Community and to meet the Headteacher who is committed to providing a fully inclusive high quality 21<sup>st</sup> Century specialist provision for pupils with communication disorders and ASD.

---

It is fair to say that a number of concerns have been raised during the consultation meetings and the stakeholder feedback received will be detailed in a consultation report presented to the Council's Cabinet for consideration in January 2019. Some issues have been raised by a number of parents on the impact of the changes on existing learners and due consideration will be given to all evidence presented. The report submitted to Cabinet will contain information in relation to all the representations made, and decision making on whether we proceed to statutory notice or not will be well informed by the extensive stakeholder feedback received.

The Local Authority understands that any proposal for change can be an anxious time for pupils and parents/carers alike. The Education Directorate will however endeavour to ensure that the correct decision is made in the best interest of the children and young people who are central to these proposals for change.

Yours sincerely

**Councillor Joy Rosser**  
**Cabinet Member of Education**



CHRIS BRYANT MP  
Member of Parliament for the Rhondda

181211AM (L) C BRY  
Deadline  
Oxford House, Dunraven Street  
TONYPANDY, Rhondda  
CF40 1AU  
Tel: 01443 442521  
Tel: 01443 442246  
Email: chris.bryant.mp@parliament.uk

Councillor Andrew Morgan  
Leader  
Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council  
The Pavillions  
Clydach Vale  
Tonypandy  
CF40 2XX

CABINET SUPPORT  
11 DEC 2018

**Our Ref: CB17834**

7 December 2018

Dear Andrew,

**Re: Relocation of KS2 Communication Disorder Class at Hafod Primary School**

I am writing on behalf of many constituents who have been in touch with my office recently regarding the relocation of the KS2 Communication Disorder Class at Hafod Primary School.

On a recent visit to the school, I saw how integral the class is to the school, and this proposed change is causing much upset and concern with both parents and staff. I would kindly ask for the decision to be looked at once more, with further consultation done with the parents and staff affected.

I enclose the letters I have had from concerned parties about this change.

Kind regards,

*Chris Bryant*

**Chris Bryant**  
Member of Parliament for the Rhondda

Cc: Mr Chris Bryant



To: Chris Bryant MP  
Oxford House  
Dunraven Street  
Tonypany  
Rhondda Cynon Taff  
CBC CF40 1AU

Gofynnwch Am:  
Please ask for:  
Rhif Est:  
Telephone N°:  
Ffacs:  
Fax:  
E-bost:  
E-mail:  
Cylichlythyr:  
Circular:

Fy nghyf:  
My Ref:

Eich Cyf:  
Your Ref:

Dyddiad:  
18.12.18

Dear Chris

**Re: Relocation of KS2 Communication Disorder Class at Hafod Primary School**

Thank you for your letter which was received on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2018. The relocation of the Key Stage 2 Learning Support Class (LSC) for pupils with Communication Disorders/Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School forms part of the Local Authority's proposed realignment of Learning Support Class provision. These proposals, if improved, will enhance the current arrangements to provide more effective and a more equitable continuum of mainstream inclusion opportunities for pupils with a range of special educational needs.

Porth Community School currently hosts one Learning Support Class for pupils with ASD in the Foundation Phase and three Learning Support Classes for pupils with ASD in Key Stages 3 and 4. The proposed relocation of the Learning Support Class at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School will create an all through phase specialist provision for pupils with ASD from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. The proposal will minimise unnecessary transition for pupils with significant needs to transfer from one school setting to another to access Learning Support Class provision for Communication Disorder/ASD and provide equity for pupils in need of specialist provision to remain in one school setting – an opportunity that is generally available to their mainstream peers. The new location will also ensure that the pupils in the Learning Support Class will access a fully accessible cross-phase provision for learners with ASD within a school environment that has recently benefited from £11.6m investment as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Modernisation Programme.

As I am sure you are aware, the initial consultation period has been in process since October and ended on the 21<sup>st</sup> December. There has been an opportunity for all concerned parties to submit their views and queries to the Council in relation to the above proposal. Consultation meetings have been held at the school with the School Council, staff, parents and governors where the process for concerned parties to respond to the consultation was explained. Parents of pupils currently in the Learning Support Class who would be directly affected by this proposal have also had the opportunity to visit the proposed new facilities at Porth Community and to meet the Headteacher who is committed to providing a fully inclusive high quality 21<sup>st</sup> Century specialist provision for pupils with communication disorders and ASD.

It is fair to say that a number of issues have been raised during the consultation meetings and the stakeholder feedback received will be detailed in a consultation report presented to the Council's Cabinet for consideration in January 2019. Some concerns have been raised by parents on the impact of the changes on existing learners and due consideration will be given to all evidence presented. The report submitted to Cabinet will contain information in relation to all the representations made, and decision making on whether we proceed to statutory notice or not will be well informed by the extensive stakeholder feedback received.

The Local Authority understands that any proposal for change can be an anxious time for pupils and parents/carers alike. We will however endeavour to ensure that the correct decision is made in the best interest of the children and young people who are central to these proposals for change.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Morgan  
Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council





*Education is our heritage and our future*

[REDACTED]

26<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Dear Mr Bryant,

As part of the consultation on the document "Review of Learning Support Provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf" we are writing to seek your views and support about our objections to the Local Authority Proposal 2 to "relocate" the KS2 Communication Disorder Class at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School from September 2019. The school and the wider community strongly oppose the relocation as we believe it will not be in the best interests of any children in Hafod Primary School.

Our LA funded KS2 Communication Disorder Class (CDC) was established in 1997 at Hafod Primary and it is staffed by 1 teacher and 2 Learning Support Assistants. The number of children in the class was 8 until September 2016 when numbers rose to 10. We have never had surplus numbers in our CDC until this academic year when the Local Authority placed 8 children in the CDC one month before the announcement of this proposal.

The CDC serves to provide children on the Autistic Spectrum with inclusive provision in a mainstream setting. Our pupils are supported to develop academically, improve their understanding of social communication and to provide opportunities for supported social and academic integration with mainstream children. At Hafod we strive to ensure our CDC provides equity of provision to enable pupils to fulfil their potential both academically and socially.

At Hafod Primary our CDC is supported by: a small whole school staff team, a nurturing small school environment, a management team experienced in ALN and a supportive close-knit community. Working together we have established flexible arrangements for integration, equality of opportunity for pupils in the CDC and strong community links. These key aspects have been instrumental in the success of our CDC at Hafod Primary. We believe these features cannot be replicated in the large 3-16 setting at Porth Community School.

At Hafod Primary School we are a small staff team. Children in our CDC class are known and supported by **all staff** throughout the school. This is invaluable particularly during more challenging social times such as dinner time, play time, assembly and transition times. Pupils in our CDC are not segregated and they successfully integrate during these times. We are also able to share knowledge and information quickly and effectively, responding to children's needs more readily. This has proved essential in more challenging situations. As a small school the CDC classroom is in close proximity to

Our small school nurturing environment combined with close-knit community support means pupils in our CDC even have opportunities to excel in more formal presentations and celebrations without being overwhelmed and over stimulated by the environment. Pupils always take full part in class assemblies, Y6 leavers assemblies, Eistedfordd art competitions, plays and whole school celebrations such as Harvest and Christmas plays. Several pupils throughout the years have performed lead roles in such events. Commenting on our recent harvest performance in Trehafod Village Hall One parent of a CDC pupil wrote in her child's home/school book, "We were overjoyed watching our son step out of his comfort zone during the harvest play. Thank you".

Prior to its establishment at Hafod Primary School in 1997, a number of schools bid for this CDC provision and our school was selected for a number of good reasons: the depth and wealth of experience and knowledge of ALN in the management team, the quiet, small village location with good access to major routes and the school being in good repair and fully accessible. These reasons are as valid today as they were then.

A small school nurturing environment, small staff team, smaller mainstream class sizes and close-knit community cannot be replicated in a large 3-16 provision. All these features contribute to establishing a low arousal environment, successful integration and great opportunities for our CDC pupils.

The community feeling to keep the CDC in Hafod Primary is very strong. A large group of parents quickly established a working group and enclosed is their 'Campaign Poster' for information. The whole community is fighting to keep the CDC at Hafod because their children have friends in the class and because they feel as committed to providing the best for children with Additional Learning Needs as the staff do.

For the past 21 years our LA funded CDC has not merely been located in Hafod Primary, it has evolved to be integral to the school and central to its ethos and identity. Our CDC is part of the Hafod "family". Please come and visit us so you can see for yourself.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

### **Staff and Governors of Hafod Primary School**

The consultation document can be found:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>

**Copies to:**

Chris Bryant MP  
Cllr Christina Leyshon  
Cllr Gareth Caple  
Cllr Joy Rosser  
Cllr Margaret Teg  
Cllr Robert W. Smith  
Eluned Morgan AM

Kirsty Williams AM  
Leanne Wood AM  
Mark Drakeford AM  
RCT Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
[REDACTED]  
Vaughan Gething AM



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms Gaynor Davies  
Director  
Education and Lifelong Learning  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ

Our Ref: BB/OS6675

8 November 2018

Dear Ms Davies

**Re: Closure of Dosbarth Coch at Hafod primary school**

I am writing on behalf of my constituent [REDACTED] who recently contacted me regarding the closure of Dosbarth Coch at Hafod primary school, and relocated to Porth County school.

[REDACTED] has a son who is on the autistic spectrum, who attended the Dosbarth Coch unit. With the support of the teaching staff at the school, he made the transition to mainstream before secondary school, where he achieved a degree in Computer games design.

[REDACTED] believes children who attend the unit have reaped the benefit of attending a facility close to their home, and with the extra support provided, they have been given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

I would be grateful if you could look into the issue [REDACTED] has raised, and let me know if a more local alternative provision has been considered and if an educational impact assessment has been carried out to measure the impact on the children affected by the closure of the school unit.

Yours sincerely

Owen Smith MP  
Member of Parliament for Pontypridd  
10 Market Street, Pontypridd, CF37 2ST  
owen.smith.mp@parliament.uk  
www.owensmithmp.co.uk  
Twitter @OwenSmith MP  
Tel: 01443 401122



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

To: Owen Smith MP  
10 Market Street  
Pontypridd  
CF37 2ST

Gofynnwch Gaynor Davies  
Am:  
Rhif Est: 01443 744001  
Telephone N°:  
Flacs:  
Fax:  
E-Bost:  
E-Mail:  
Cylchlythyr:  
Circular:

Fy nghyi: CJ  
My Ref:

Eich Cyf: BB/OS6675  
Your Ref:

Dyddiad: 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018  
Date:

Dear Mr Smith

**Re: Closure of Dosbarth Coch at Hafod Primary School**

Thank you for your letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> November on behalf of your constituent [REDACTED] regarding the proposed relocation of Dosbarth Coch to Porth Community School.

The proposal to relocate the Learning Support Class for pupils with Communication Disorders / ASD at Hafod Primary to Porth Community School forms part of the Local Authority's proposed realignment of Learning Support Class provision to enhance current arrangements to provide more effective and a more equitable continuum of mainstream inclusion opportunities for pupils with a range of special educational needs.

In relation to your reference to whether a more local alternative provision has been considered, it is important to note that the locality of Porth Community School is proximal to Hafod Primary, being only a short distance from the primary school. Further, regarding your query about whether an educational impact assessment has been carried out, I can assure you that the proposal and consultation process regarding the above relocation of Dosbarth Coch have been undertaken in accordance with the statutory requirements of the School Organisation Code which includes considering the educational case for the proposal and the likely impact of the proposal on the school pupils.

Tŷ Trevithick  
Abercynon, Aberpennar, CF45 4UQ  
Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ

Ffôn/Tel: 01443 744000  
Flacs/Fax: 01443 744024

**Gaynor Davies**  
Cyfarwyddwr Addyg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant | Director of Education and Inclusion Services

**Dewlswch iaith a diwyg eich dogfen | Available in alternative formats and languages**


Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhowch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewis iaith e.e Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog.  
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.



The consultation period for the above proposal is currently taking place and comes to an end on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018 during which [REDACTED] is welcome to send a response to the proposal to the Local Authority for consideration.

I hope the information above explains the current situation regarding the proposed relocation of the learning support class at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School.

**Yours sincerely**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gaynor Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

**Gaynor Davies**  
**Director of Education and Inclusion Services**



[Redacted]

Carter, Lisa

From: Williams, Rachel  
Sent: 05 December 2018 14:21  
To: Carter, Lisa  
Subject: FW: Proposal to relocate Hafod CDC

From: [Redacted]  
Sent: 04 December 2018 13:50  
To: Jones, Ceri (Education) <Ceri.L.Jones@rctcbc.gov.uk>  
Cc: Williams, Rachel <Rachel.Williams3@rctcbc.gov.uk>; 'secretary@rhondda-cynon-taf.nut.org.uk' <secretary@rhondda-cynon-taf.nut.org.uk>; [Redacted]  
Subject: Proposal to relocate Hafod CDC

Good Afternoon Ceri,

Thank you for your email today. I have copied and distributed the letters Rachel sent to invite parents to Dosbarth Coch.

Staff expressed a wish to visit Porth Community School in the meeting and thought this had been agreed. Indeed you said that members of your team would be happy to arrange cover for the class so that the three CDU staff could visit together. I have copied Rachel into this email as I understand she is arranging visits.

As agreed in the meeting staff have also asked me to forward the following questions to you:

1. Will staff currently working in the CDC at Hafod be relocated to Porth Community School if the proposal goes ahead?
2. When was the decision made to propose the relocation of Hafod CDC to the new Porth Community School. Why were parents and staff at Hafod Primary School not included in the initial consultation for Porth Comprehensive to become a 3-16 provision incorporating the CDC at KS2? Why was the decision made to relocate the Foundation Phase ASD class to Porth instead of the new 3-16 provision in Tonypany along with the rest of the pupils in Ysgol Yr Eos?
3. If the proposal goes ahead how will timetabling differences between lower and middle school in Porth Community School be addressed to facilitate effective inclusion for pupils in the Key Stage 2 CDC?
4. If the proposal were to go ahead what local amenities to support social skills development and community involvement are there near Porth Community School? Are they easily and safely accessible for pupils on foot?

If any of these questions are better answered by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century team perhaps you could provide appropriate contact information. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you

[Redacted signature block]

**Carter, Lisa**

**From:** Davies, Gaynor (Education)  
**Sent:** 11 December 2018 16:39  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Jones, Ceri (Education); Carter, Lisa  
**Subject:** FW: Proposal to relocate Hafod CDC

[REDACTED]

~~Thank you for your query. We acknowledge receipt and can confirm that these issues will be logged and included in the consultation report presented to Cabinet in January 2019. As I'm sure you will appreciate, there are numerous school consultations being undertaken at present and it is not possible to respond to every individual query during the consultation process. However, responses to all the issues raised during the consultation process will be provided as part of the consultation report presented to Cabinet members: The decision made by Cabinet at this time will inform whether or not we need to proceed to a statutory consultation.~~

The consultation document relating to reorganisation of primary schools, secondary schools and 6<sup>th</sup> form provision in the Rhondda Vallëys and Tonyrefail includes a reference to establishing specialist provision for the four key stages in the new 3-16 school. The school, governing bodies, parents, carers and staff of Hafod School were included in this consultation. The current proposals are a different matter and have a different focus.

If learning support class staff wish to visit the provision, then please ask them to contact Rachel Williams directly to discuss further.

The impact on staff is as outlined in the consultation document: **All LSC staff are appointed by the LA and are contracted to work in any appropriate LSC provision. This is subject to the needs of the LA and the skills set of the staff in question. Any additional necessary resources will be provided to support the realigned provisions. Every effort will be made to redeploy any displaced staff and to minimise the risk of redundancy.** Clearly if these proposals are approved, then staff will be given the opportunity to transfer with the provision. I suggest that affected staff make contact with HR for further advice and guidance in relation to their individual circumstances if they are concerned.

Timetabling issues should not be a problem as this will be a discrete key stage 2 provision. As for access to local amenities for social skills development all provision will be planned for in a person centred manner and risk assessed and managed.

Thanks

Gaynor

Gaynor Davies  
Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
*Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant*  
Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Rhondda Cynon Taf, CF45 4UO  
☎ 01443 744004  
Gaynor.Davies@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 04 December 2018 13:50



42

**Morgan, Tracey (Directors Secretary)**

**From:** Morgan, Tracey (Directors Secretary)  
**Sent:** 22 November 2018 15:10  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Morgan, Andrew (Councillor); Webber, Maureen (Councillor); Caple, Gareth (Councillor); Leyshon, Christina (Councillor); Lewis, Rhys (Councillor); Rosser, Joy (Councillor); Hanagan, Christian; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Permission not granted to see Porth Community School KS2 CDU provision  
**Importance:** High

On behalf of Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your email, which has been passed to me to respond, regarding your request to visit the proposed Key Stage 2 Learning Support Class for pupils with Communication Disorders / Autistic Spectrum Disorder at Porth Community School, where the learning support class at Hafod Primary will relocate should the Local Authority's proposal to realign its learning support class provision proceed.

As you are the parent of a child who currently attends the learning support class at Hafod Primary and would be directly affected by the above proposal, I can fully understand the importance for you of having the opportunity to view the proposed school environment and facilities as part of the consultation process.

I understand that, on 13<sup>th</sup> November, a meeting was held at Hafod Primary School for parents as part of the consultation process. I have been informed by Local Authority Officers who attended the meeting that it was agreed at the meeting that parents should have the opportunity to visit the proposed provision at Porth Community School. I believe that the Access and Inclusion Special Needs Coordinator who oversees the Local Authority's learning support classes for Communication Disorders / ASD has agreed to coordinate a visit for parents at Porth Community and that she will liaise with the Head Teacher at Hafod Primary shortly to discuss arrangements.

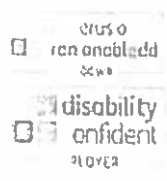
I hope that your visit will be informative and a valuable experience for you as part of the consultation.

Yours sincerely,

**Gaynor Davies**  
**Director of Education and Inclusion Services**

*Faint, illegible text, likely a signature or header area.*

*Faint, illegible text, likely a footer or contact information.*





Dear Councillor Caple

Thank you for your email regarding the fact that a parent of a pupil attending the Learning Support Class at Hafod Primary School had not been granted permission to visit the proposed new provision at Porth Community School.

As the parent and the child would be directly affected by the proposal to relocate the Hafod Primary School provision to Porth Community School, I can fully understand the parent's wish to have the opportunity to view the proposed school environment and facilities as part of the consultation process.

On 13<sup>th</sup> November, a meeting was held at Hafod Primary School for parents as part of the consultation process. I have been informed by Local Authority Officers who attended the meeting that it was agreed at the meeting that parents should have the opportunity to visit the proposed provision at Porth Community School. I believe that the Access and Inclusion Special Educational Needs Coordinator who oversees the Local Authority's learning support classes for Communication Disorders / ASD has agreed to coordinate a visit for parents at Porth Community and that she will liaise with the Head Teacher at Hafod Primary shortly to discuss arrangements.

As your email suggests, granting permission for parents to visit the proposed provision will ensure that the consultation has been conducted with openness and transparency and, hopefully, by having the opportunity to view the excellent 21<sup>st</sup> Century school environment and facilities that have benefited from significant financial investment from the Local Authority, will alleviate the parents' concerns about her child's proposed future educational placement.

Yours sincerely



## Morgan, Tracey (Directors Secretary)

---

**From:** Caple, Gareth (Councillor)  
**Sent:** 14 November 2018 21:12  
**To:** Hanagan, Christian; Rosser, Joy (Councillor)  
**Subject:** FW: Permission not granted to see Porth Community School KS2 CDU provision

**Importance:** High

---

Evening Both,

Further to my discussion with Christian yesterday, please see below an e-mail from the parent of a child attending the CDU (Dosbarth Coch), at Hafod Primary, who has been refused a reasonable request to visit the new learning environment at Porth Community School.

The Consultation Document proposes that this unit be transferred from Hafod Primary to Porth Community School in September, 2019, should the realignment be accepted.

I am concerned that, initially, the visit was welcomed and accepted by the School, then overturned by the LEA.

Surely, under the principles of transparency, openness and fairness, I shall be obliged if you will give consideration to overturning this refusal and allowing this parent the right to access and view the excellent learning environment at Porth Community School, in order to address and alleviate her just concerns for her child's future.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Many thanks for your assistance in this matter.

Regards,  
Gareth.

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
([www.blackberry.com](http://www.blackberry.com))

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Monday, 12 Nov 2018, 12:29 pm  
**To:** Morgan, Andrew (Councillor) <[Andrew.Morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk)>, Webber, Maureen (Councillor) <[Maureen.Webber@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Maureen.Webber@rctcbc.gov.uk)>, Caple, Gareth (Councillor) <[Gareth.J.Caple@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Gareth.J.Caple@rctcbc.gov.uk)>, Leyshon, Christina (Councillor) <[Christina.Leyshon@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Christina.Leyshon@rctcbc.gov.uk)>, Lewis, Rhys (Councillor) <[Rhys.Lewis@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Rhys.Lewis@rctcbc.gov.uk)>, Rosser, Joy (Councillor) <[Joy.Rosser@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Joy.Rosser@rctcbc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Permission not granted to see Porth Community School KS2 CDU provision

Hello everyone.

I am a parent of a child that is currently attending Hafod Primary CDU (Dosbarth Coch). It is proposed that this CDU will be relocated to Porth Community School as of September 2019 – we are currently in the consultation period (proposal 2). We are having an LA meeting/ parents tomorrow at Hafod Primary at 3.30pm.

The reason why I am contacting all of you today is that I have been refused a visit to the proposed learning environment in Porth community School.

I contacted Porth Community School – spoke with [REDACTED] who confirmed my date and time requested to visit was fine, but proceeded to tell me that I needed permission from the local authority. I was given a name Danielle Edwards. I contacted Danielle and when discussed, due to proposal circumstances, she advised I contact Kate Hill. I contacted Kate Hill via email and I received this response...

From: "Hill, Kate" <Kate.Hill@rctcbc.gov.uk>

Date: Wednesday, 7 November 2018 at 13:29

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Need to secure a visit to Porth Community School CDU please

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your email, it is good to see how proactive you are being in trying to understand the implications of the proposal for your son. However on this occasion I think that it would not be appropriate for you to visit the current provision at Porth. The reason for this being that there is currently no Key Stage 2 provision in Porth as the proposal is to move the provision at Hafod into Porth so we are able to offer provision for all ages at one setting. Porth has had secondary provision for a significant time period and the foundation phase class has just moved there this September from the closed Ysgol yr Eos. We do try to limit visits to provisions to minimise the disruption to the pupils and their learning, I hope you will understand this.

Although we are at the very early stages of consultation, if the proposal was to proceed, then I can assure you that a very careful programme would be put into place to support the children in the move from one setting to another.

Regards

Kate

*Kate Hill*

*Pennaeth Gwasanaeth Cynnal Dysgu / Head of Learner Support Service*

Speaking on behalf of all parents of CDU pupils, we have the right to see the proposed learning environment for our children. I can't understand how we can disrupt children when we are viewing an "empty classroom" as there is currently no KS2 provision at Porth Community School. Surely the classroom and facilities are available if they are proposed best and to be in force so quickly. I have calculated that my son will potentially have 2.5 months at the most to adjust, which is not acceptable and a great concern for us all.

Thank you all for your time – hoping some of you can attend tomorrow's meeting.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 29 November 2018 00:10  
**To:** Morgan, Andrew (Councillor) <[Andrew.Morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Proposed Relocation of Hafod Primary CDC Unit to Porth Community School

ACKNOWLEDGED AND PUT ON THE TRACKER

Dear Cllr Morgan,

I am writing to you as advocate for a group of concerned parents and students at Hafod Primary School in Trehafod. My name is [REDACTED] and I am the chairperson of the PTA as well as a Parent Governor at the school.

We have recently been informed that the Local Authority are considering moving our very successful Communications Disorder Class from Hafod Primary, where it has been for over 21 years, to the new Porth Community School. I have no doubt that you are aware that we are currently in the consultation period for this relocation – and I am hopefully correct in my understanding that you and your colleagues in the Cabinet are responsible for this decision going forward.

It would therefore be remiss of me not to contact you personally with *our* feelings on this matter, as opposed to a lengthy written report from the Local Authority. As I know you are extremely busy I will be both brief, and grateful for your time.

I have been working closely with the parents of children in the CDC unit, and they are worryingly stressed and enduring countless sleepless nights over this decision - this is not rhetoric to get your attention, this is a group of deeply concerned parents who feel that their children are about to be removed from an environment where they are thriving, and placed into one which is unknown, and untested - this is unacceptable when you take into account their additional learning needs.

Children with Autism and communication disorders require stability, familiarity, patience and above all to feel safe. We understand that the Local Authority feel they are offering this in the new school, but we have yet to see proof of this. There are no statistics which they can offer us to give peace of mind - in fact parents of children in Hafod Primary have moved their children from Porth before the school merger because their children were not making adequate

progress – so you can understand their fear at a backward step. At Hafod they have all progressed due to the ingredients in Hafod Primary all being just right. The children are cared for by all staff, all children and are included in all events. All of our children excel in Dosbarth Coch – for example, a child who arrived at Hafod with severe emotional outbursts and was unable to read other people's emotions gave a tour of the sensory room to M.P Christ Bryant 2 weeks ago and he excelled. His mother said this would not have happened in his previous school.

If Porth can offer this same supportive learning environment to our children, then we would be willing to listen, but so far the Local Authority have stood in the way of parental visits, actually citing that they were 'inappropriate' at this time, and they will not give straight answers to us regarding the level of care we can expect during any future transition. Should this proposal go ahead in the New Year, we will be appealing – this means that a final decision will not be made until late Spring 2019 at the earliest. This means that these children who require such stability and familiarity will only have a matter of weeks to be prepared for this transition - and even more worryingly, possibly without the staff who they have come to rely on as their home from home.

The Local Authority have a legal duty of care to these children, the wishes of the parents and children should be taken into consideration, as legislated in the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. It clearly states that the young person should be provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in decisions about their education - so far this categorically has not happened. The parents of Dosbarth Coch feel like they are not being listened to, and that their children are about to become the guinea pigs in a new class at a new school which has not even been tested by Estyn yet. They are thriving where they are, and this decision could cause a regression in the confidence and trust that has been so hard won.

I understand that these decisions are not easy for you, but I urge you not to wait and make this decision solely on paper –

I would like to invite you, in your capacity as Chair of the Cabinet, to Hafod Primary, come and meet with the children and the parents, listen to their stories and please let their concerns lead you to the best decision possible for these children – it is critical that even a small class of 9 should not be allowed to fall through the cracks of a change made too quickly and impersonally.

With thanks for your kind attention,

Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhwch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewis iaith e.e. Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog

Mae'r neges ar gyfer y person / pobl enwedig yn unig. Gall gynnwys gwybodaeth bersonol, sensitif neu gyfrinachol. Os nad chi yw'r person a enwyd (neu os nad oes gyda chi'r awdurdod i'w derbyn ar ran y person a enwyd) chwech chi ddim ei chopio neu'i defnyddio, neu'i datgelu i berson arall. Os ydych chi wedi derbyn y neges ar gam, rhwch wybod i'r sawl sy wedi anfon y neges ar unwaith. Mae'n bosibl y bydd holl negeseuon, gan gynnwys negeseuon GCSX, yn cael eu cofnodi a/neu fonitro unol â'r ddeddfwriaeth berthnasol. I ddarllen yr ymwadiad llawn, ewch i <http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/ywadiad>

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual

This transmission is intended for the named addressee(s) only and may contain personal, sensitive or confidential material and should be handled accordingly. Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive it for the addressee) you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else. If you have received this transmission in error please notify the sender immediately. All traffic including GCSx may be subject to recording and/or monitoring in accordance with relevant legislation For the full disclaimer please access <http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/disclaimer>



On Wednesday, 12 December 2018 16:51:01 GMT, Morgan, Tracey (Directors Secretary) <Tracey.Morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk> wrote:

**On behalf of: Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services**

  
Thank you for your e-mail to Councillor Andrew Morgan, Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. Councillor Morgan has asked me to look into this on his behalf.

I appreciate the concerns that you and the parents of the pupils in the learning support class in Hafod Primary have about the proposal to relocate the class to Porth Community School. As you will be aware, there is an opportunity for all concerned parties, including parents/carers to submit their views and queries to the Council as part of the consultation process in relation to the above proposal. I understand that consultation meetings have already been held at the school with the school council, staff, parents and governors where the process for concerned parties to respond to the consultation was explained. This is also documented in the published consultation document. Key issues raised during all consultation meetings and stakeholder feedback received will be detailed in a consultation report presented to the Council's Cabinet for consideration in January 2019. This report will be used to inform decision making and, if Cabinet agree to proceed, a statutory consultation process will commence for a 28 day period during which any interested person may comment or raise objections. An objection report will then be submitted to Cabinet for final consideration.

The quality of the provision in Hafod Primary is not in dispute. The proposal to relocate the Learning Support Class at Hafod Primary to Porth Community School is underpinned by a desire to enhance current specialist provision for learners with Communication Disorder/ASD in the locality to improve continuity in learning and to minimise transitions from one specialist setting to another. There is a foundation phase and key stage 3/4 specialist provision for learners with communication disorders already in Porth Community School. In future, if we do not proceed with the proposals, learners would have to leave the communication disorder unit at the end of the foundation phase to attend Hafod Primary School for key stage 2 education, only to return to Porth Community School for secondary provision. The proposals, if agreed, would provide an all through 21<sup>st</sup> century learning provision with a focus on ensuring continuity in high quality provision and relationships.

I fully understand that this is a worrying time for parents and pupils as change can be unsettling and I can appreciate the importance for parents of having the opportunity to visit the proposed provision at Porth Community School. I have been informed that a time and date has been arranged for parents of pupils who

attend the learning support class in Hafod to visit the excellent 21<sup>st</sup> Century school environment and facilities at Porth Community school and to meet with senior staff. However, it is important to note that, if proposals are agreed, staff who are currently teaching in the learning support class would also have the opportunity to transfer with the provision, thus providing added continuity.

In the event of the proposals being progressed, every attempt will be made to minimise any adverse impact on learners and person centred planning will ensure that any transition is undertaken collaboratively and in partnership with families. I am advised by senior officers that for families who would prefer for their children to remain in Hafod Primary School, then bespoke educational packages could potentially be provided in the mainstream if this was deemed in the child's best interest.

We take our responsibilities for learners with Additional Learning Needs very seriously and as a Council we continue to invest heavily in specialist provision for learners. The proposals are driven by our desire to further enhance the provision available for learners but recognise that parents are concerned about the proposals. Due process now has to follow and Cabinet members will give appropriate consideration to the representations made by all stakeholders, including the families affected.

It is my understanding that Councillor Rosser, Cabinet Member for Education, will be visiting the provision in due course. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get back in contact.

Regards,

Gaynor Davies

Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Tracey Morgan

Swyddog Cymorth i Fusnesau 21ain Ganrif / Ysgrifennyddes i Gyfarwyddwr Addysg a Dysgu Gydiol Oes a Chylarwyddwr Gwasanaeth - Mynediad, Ymgysylltu a Chynhwysiant

21st Century Business Support Officer / Secretary to Director of Education & Lifelong Learning and Service Director for Access, Engagement & Inclusion

Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Aberpennar/ Mountain Ash. CF45 4UQ

☎: 01443 744009

☎: 01443 744023

✉ [tracey.morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk)

**Carter, Lisa**

---

**From:** Davies, Gaynor (Education)  
**Sent:** 18 December 2018 17:46  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Carter, Lisa; Jones, Ceri (Education); Rosser, Joy (Councillor)  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Relocation of Hafod Primary CDC Unit to Porth Community School

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your email and response. These will be noted and responded to as part of the consultation process.

Lisa Cater will be available to meet you and to provide a receipt. Can you please ask the receptionist to make contact on arrival.

I have copied in Cllr Rosser, for her information.

I hope you have an enjoyable Christmas break.

Thanks

Gaynor

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 December 2018 23:31  
**To:** Morgan, Tracey (Directors Secretary) <Tracey.Morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed Relocation of Hafod Primary CDC Unit to Porth Community School

Dear Ms. Davies,

Thank you for your email dated 12th December regarding the proposed CDC relocation from Hafod Primary School. I appreciate you taking the time to address some of our concerns and acknowledging that it is indeed a worrying time for parents and children. It was stated at the close of your email that Cllr Rosser will be visiting the provision in due course. I was hoping that this includes a visit to Hafod Primary and not just Porth Community? - we feel that it would be beneficial in their decision making process and hope that all of the provisions affected will have a personal visit from a cabinet member.

I am grateful to hear that the high standard of teaching at Hafod Primary has never been in dispute - we are very proud of our school and its achievements. I think this is why the CDC parents have such a high level of concern - because their children are being relocated from a tried and tested school community where their children are already achieving, to a brand new, untested provision which is expecting a huge leap of faith on their part. I was informed last week that the visit for the parents to Porth Community has now finally taken place, and unfortunately it has done little to allay fears regarding this move.

[REDACTED]

From reading your email, I can quite see why the Local Authority feel that a through school provision in one location would be of benefit to these children – but from the parent's point of view, this is just not the case. They have come away from the visit feeling that the facilities are modern and very adequate, but it lacks the deeper community aspect that it takes to create a successful integrated supportive learning environment. It is also such a new school, and from many accounts still overcoming teething trouble – there are relevant concerns regarding moving students before everything is adequately in place with guaranteed consistency for students with ASD. We appreciate your assurance that staff will be given the opportunity to relocate with the class – but there are concerns that if the staff decide to decline the transfer, this will have a detrimental effect on the class dynamic as a whole, which is currently performing to a very high standard. The parents are concerned about their children being denied their legal right to a duty of care – and if there is any evidence of poor performance and a backslide in their progress due to the move the parents will be quick to highlight this.

The concessions which were detailed allowing children to remain in Hafod with the correct bespoke educational package has also been met with concern. This would essentially mean that the children will have to be disrupted, and spread throughout different classes with different staff. It is difficult to see how this could be achieved successfully – unless you have any further details regarding this which I will happily pass along.

The biggest overall concern is that Porth Community should essentially have to prove that it is a thriving community based school, fully settled after the integration of so many smaller schools. The Aberdare super school report is so damning, it is casting a spectre over these mergers, and only time will tell if this model is a success. If it is not, then moving these children prematurely will have such a negative impact that the parents will feel forced to seek some redress in the future, as once these smaller units are closed, it would be so difficult to reinstate them.

We have been told repeatedly that Porth Community is striving to further enhance the provision – but surely the Local Authority has to show proof that the new provision is as good as, or a significant improvement to, the existing KS2 provision in Hafod Primary. So far the parents are not convinced that it is anywhere close, and we welcome anything that you could tell us to the contrary. I understand that this is difficult in a new school, without its first Estyn report – but therein also lies our dilemma.

Late morning on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December, I will be personally delivering our petition and letters/pictures from the community and children to Ty Trevithik so that we are in good time for the 21<sup>st</sup> December deadline. I would be most grateful if someone familiar with the case could meet me and provide a receipt for me to pass back to the parents.

I once again would like to thank you for taking the time to read this, and listen to our concerns. We are not pursuing this path to cause disruption for the sake of it – we really do have the best interests of our children at heart, and it is our job to ensure that they receive the best care and to be educated in a place that prepares them for a bright future. Unless there are more assurances, and more steps to show specific care plans for any proposed move we cannot help but feel that future should begin at Hafod Primary.

I wish you all the best for the holiday season, and the New Year.

Regards,



**Proposal 2:**

**The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:**

Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to KeyStage 4

Do you agree with the proposal? (please circle)

YES

NO

NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Hafod CDU has been outstanding for 21 years. It makes no sense to move an excellent provision to benefit a new school that is yet to prove itself.

Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

Us as a family had great worry and concerns for my nephew when he attended Porth Infants. He always loved school but he was let down. Not by the teachers but delays and communication.

Please indicate who you are

(e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

Auntie of CDU PUPIL AND TEACHING ASSISTANT AT HAFOD PRIMARY.

Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please forward completed questionnaires to the below address no later than 5pm on the 21st December 2018.

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice)

and the Council's data protection pages here: [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).

Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, CF45 4UQ or by fax to 01443 744024, or email to [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)

breakdowns between health care and external services specialised to help.

No advice was given to my sister -

She had to read SEN code of practice to seek advice whilst working full-time to try and secure the best provision.

I became employed during this time at Hafod Primary School and explained

to my sister that there was a CDU but ~~my nephew~~ <sup>my nephew wasn't</sup> old enough to attend.

My nephew had no diagnosis (until May 2018 - ASD) and therefore did not know suitable provision so my

Sister decided to keep him in Porth Infants School - proceed to statement and specifically requested he attend Hafod Primary, Due to the outstanding reputation heard from others as well as myself, I am so proud to be part of Hafod Primary. It was wonderful to see how well my nephew settled into Hafod Primary and how instant his learning developed. He is such a character and gives 100% and included in ALL school activities (URDD, SPORTS TOURNAMENTS, CONCERTS, SCHOOL CLUBS).

THESE OPPORTUNITIES WERE ~~IN~~ AVAILABLE  
in Porth Infants but by these being  
available at Hafod Primary, my  
nephew has grown in confidence and  
helped him with Social Learning and  
Communication difficulties.

I think R.C.T would benefit by having  
excellent provisions - we have an  
outstanding CDU and school report,  
proven track record of successful

transitions, wonderful community  
support, one big family!! We are  
excellent due to commitment and  
hardwork and are distraught  
to have the risk of our CDU class  
removed to make a new school  
excellent. These disruptions doesn't  
benefit the children as they already  
have what they need and more -

the move would be to benefit  
another school. I don't just hear  
how excellent Hafod Primary is,  
I am part of it. I have witnessed  
children transitioning to our CDU  
and am amazed at how quick they  
have settled and improved tremendously  
and how their families have had a  
weight lifted off their shoulders.

What we have at Hafod Primary is  
unique, special and can't be  
replicated elsewhere. If the proposal  
goes ahead it will disrupt the school

and the community. If this should happen, what care plan is in place for the remaining pupils at Hafod Primary? losing friends, not understanding why this is happening, relations broken. Porth would have gained, we would have lost and it will affect us greatly. The well-being of ALL the children at Hafod Primary is not being considered.

SAVE DOSBARTH COCH - HEART OF  
HAFOD PRIMARY - 21 YEARS OF  
ACHIEVING AND BELIEVING !!!



**Proposal 2:**

**The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:**  
Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to KeyStage 4

Do you agree with the proposal? (please circle)

YES

**NO**

NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

CDU AT HAFOD PRIMARY IS EXCEPTIONAL, WHY MOVE IT?  
WE DONT ~~NEED~~ TO RELOCATE/CLOSE PROVISIONS, WE  
NEED MORE PROVISIONS LIKE DOS BARTH COCH.  
UNNECESSARY AND WRONG FOCUS!

Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

(PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)

Please indicate who you are

(e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

AUNTY TO DOSBARTH COCH STUDENT, HAFOD PRIMARY

Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please forward completed questionnaires to the below address no later than 5pm on the 21st December 2018.

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice)

and the Council's data protection pages here: [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).

Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services', Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, CF45 4UQ or by fax to 01443 744024, or email to [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)



1  
MY NEPHEW HAS BEEN A STUDENT IN DOSBARTH  
COCH SINCE SEPTEMBER 2016.

BEFORE HIS TRANSFER TO HAFOD PRIMARY, SCHOOL  
LIFE FOR MY NEPHEW WAS A MAJOR WORRY FOR  
ALL OUR FAMILY.

HIS NEEDS WERE NOT BEING MET WITHIN PORTM  
SCHOOL DESPITE THE EFFORTS MADE.

THEY DID NOT HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OR MUCH  
CLUE ON HOW TO MEET HIS SPECIAL NEEDS.

WE HAD A LONG AND STRESSFUL BATTLE  
FIGHTING TO GET THE BEST LEVEL OF CARE  
FOR MY NEPHEW.

HAFOD PRIMARY HAS OUTSTANDING REPUTATION FOR  
CDU PROVISION - IN FACT THE SCHOOL OVERALL IS  
PHENOMENAL!

WE FOUGHT DESPERATELY TO GET MY NEPHEW  
A PLACE IN THIS SCHOOL, WITH SUCCESS.

AS SOON AS HE WAS WELCOMED INTO HAFOD  
PRIMARY, INSTANTLY, A WEIGHT WAS LIFTED  
FROM OUR SHOULDERS.

HE WAS HAPPY, HE WAS UNDERSTOOD, HE WAS  
INCLUDED. FINALLY MY NEPHEW WAS BEING  
ENCOURAGED FOR HIS ABILITIES, NOT SEGREGATE  
FOR HIS DISABILITIES.

HE WAS ULTIMATELY RECEIVING EVERY GUNCE  
OF CARE WE HAD BEEN TIRELESSLY BATTLING  
FOR.

HE HAS COME ON TREMENDOUSLY AND ALL  
CREDIT IS DUE TO ALL THE EXCEPTIONAL STAFF  
AT HAFOD PRIMARY SCHOOL.



CLOSING AND RELOCATING THIS UNIT IS UNNECESSARY IF THIS GOES AHEAD IT WILL BE A GREAT SHAME AND LOSS TO THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY.

I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS OUTSTANDING LEVEL OF CARE CAN BE BEATEN OR MIMICKED, NOR TRANSFERRED ALONG WITH THE CLASS.

THE RELOCATION IS NOT TO BENEFIT THE STUDENTS BUT INSTEAD TO BENEFIT THE SCHOOL.

BASICALLY, PORTH SCHOOL ARE ATTEMPTING TO STEAL AN EXCELLENT THRIVING UNIT OF HAPPY CHILDREN TO EXCELL THEIR OWN SCHOOL. KEEPING 21 YEARS OF HARDWORK AND EXPERTISE OF HAFOD PRIMARY SCHOOL STAFF.

IT IS WORRYING TO THINK THAT ALL MY NEPHEWS PROGRESS COULD BE REVERSED BY AN UNNECESSARY CHANGE.

DOSBARTH COCH DOES NOT NEED FIXING. ATTENTION NEEDS TO BE REDIRECTED TO THE FAILING WITHIN THE EXTERNAL SERVICES. RESOURCES AND FUNDING IS TOO LIMITED AND THIS IS THE REAL ISSUE THAT NEEDS ADDRESSING

THE POSSIBLE RELOCATION IS DEVASTATING NEWS TO MANY PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY DOSBARTH COCH KIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES.



### Consultation Feedback: Summary of Submissions

Where appropriate comments have been written verbatim.

1. Hafod Primary School Proposals			
The following are the comments raised during consultation regarding the proposal to close the LSC at Hafod Primary All responses disagreed with the proposal			
Respondent	Type of Consultation response	Comment/Points Raised/ Additional Information from respondent	LA Response
Staff and Governors Hafod Primary	Letter	<p>We have never had surplus numbers in our CDC unit this academic year when the Local Authority placed 8 children in the CDC one month before the announcement of this proposal.</p> <p>Children in our CDC class are known and supported by <b>all staff</b> throughout the school. This is invaluable particularly during more challenging social times such as dinner time, play time, assembly and transition times.’</p> <p>‘We are also able to share knowledge and information quickly and effectively, responding to children’s needs more readily. This has proved essential in more challenging situations.</p> <p>Training such as AUTISM Awareness, Literacy interventions and Relax Kids are just a few examples of numerous initiatives successfully shared and developed at Hafod Primary.</p> <p>Adapting to new environments and new people is a necessary part of life experiences and we support pupils and parents well throughout this process.</p>	<p>The proposal is to relocate the provision at Hafod and not to reduce the number of KS2 CDC specialist placements.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>Staff who relocated to the Porth Community have come from schools that accessed a range of training opportunities for pupils with additional learning needs.</p> <p>The Local Authority acknowledges that this support will be essential in supporting the pupils transition to Porth Community School should the proposal proceed.</p>

		<p>At Hafod we have mixed year classes, Nursery/Reception, years 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6. Our cohorts are smaller compared to larger mainstream schools. This means we are able to achieve small group integration opportunities for children in our CDC more successfully than other larger mainstream schools with single year classes. Because we are a small school, we are able to trial and manage more flexible arrangements for supported academic and social integration.</p> <p>From 1997 to the present day staff in the CDC have been fully supported by management teams and the Governing Body.</p> <p>Throughout the years it has been an essential requirement that appointed Headteachers have expertise and good experience of pupils with ALN. The Headteacher at Hafod primary have been committed to equity of provision for our CDC class and continue to strive to ensure this is possible through various means.</p> <p>Our small school nurturing environment combined with close-knit community support means pupils in our CDC even have opportunities to excel in more formal presentations and celebrations <b>without</b> being overwhelmed and over stimulated by the environment.</p> <p>A small nurturing environment, small staff team, smaller mainstream class sizes and close-knit community cannot be replicated in a large 3-16 provision. All these features contribute to establishing a low arousal environment, successful integration and great opportunities for our CDC pupils.</p>	<p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>The Headteacher at Porth Community School and Governing Body fully support the placement of the current KS3/4 and Foundation Phase LSC Provisions and are fully committed to having a KS2 provision.</p> <p>The Headteacher at Porth Community School has worked in schools where specialist provisions have been located.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p>
--	--	--	---



		For the past 21 years our LA funded CDC has not merely been <b>located in</b> Hafod Primary, it has evolved to be <b>integral</b> to the school and <b>central</b> to its ethos and identity.	
LSC Hafod	Letter	<p>There seems to be a lack of understanding as to what the success of this class means to the children, and their school.</p> <p>Our school is at the heart of our community, and our class- the heart of our school. We nurture our children and provide excellent teaching, ensuring that no child goes without regardless of age, class or ability. The mainstream pupils in Hafod embrace pupils in our CD unit, and no child is treated differently. During lesson time, children from the CD unit are integrated (with support) into mainstream classes when possible. This school is as much theirs as it is any other child's, and when the time comes for them to move on in line with pupils they have grown and developed with, the transition to the secondary school of their choice has always been successful.</p> <p>Though I appreciate Porth Community School offers some fantastic new facilities for our pupils, our class at Hafod is already fully equipped to support the needs of our students. In addition to all of this, our inspection reports have always shown a positive feedback for our class.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent of a pupil in Hafod	Questionnaire	<p>I don't agree with this move because my son just started in September and has now settled in to move him again would upset him.</p> <p>My son does not like to be in big crowds as he gets anxious. The class he is in now is the perfect place for him as he is calm and his social skills and learning skills are increasing.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parish of Pontypridd Schools Worker	Questionnaire	<p>I feel very strongly that the decision to move the Learning Support Class from Hafod school will grossly impact the nature of the school. They are involved fully in every aspect of school life.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues.

		<p>The move would not aid the learners and the school itself would lose part of its identity within the school and also within the wider community of Trehafod.</p> <p>Strong friendships that have already been formed will be eroded. The knock-on effect will add more strain to the learners and their families and will ultimately take a long time to adjust.</p> <p>Relocating these children does not benefit them, their families, or indeed Hafod school.</p>	
Parent of a pupil in Hafod CDC	Questionnaire	<p>My son has moved schools four times trying to find a unit and school that is suitable for him.</p> <p>Finally he is happy and settled in Hafod Primary and I think the move would not benefit him it would just cause him to be unsettled and not fair on him to have to get used to new surroundings teachers and friends for the fifth time.</p> <p>I have seen a lot of progress in my son since being there in September and that is down to Hafod primary.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	<p>Excellent child staff relationships.</p> <p>Easy transitions for children throughout the school day.</p> <p>Children have made important friendships with other children within different classes.</p> <p>Children are integrated with all children within the school.</p> <p>Staff's expertise in the unit.</p> <p>The children would really miss the children in Dosbarth Coch.</p> <p>Why try and fix what is already working extremely well within the school.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	<p>The emotional struggles it will have on the child, change is not easy for anyone especially a child with a disability.</p> <p>Offers inclusion, expertise within the whole of the school, support from Trehafod community.</p> <p>Dosbarth Coch works in Hafod Primary because of the nature of the setting. Yes it's an old building but its familiar to them- new building which is cold and looks like a hospital is going to cause the children extreme anxiety and this will have a massive impact on their well-being.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues

		<p>Every single child in Dosbarth Coch has excelled what if the change causes them to have a setback in their development.</p> <p>Dosbarth Coch belongs to Hafod Primary school- if it's not broke don't fix it.</p> <p>We all appreciate this is all down to money but surely lets thinks about the person for once.</p>	
Grandparent whose grandchildren attend Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	<p>Hafod Primary has been a part of our village life for generations. I believe that not only has it benefitted the lives of countless pupils with communication disorders over the years, it has also enriched the lives of those in the general school population.</p> <p>I would notice when we were outside of the school environment when my children met any child with additional learning needs, they would never shy away from them, or feel that they were different. This is what having a CDC unit included in a small community school does – it teaches tolerance, understanding and compassion for others, it fosters friendships where in other places these children feel isolated, segregated and bullied.</p> <p>It would also be devastating for such a small school to be losing such dedicated staff members to Porth Community School- because in Hafod Primary they do not just care about their individual classes, they are a community- a family of teachers who know all of the students and each other.</p> <p>They work as a team, and our children benefit from this dynamic, and the considerable pool of knowledge they have.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues
Parent and ex-pupil of Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	<p>A big part of why this class has been so successful is due to the integration of the pupils with the rest of the school.</p> <p>I feel the pupils of Dosbarth Coch and the rest of the school will suffer immensely with the proposal.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues
Parents of a pupil who once attended Hafod	Email	<p>This class is extremely important to the children who need it, one of which is my son who is on the autistic spectrum.</p> <p>Without the support of the excellent teacher and staff at Hafod, he would not have made the transition to mainstream before secondary</p>	<p>See Summary of Key Issues</p> <p>The proposal is not to remove provision but to relocate it to Porth Community.</p>

		<p>school and doubt if he would have been able to achieve his degree in computer games design.</p> <p>The staff at the CDC are amazing and the class is a lifeline to children who need extra support to reach their full potential.</p>	<p>Following the successful relocation of the Foundation Phase LSC to Porth Community School in September 2018, the Local Authority is confident that the relocation of the Key Stage 2 LSC from Hafod Primary will be equally as successful and provide enhanced provision for its pupils.</p>
Hafod Parents and Governing Body	List of Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why are you proposing this move? Is it essential? And are you prepared to listen to the voice of our community who are totally against it?</li> <li>2. Can you comment on the research now coming to light that the performance of smaller schools is of a higher standard than the more recently developed super-schools?</li> <li>3. Are you aware that Hafod's smaller environment is better suited for the teaching of Autistic children when compared to larger, busier schools?' 'How many of your decision makers have actually experienced spectrum/sensory processing difficulties (in a false environment) to try and understand these changes from our children's point of view?</li> <li>4. We have tried to arrange access to visit the SEN unit in Porth Community School and have been told that it would not be 'Appropriate' at this time. Please can you explain why as the parents cannot make an informed choice for their child if the LEA is withholding vital information</li> <li>5. If the proposal goes ahead how integrated will our children be with the general school population?' 'Will they have a shared or isolated yard?' 'What facilities are actually available at Porth Community</li> </ol>	<p>See Summary of Key Issues</p> <p>The proposals have been discussed and agreed upon by professionals within the LA who have extensive experience of working with pupils with ASD.</p> <p>A visit was arranged for parents to visit the proposed LSC at Porth Community on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Three parents attended and were able to view the new facilities and discuss any concerns/matters of importance with the Headteacher. A further visit is planned for January 2019.</p> <p>If the proposal proceeds the LSC will be integral to school life in Porth community and pupils and staff will be fully considered and included in all planning of any activity</p>

		<p>School, how are they an improvement and why we have not been invited to view them?</p> <p>6. It is proposed that children from the Foundation Phase ASD class will transition to the Key Stage 2 CDC? How will this be structured as these children surely have very different needs? How many children will be in the class and how can you ensure the staff will not be spread to thinly?</p> <p>7. The children in our CDC class have different needs during unstructured time such as break, lunch and transfer between classes- in Hafod these needs are met individually due to the flexible, nurturing ethos, which is person centred here-can you guarantee the same level of care if they are moved to Porth?</p> <p>8. Will the unit staff in Porth have split breaks to ensure children have recognisable, trained and visible trusted support at all times, whether in class, dining hall or playground? Will they be supported by wider school staff and management?</p>	<p>both educational and extra curricular. Pupils in the LSC will be fully integrated with their mainstream peers on the yard. The LSC will have brand new up to date resources including the latest technology. There will be a fully equipped sensory room. The classroom has adjoining toilet/washing facilities. The classroom is placed within the newly built primary building. All facilities are fully accessible. Pupils will have access to the 3G pitch on site.</p> <p>Criteria for placement in the FP ASD class and the KS2 CD LSC are the same and therefore pupils with the same type of needs will access both provisions. Therefore, pupils in the FP ASD class will be expected to transition seamlessly into the KS2 class. The KS2 class has capacity for 8-10 pupils and the staff to pupil ratios remains the same.</p> <p>The same arrangements will be put in place for pupils in Porth Community School as there is an expectation that individual needs of all pupils in the LSC provisions across RCT are catered for during both structured and unstructured times at school.</p> <p>Staffing will be organised to ensure that pupil's needs are catered for at all times during the school day. The Headteacher has expressed full commitment to supporting</p>
--	--	--	--

		<p>9. Does your proposal include supervised places to eat away from the noisy cafeteria environment? Do you plan to provide choices for separate dedicated areas where children can go if they need to take time out whether during structured or unstructured time?</p> <p>10. At Hafod, if a member of staff from the CDC is absent, the school will place a recognised member of staff from the school with the children and relief staff in with a different class to maintain continuity for the children who need it the most. Will the staff in the CDC unit in Porth Community School be consistent? What happens when one of their staff members are off sick? Would supply staff be properly trained to support children with additional learning needs?</p> <p>11. Can you outline how you have ensured that our children, as a minority group in the education system, have been prioritised in your decision making in accordance with the Additional learning Needs Act?</p>	<p>the pupils and staff in the KS2 LSC as is currently the situation with the FP ASD class and the KS3/4 classes.</p> <p>Where possible, pupils would be fully included with mainstream peers during lunch/unstructured times. However where this is considered not to be in the best interest of individual pupils, separate areas will be provided and /or different times arranged to allow pupils to engage in these activities at a different time. All reasonable adjustments will be put in place.</p> <p>Staff in Porth Community will be consistent. Arrangements for cover will be the responsibility of the senior leadership team who are aware of the needs of pupils with ASD within LSCs due to hosting KS3/4 classes and the FP ASD class. Every effort would be made to obtain supply cover by a teacher experienced in ASD. However, no school with a LSC for ASD can guarantee this.</p> <p>Improving specialist provision for pupils in RCT has been at the heart of the decision making process in relation to the proposals. All decisions have been made with a full understanding of the needs of the pupils and with the aim of providing high quality, fully accessible, 21<sup>st</sup> Century specialist provision for pupils who require specialist</p>
--	--	--	---

		<p>12. Each child in our unit has an Individual Education Plan and targets, tailored to help them thrive in the school environment. How would Porth Community School plan to uphold these and encourage interactions whether in a one on one setting, or group situation during unstructured times?</p> <p>13. The council has a legal duty of care to support children with Special Educational Needs based on their statements, should this move proceed, the few remaining months before the transfer would not be sufficient for children in mainstream education, let alone those with Special Educational needs. What care plan is already in place? We should be entitled to see this plan as soon as possible to ensure the needs of our children are being met.</p> <p>14. Apart from a new building, we would like to understand why you consider Porth to be a better, more supportive, learning environment?</p> <p>15. Should the move go ahead, will children benefit from extra, longer or more regular external specialist visits such as educational psychologists and CAMHS at Porth, or will it be the same as Hafod?</p> <p>16. We understand fewer transition periods are cited as a reason for the relocation, but they will also be transitioning within Porth, to new classrooms and new buildings- how is this considered to be an improvement? And how will they be prepared for this internal transition in a better way than we do at Hafod?</p>	<p>provision in a LSC within fully inclusive mainstream settings.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that any internal transition will not be undertaken appropriately at Porth Community. No concerns have been raised by pupils, parents or staff in the FP ASD class. The Headteacher has expressed her full commitment to ensuring that the pupils in</p>
--	--	--	---

		<p>17. Please can you explain how daily integration into lessons would be managed in a much larger school environment?' 'Also how will you ensure that students in the Porth CDC unit have the opportunity to transition to mainstream classes so that they can achieve the best possible outcome?</p> <p>18. Can you explain how Porth plans to facilitate extra learning for students who are gifted in a specific topic area?</p> <p>19. Are there planned provisions for leisure activities and extracurricular events, including sports, for SEN children? Will our children be included in whole school activities as they are in Hafod? How will this be managed so that they are not overwhelmed?</p> <p>20. How will you meet the children's needs during the proposed home to school transfer and the return journey? Effectively managing school start/end times? Strategies to meet heightened sensory processing issues during transfers? Possible lengthened journey time? Chaotic parking/transport issues associated with Porth Community School?</p>	<p>the LSC will be treated inclusively alongside mainstream peers. Staff in the LSC will continue to use their expertise to support pupils appropriately.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>Porth Community provides a range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. The FP ASD class is included in whole school activities and extracurricular activities alongside mainstream peers. The KS2 class will also be fully included in the above. No concerns have been raised by pupils, parents or staff from the FP LSC in relation to the pupils feeling overwhelmed in their new setting</p> <p>Specific arrangements are in place currently for pupils accessing FP ASD class to arrive/leave school in a discrete area of the school site. School start and finish times are staggered and differ from start and finish times in the secondary site. No concerns have been raised by parents, pupils or staff accessing the FP ASD unit which will be in the same site as the proposed KS2 LSC. Staff are experienced in catering for pupil sensory needs. The LA has not observed any chaotic parking/transport issues.</p>
--	--	---	---



		<p>21. Will all children be eligible for transport within this proposal? Or will it be determined by distance? Will children ages 3-16 be potentially sharing transport?</p> <p>22. Is there a breakfast club available for SEN children in Porth? Can you elaborate on how or if this would be integrated with other children?</p> <p>23. If this is not going to save money, then can we choose to stay in the place where the children are already thriving?</p> <p>24. Is this proposal not taking away a parental right of choice?</p> <p>25. If our students have a sibling or family member at Hafod, will they be expected to relocate too?</p> <p>26. Should the decision be made to relocate the unit, and we then appeal-which we will- will the petition be relevant for re-submission, or would we require a new petition and further evidence? Is it true that the Petition only counts as one objection, no matter how many signatures are on it?</p>	<p>All transport arrangements will continue to operate effectively in line with the RCT Learner Travel Policy. It would not be appropriate to transport pupils of significant differing ages together.</p> <p>Breakfast club is available to all children at Porth Community and is a fully inclusive provision.</p> <p>The LA has a duty to continuously monitor and review its specialist LSC provision across RCT to ensure that it is utilising its resources efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of pupils who require specialist LSC provision. This will result in the LA making decisions to close, relocate or re-designate LSC provisions based on identified need. However, as outlined in the consultation document parents will have the option to move their child to Porth Community with the class or discussions can take place with individual families to discuss a bespoke package within mainstream.</p> <p>This will be parental choice.</p> <p>A new petition would be required. Further evidence could be provided. The petition is recorded as a petition with the number of signatories noted within the consultation response document.</p>
--	--	--	--

Statement from an ex pupil of Hafod Primary school:		I can safely say that Dosbarth Coch needs to stay in Hafod Primary. The students in Dosbarth Coch are a part of Hafod primary just as much as any other pupil. They were not treated any differently and took part in our assembly's and school plays and I spent many a playtime with pupils from Dosbarth Coch. However, during my time at Porth County, I can count on my hand the amount of times I saw those pupils. They were never included in Assembly's/Eisteddfods etc. ....	See Summary of Key Issues
Friend of a concerned parent of a CDU Pupil	Questionnaire	This proposal risks causing great emotional upset to the children and their families who attend Dosbarth Coch. These children are emotionally vulnerable and should not be subjected to the stress this unnecessary change will cause them. These children are happy and thriving where they are, what will they gain from moving into a bigger, unfamiliar environment which is alien to them.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Family friend of a pupil in CDU	Questionnaire	My Cousin is happy at his current school and feel that change will have a detrimental effect on his education.	The responder's opinion is noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Friend of a concerned parent of a CDU pupil	Questionnaire	Why move socially vulnerable children who are happy and thriving, to a new, bigger, less focused school. How can the new school provide the specialist care they're used to? Emotional upset for children and their families, no guidance of specialist skills the children needs, already have all they promised @Hafod- why change and cause upheaval.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Friend	Questionnaire	Nice little class lovely school	The responder's opinion is noted.
Ex parent	Questionnaire	Nice to keep in Hafod for local community. Hopefully to keep a school in village.	The responder's opinion is noted. Porth Community School is proximal to Trehafod.
Family of pupil Anonymous	Questionnaire	Children with SEN should be integrated within a local setting.	The responder's opinion is noted. As above
Friend of Pupil	Questionnaire	Concerns re large provision and impact this will have on children, impact on how change of provision will affect the children. Benefits of current provision PTA and Breakfast club in current provision. Impact on community loosing provision in Hafod Primary School.	See Summary of Key Issues.

Grandparent of a pupil at Hafod Primary School.	Questionnaire	At the moment the children of the LSC mix with the mainstream children which is important for their progress.  If the LSC is located at Porth School the children will be segregated from the mainstream which do more harm than good.	The pupils in both the Foundation Phase and the KS3/4 LSC in Porth Community School are included in school activities, including in formal presentations. Pupils in the FP LSC have been included in Christmas activities such as the Christmas concerts and recreational trips.
Parent of a pupil at Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	Children need to be included	The responder's opinion is noted. As above
Parent of a pupil at Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	It will be beneficial to the students  Smaller pupil numbers at Hafod will lead to its closure to all pupils.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Regular Supply Teacher	Questionnaire	On the surface it may seem perfectly reasonable to transplant any class from one setting to another with little or no negative impact. One could be forgiven for thinking that any one community is indistinguishable from the next. The school clearly fosters a close-knit family ethos based largely on its being part of a wider, unique community.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Anonymous	Questionnaire	School always offered this facility and should continue to.	The responder's views are noted.
Parent of Hafod Primary	Questionnaire	Children of Dosbarth Coch would not get the care needs they have in Hafod Primary.	The responder's opinion is noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Friends of Parents of Hafod Primary	Questionnaire	Hafod Primary Dosbarth Coch kids are settled and its took a long time to do this so please don't up root them. Don't up route our kids, don't move them from everything they know Hafod is a great school.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of Ex pupil of Hafod Primary	Questionnaire	It is vital to have this facility in the community.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of Hafod Primary	Questionnaire	Dosbarth Coch will be singled out they will not get the teaching they have at Hafod. Our children don't like change please don't move them to another school.	See Summary of Key Issues.

Parent of Hafod Primary	Questionnaire	We love our class and it's not fair for the children to be up routed to move to another school. Our children are mixed at playtime lunchtime and are involved in everything we do.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Former Student of Hafod Primary and Porth County	Questionnaire	The students in Dosbarth Coch are a part of Hafod Primary just as much as any other pupil. During my time at Porth County, I can count on my hand the amount of times I saw those pupils. They were never included in Assembly's/Eisteddfods etc.	The responder's opinion is noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	Hafod Primary School has had a successful CDC unit for over 21 years with good reason, therefore I strongly disagree with this proposal. This community driven, accessible school with a fantastic inspection report provides the opportunities for all children to integrate and be included and accepted no matter what. The children and their parents are extremely happy here at Hafod Primary thanks to the Ethos understanding and commitment of staff not only based within Dosbarth Coch but throughout the whole school. It has been proven that changing schools and environments for any child can cause negative effects academically and socially resulting in stress. Studies have identified student mobility as a contributing factor especially in the areas of school engagement and attendance. (Dobson Henthorne & Lynas 2000, Hill & Doyle 2012, Reynolds, Chen & Herbers 2009).	There is no evidence that previous relocations of LSCs has had a detrimental impact upon pupils. The FP LSC successfully relocated to Porth Community from Ysgol yr Eos in September.
Class Teacher	Questionnaire	This unit sits in a small, caring environment that allows the pupils to gain confidence and develop their independence. There is excellent Parent/Staff/Headteacher relationships. Communication between all parties is excellent also, with parents with any worries able to speak to staff including the Headteacher at a drop of a hat. In a large setting this isn't possible. All staff know the children well and understand the needs of all in the unit. Pupils of Dosbarth Coch integrate fully in the school life, make close friendships with pupils in the mainstream classes and play a full part in all activities in the school.	The responder's opinion is noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Friends of pupil and family	Questionnaire	Impact on how change will affect the children modern setting may be uncomfortable and change in activities. Proposal will have a significant impact on Hafod Primary School.	See Summary of Key Issues

<p>Parent of LSC Hafod Primary School</p>	<p>Questionnaire with additional supporting information please refer to appendix 4</p>	<p>Is the relocation essential?          What evidence do you have that Porth Community School KS2 CDU will be a 'better' provision than Hafod Primary CDU?</p> <p>Why was Porth Community School built and plans viewed, clearly displaying 'SEN classrooms' when there was no CDU provision before school merge, and is no KS2 provision currently?</p> <p>Why are the Hafod CDU staff jobs confirmed 'not safe' by LA?</p> <p>How many places will be available in the KS2 provision in Porth Community School?</p> <p>If other KS2 CDU's in RCT exist and pupils transition into KS3 provision in Porth Community School, why can't Hafod Primary CDC remain open and do the same?</p> <p>Will there be a risk of other closures of RCT CDC and therefore resulting in a large class at Porth Community School in the future?</p> <p>Will the CDU children have ALN met at Porth Community School provision?</p> <p>Can you tell us what the CDU children will have at Porth Community School provision that is 'greater' than what Hafod Primary is already providing.</p> <p>Will my son continue to be eligible for transport to and from the proposed provision</p>	<p>See Summary of Key Issues</p> <p>The LA continuously reviews its LSC provision in line with Welsh Government requirements.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues</p>
---	--	---	--

77 respondents	On line petition had the option of submitting additional comments	Comments raised mirror comments already received and commented on above 77 comments were provided via the online petition. It is understood that signatories were provided with an opportunity to add additional comments. A member of the Governing Body copied the comments onto individual proforma sheets	All responder's opinions are noted.
Uncle of a pupil from Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	Dosbarth Coch has been a fab class and the children have come on so well. Why close something that is working so well? Concerns for full integrational involvement in all school activities. Welfare of child no considered.	The responder's opinion is noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent of a pupil from Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	The children are very happy and settled well, it's a fab unit and is great for the school to have a variety of individuals.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Auntie of a pupil from Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	The class has been in place and successful go 21 years why close it? Transport concern for one pupil due to relocation. No evidence that Porth is a suitable provision.	The responder's opinion is noted. See Summary of Key Issues. The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of CDU pupil Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	I object to the proposal as I feel the relocation is not in the best interest for my child. Since attending Hafod Primary my son was instantly understood and his needs were met. He was let down un previous years by LEA, healthcare professionals and serious limits (funding, large classes, and fight for support). Concerned with delay to view provision The proposal will benefit the school not my child, concerned about comment made 'we need excellence to be excellent' No evidence that these changes will work, Porth needs to prove it is an excellent school- Hafod Primary is! I don't want my son being an experiment. Not enough time for sept 19 start if proposal goes ahead- 11 weeks for transition is not acceptable. Concerned for my child's wellbeing. As there is no evidence that this will work, I believe a contract should be offered. What if this LEA's decision fails my son and damages his education? Offering a bespoke care	The responder's opinion is noted. See Summary of Key Issues.

		package to stay in Hafod Mainstream is not an option as my son is stated – the LEA has a duty of care. Relocation is risking this. Why wasn't the relocation considered for Sept18 with key stage 1 gained from closed provision? SEN 2 facilities were clearly displayed on Porth Plans 2016. I feel Hafod CDU KS2 are 'trapped' to fill a gap created by LEA.	
Member of the Community	Questionnaire	No positive indication that a school of this type works for children concerned, too large for children with special needs- need to be nurtured.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of pupil in Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	The new school does not take account of individual children's needs. Hafod School is perfect for these children.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of a pupil in Hafod	Questionnaire	My grandson was sent to the super-school and was just left to cry on the floor cause he was unsettled and no one was interested in him.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Uncle of a pupil in CDU	Questionnaire	The unit provides excellent educational needs for my nephew who enjoys going there, he is very worried it might close please don't close it.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of pupil at Hafod	Questionnaire	Too many bad reviews of the new super school.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of pupil at Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	I think the more is unnecessary and causes more problems for the children than benefits. Welfare of the children, happiness if children.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of a pupil at Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	The children are an important part of the school	The responder's opinion is noted.
Parent of a pupil at Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	Needed with in the school	The responder's opinion is noted.
Member of community-Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	Significant impact on school and wider community impact on pupil-detrimental to wellbeing of child.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Family member of pupil in CDU Hafod Primary	Questionnaire	My nephew is happy at his current school and I feel this change will have a detrimental effort on his education.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Family member of a pupil in CDU Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	It will negatively impact on a family member who attends the class. Choosing the class is not in the best interest of the individual and is all about cost effectiveness for RCT council.	The responder's opinion is noted.

PTA parent of pupil who's just moved to year 7- Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	I believe children with any learning disability thrive better in a smaller provision. The provision at Hafod is successful, it works doe all the pupils who use the class and they learn to cope and grow within a small school environment.	The responder's opinion is noted.
Grandparent of a pupil at Hafod Primary School	Questionnaire	The LSC pupils at Hafod Primary School are fully integrated with the other pupils with the other pupils. The LSC pupils are able to mix, communicate and play with their peers. The history and success stories of the LSC at Hafod Primary School speak for themselves. It is foolish beaurocracy to change. Why try and fix it if it's not broken	The responder's opinion is noted.
<p><b>Key themes for Hafod Primary School consultation responses:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impact upon pupils</li> <li>2. LSCs currently hosted by smaller mainstream settings</li> <li>3. Transition of current LSC pupils to new LSC settings</li> <li>4. Redeployment of staff and changes of terms and conditions of employment</li> <li>5. Inclusion of SEN pupils within mainstream settings</li> <li>6. Closure of mainstream settings</li> <li>7. Rationale for change</li> <li>8. Loss of LSC provision from within current school setting and loss of teaching staff</li> <li>9. Discussions about individual pupils provision</li> <li>10. Concerns regarding the quality of relocated LSC provision where LSC provision has currently been considered to be effective</li> <li>11. Reducing funding for specialist provision</li> <li>12. Meeting SEN/ALN of LSC pupils relocated provisions</li> <li>13. Additional benefits of relocation of Hafod CDU to Porth Community School</li> <li>14. Concerns regarding access to the wider community in Porth compared to current location in Hafod Primary School</li> </ol>			



<b>2. Penrhys Primary School Proposals</b>			
<b>The following are the comments raised during consultation regarding the proposal to close/relocation of the LSCs at Penrhys Primary</b>			
<b>All responses disagreed with the proposal</b>			
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Type of Consultation response</b>	<b>Comment/Points Raised/ Additional Information from respondent</b>	<b>LA Response</b>
Questions asked by Governors in Penrhys Primary School	Presented during meeting	<p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why is Maerdy considered to be more accessible than Penrhys?</li> <li>2. Why is the LA taking away a through provision at Penrhys primary and giving the reason for the move as to make a through provision.</li> <li>3. What is going to happen to the children in the early year's observation class at Darran Park primary when they need placing?</li> <li>4. Are there any future plans for any other learning support classes?</li> </ol>	<p>Major investment has been made in Maerdy Community School (approximately 4 million) to ensure that the school's environment is fully accessible and inclusive to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century standard.</p> <p>Where possible the LA strives to create through provision for pupils in LSCs to avoid unnecessary transition from one school setting to another to access specialist provision, thus providing equity with mainstream peers. There is currently a KS2 provision in Maerdy. Relocating 1x FP LSC from Penrhys would create a through provision in a school where there is a proven track record for providing effective SEN provision for pupils with complex needs.</p> <p>Placement of pupils in the early years LSC at Darran Park will depend upon the outcome of assessment of individual needs.</p>

		<p>5. Is it possible to see the transcript to the consultation meeting with parents to ensure it is true and accurate record?</p> <p>6. Will it be possible to see the transcript of this meeting?</p> <p>7. When will all paper work go to councillors it is an open meeting or can members of the public attend?</p> <p>8. Why did they stop children coming into L.S classes to make it look like they were not needed?</p> <p>9. They said at the proposal meeting it only affects 1 child as if 1 child doesn't matter. We all know it affect the whole school and many other communities not just Penrhys because the LS classes have children from all over the Rhondda.</p>	<p>The LA is consulting solely on the proposal included in the consultation document 'Review of LSC Provision within RCT'. The LA has a responsibility to continuously review specialist provision to ensure it is making effective and efficient use of resources to meet the needs of pupils with SEN across RCT.</p> <p>There is no requirement to take a transcript of consultation meetings. A summary of the main topics/areas of discussion has been recorded please refer to Appendix 4</p> <p>Members of the public are welcome to attend and sit in the gallery, however should a representative wish to speak at the meeting then a formal written request needs to be submitted to the Cabinet Office 5 working days prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Placement of pupils in LSC is considered in line with Access &amp; Inclusion Specialist Placement Criteria</p> <p>The LA understands that any proposal for change can be an anxious time for pupils and parents. Individual discussion will take place with parents/pupils affected should the proposal process in relation to future educational placement. LSC</p>
--	--	---	--

		<p>10. How can you say it is in the best interest of the children when right now they are getting the support they need these children will have different needs as complex needs are varied how will bigger classes support this?</p> <p>11. What is the maximum capacity of the classes in Maerdy? Are there plans to expand? Is there room to expand?</p> <p>12. Where do the children go when it's reached its maximum capacity? Decision affects the children still coming through the system where do they go when full capacity it reached?</p> <p>13. Where are the children of Rhondda Fawr going to be able to access these types of complex needs support classes? (Do not let them name behaviour support classes it's a different type of class.)</p> <p>14. How will the children with complex needs be given support in larger mainstream classes?</p>	<p>provision will still be available for pupils within the Rhondda The remit of the complex LSC will not change. The classes will continue to have a high staff to pupil ratio in order to support pupils' complex needs.</p> <p>The LA continuously reviews its specialist provision to ensure it makes efficient and effective use of resources to meet the needs of pupils with significant SEN across RCT.</p> <p>Please see above.</p> <p>Pupils who meet the criteria for placement in a LSC will access a specialist LSC provision.</p>
Anonymous and Teacher at Penrhys School	Questionnaire	<p><b>Proposal 1-</b> The GCA entry requirement for Complex need classes has been greatly lowered in recent years from 74 to 61. This has made it far more difficult for pupils to access a place in these classes, even though they present significant difficulties and find it hard to access the curriculum in a mainstream class. It is feared that there will be a detrimental effect on mainstream classes if complex need classes are closed. As pupils who would have previously accessed places in complex needs classes will have to attend mainstream classes with no extra support, thus often causing disruption. Teachers in mainstream classes will be expected to raise standards of mainstream pupils whilst providing extra attention to those pupils who</p>	<p>The consultation does not include a proposal relating to specialist placement criteria. The responder's opinion is noted.</p>

		<p>have additional learning needs, resulting in mainstream teachers succumbing to more pressure.  Additional training will/may be required by mainstream teachers to support pupils who have a variety of complex needs.  In the current class arrangements, both academically and socially, good progress and performance has been made by almost all pupils with complex needs, both in school and at home with the majority of parents have reported improvements at home.</p> <p><b>Proposal 2-</b>  Moving the FP to Maerdy Primary school is less accessible to many pupils in the Rhondda Valley than that of Penrhys Primary School.</p> <p>Times stated below are taken from AA route planner:  Blaenrhondda to Penrhys takes 17 minutes, to get to Maerdy it will take 28 minutes  Treorchy to Penrhys takes 8 minutes, to Maerdy it takes 19 minutes.  All journeys are extended significantly from the current provision at Penrhys Primary, and these times do not take into account transport trying to pass through Ferndale at peak times, extending the journey further.</p> <p>The proposal to put through provision in Maerdy which is less accessible and take the provision from a more accessible school.</p> <p>Transition/ developing links with the KS3 class will be made extremely difficult due to the distance, as the KS3 provision is proposed to be placed at Treorchy comprehensive.</p> <p><b>Proposal 3 –</b>  There is a definite need for an observation unit at Foundation Phase to ensure pupils are correctly placed, however under the proposed arrangements, if pupils are diagnosed with a particular need will there be a suitable placement available to them to meet that need appropriately.</p>	<p>The responder's opinion is noted.</p> <p>In relation to travel the distance/travel times fall within the parameters outlined in the Learner Travel Policy.</p> <p>Maerdy Community School is fully accessible 21<sup>st</sup> Century school setting</p>
--	--	---	---

		<p>If there is no placement available under the proposed arrangements will pupils be kept in this observation unit inappropriately.</p> <p><b>Proposal 4-</b> Extra provision at KS3 is overdue, however the distance from the proposed through provision is a concern, if located in Maerdy Primary school, the travelling distance for transition will be difficult.</p>	<p>There is a KS3/4 class for complex needs in Ferndale and there is also a proposal to open a KS3/4 class in Treorchy. The well-established KS2 class will put robust transition plans in place for pupils transferring to both settings. Distance will not impact upon the above.</p> <p>Placement will be identified and actioned as appropriate to the needs of the pupils.</p> <p>The responder's opinion is noted. Distance will not be a barrier to implementing robust transition arrangements for pupils.</p>
Grandfather of pupil in Penrhys Primary School	Questionnaire	It's diminishing the school, it's a traditional school for children with learning needs and disability.	The responder's views are noted.
Volunteer Penrhys Church and Friend of the Penrhys Community	Questionnaire	<p>Affect children with all types of behaviour. Children don't like change. Travelling from different area is not good for any child. Affect the children by going to another school and distance is not good. Heart of Penrhys.</p>	See Summary of key Issues.
Voluntary Friend of the Penrhys Community	Questionnaire	<p>Needs of these pupils best met in a smaller unit. Vulnerable children and would be overwhelmed by busier setting. Penrhys central position in Rhondda, Maerdy would be a very long journey for most pupils.</p> <p>Could this lead to the closure of Penrhys Primary?</p>	<p>The capacity of the class would remain the same if it were to relocate to Maerdy.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p>
Neighbourhood manager of Penrhys	Questionnaire	Classes were instrumental in helping my niece to overcome her speech problems allowing her to now speak in 2 languages.	<p>The responder's views are noted.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p>

		At present classes are held at the centre of the valleys to move them will create great issues.	
Uncle of pupils who have benefited from Penrhys	Questionnaire	Many children with learning difficulties which is becoming more apparent in the modern era. Penrhys is a central location.....more classes are needed. More cost effective keep classes....carting them all over the Valley with the raising fuel cost. More classes are needed.	The responder's views are noted. The LA continuously reviews its specialist provision to ensure it makes efficient and effective use of resources to meet the needs of pupils with significant SEN across RCT
Anonymous	Questionnaire	Not feasible for children or families. Travel and the relocation will be upsetting for all involved.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Member of Penrhys Community	Questionnaire	Important to have special need alongside mainstream children for learning and mixing and becoming friends. Distance of travel, Penrhys is central to both Valleys.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Anonymous	Questionnaire	Children went there and learnt and made many friends. Way too far away.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent	Questionnaire	Both sons taught in unit they were a great help. Travelling is too much with children with needs.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Member of Penrhys Community	Questionnaire	All children are kept together. Penrhys central, less travel time.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent and Ex-pupil	Questionnaire	Know how important children with special educational needs are in the way they interact with others. Disrupt the education of the children..... fear it will lead to the closure of wonderful school.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Friend of the Community	Questionnaire	Quite a lot of pupils with learning difficulties and Penrhys is most central for all. Cost of transport would out weight the cost of keeping classes open.	The responder's views are noted. Feedback from the LA's Integrated transport Unit does not suggest that the proposals in relation to Penrhys will incur any significant additional cost to transport.

Volunteer and friend of Penrhys Community	Questionnaire	Vulnerable children's needs in larger classes are not always met, which can cause extreme stress for the children and families. Smaller school settings can address their needs more effectively. Length of time that will be spent travelling to more distant schools which has it obvious disadvantages particularly with children with physical disabilities. If LSC classes are closed it could lead to school closure.	The capacity of the class would remain the same in Maerdy Community School.  See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent of pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	Children use and need class. I don't think child should be taken from their familiar surroundings as it can effect learning and mental health.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Aunt of child who attends Penrhys	Questionnaire	Everyone should have the right to attend the same school. Maerdy has less spaces for LSC and it's too far to travel for some people. I think all children should be treated equally even LSC children.	See Summary of Key Issues.  The capacity of the class would remain the same in Maerdy Community.
Parent of pupil at Penrhys	Questionnaire	LSC provision has always been an important and integral part of Penrhys and to take it away could be detrimental to school. Penrhys can facilitate 18 pupils whereas Maerdy can only facilitate 10 pupils.	The responder's views are noted.  The capacity of the LSC that is proposed to relocate to Maerdy Community will remain the same should the proposal proceed.
Parent of pupil at Penrhys	Questionnaire	It will cause too much distress on the children having to travel so far. Penrhys has the ability to facilitate 18+ pupils than Maerdy only 10. Penrhys is central to the Valley.	The capacity of the LSC that is proposed to relocate to Maerdy Community will remain the same should the proposal proceed.  There is currently surplus capacity in the 2 FP LSCs in Penrhys Primary. The proposal aims to redirect resources to address other identified areas of need for LSC provision across RCT.
Parent of pupil at Penrhys	Questionnaire	Will take my child back in development stage due to her complex needs. My daughter would not travel from Penrhys to Maerdy with their needs.	There is no evidence to suggest that transition to a new setting would impact upon the pupil's development. See Summary of Key Issues.

Grandparent of one of the pupils in Penrhys	Questionnaire	Children need class as not all children are the same and some need extra help. Should not have to travel when we have a perfect LS in our own school.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent of pupil at Penrhys	Questionnaire	Children with learning difficulties need this placement. This is too far for young children to travel when there is a perfectly good school on site.	The responder's views are noted.  The capacity of the LSC that is proposed to relocate to Maerdy Community will remain the same should the proposal proceed.
Parent of pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	Need to higher the GA score, so then the class could be filled. Already a cross phase I think the travelling would be unacceptable.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent of a pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	Children need this class if they are finding mainstream hard. I do not think children at such a young age should have to travel this far to suit their needs.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Governor	Questionnaire	Welfare of child should come first, the children are settled so would not need disruption. Traumatising for children to be relocated. Penrhys has excelled in looking after/ teaching LSC children.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent of a pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	Penrhys is a small school and teachers and children have close relationships which is very valuable with learning difficulties children. Maerdy is also far from Penrhys.	The responder's views are noted.
Parent of pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	I think it is pathetic to close the LSC class. Children will have to travel longer and further and this will cause more traffic which council is trying to avoid. This decision will put pressure on other schools and children will get lost in system. Children have to get used to different school, bigger classes.	The responder's views are noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Grandparent of Penrhys	Questionnaire	I don't think it is in children's best interest to lose another class. I don't think children should be treated like sheep to have to go to another school.	The responder's views are noted.
	Questionnaire	There is a long established class with experienced teachers.	The responder's views are noted. See Summary of Key Issues.



		Penrhys ideally located between two valleys, whereas Maerdy is at the top of the Rhondda Fach a long a distance for vulnerable children to travel.	
Parent of a pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	Best school in the Rhondda, caring teachers, supportive headmistress, only school my children settled in and had support. The unit is needed in the community and should not be relocated. Things should not be changed.	The responder's views are noted. The proposal is to relocate the LSC to create a through provision in Maerdy Primary. This setting's last Estyn Inspection was positive. It must be noted that the Estyn Inspection in Penrhys in 2017 deemed that 3 out of 5 inspections areas were 'adequate' and in need of improvement.
Pupil at Penrhys	Questionnaire	Wrong to shut down for funding. It's doing fine up the current location. Shutting down a good school.	See Summary of Key Issues.
Parent of pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	Everyone should have the option to attend a school that has facility. Maerdy can offer so many spaces with the facility but Penrhys can cover more spaces.	The responder's views are noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Grandparent of a pupil in Penrhys	Questionnaire	LSC has provided great support, it is ideally situated to cover both sides of the valley, so children don't have to travel so far. Maerdy is smaller unit not so many children attend as in Penrhys. Agree with Proposal 3: The sooner problems are identified in preschool age children the better support can be sat in place for when they reach compulsory school age. Penrhys has provided excellent support to the children who attend the LSC for years, the staff have a fabulous bond with the children meet the individual needs.	The responder's views are noted. See Summary of Key Issues.
Community of Penrhys	Questionnaire x30	Disagree to the proposals	Noted
Penrhys Primary School	Questionnaire	Proposal 1 GCA requirements have been lowered -74 to 61- making it more difficult for pupils to obtain places in these classes. Finding it difficult to access	The responder's views are noted. See Summary of Key Issues.

		<p>the curriculum in mainstream class, be underperforming and would benefit greatly from accessing such a provision.</p> <p>Closing classes have to attend mainstream with no extra support- causing disruption- having detrimental effects on the other pupils in class.</p> <p>Teachers in mainstream class put under more pressure</p> <p>Mainstream teachers will require additional training.</p> <p>Pupils with significant learning difficulties will find it more difficult to function and progress.</p> <p>Currently pupils with complex needs perform well and make good progress in current class arrangements- both academically and socially.</p> <p>Proposal 2-</p> <p>Moving class Penrhys primary school to Maerdy Primary school make it less accessible to many pupils in the Rhondda Valley.</p> <p>Journey should be reasonable.</p> <p>Taking away a through provision form the accessible school.</p> <p>KS3 provision in Treorchy comprehensive- making transition links with KS3 class very difficult due to the distance.</p> <p>Proposal 3</p> <p>Definite need for an observation unit in Foundation Phase. Will there be a suitable placements.</p> <p>Proposal 4</p> <p>Definite need for extra provision in KS3.....concern due to travel distance</p>	<p>The responder's opinion is noted.</p> <p>Placement will be identified and actioned as appropriate to the needs of the pupils.</p> <p>Distance will not be a barrier to implementing robust transition arrangements for pupils.</p>
<p>Penrhys Primary school typed letter contain exactly the same content submitted by an number of individuals (x76)</p>	<p>Letter</p>	<p>Parental satisfaction with quality of teaching, care and outcomes for pupils in learning support classes.</p> <p>The adverse effect of the policy of compartmentalising the consideration of LSC provision in isolation from the effect on the whole school and its future.</p> <p>Separating pupils who are often vulnerable from their friends, peers and in some cases their siblings, is giving rise to a very real concerns for families.</p> <p>Considerable concern about vulnerable pupils attending a larger school with potentially larger classes.</p>	<p>The responder's views are noted.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p>

		<p>Distance and time involved in pupils travelling to and from school, effect on lengthening the school day is a worry. Penrhys is far more accessible to the Rhondda Fawr than Maerdy.</p> <p>Some parents or guardians will have primary age's children in both mainstream and LS classes, therefore in different schools.</p> <p>Penrhys community is extremely concerned by the tone of the whole report and the effects of what appears to be the inevitable closure of Penrhys Primary School arising from targeting of the LS classes.</p> <p>Minimal impact of the proposals...only one pupil would be affected, the concern is that this number represents only the immediate situation and does not allow for the need for LSC provision for more children in the future.</p> <p>A Community Impact Assessment is not even deemed to be desirable....impact of the proposals....on the school within Penrhys Village environment.</p>	<p>This is not unusual for parents of pupils in any of the LA's LSCs across RCT.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p>
Parent of a child in Penrhys Primary School	Questionnaire	<p>These classes help children with complex learning needs whilst my child has attended this class he has progressed really well and the teachers do a very good job with these children that have complex needs.</p> <p>Second time that this has happened to my son it's not fair to him moving schools again as its upsetting as he doesn't like change.</p> <p>Children with complex needs, need these classes to help them it's not fair that you want to take these away from them.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues
Teacher at Penrhys Primary School	Questionnaire	<p>Proposal 1</p> <p>GCA requirements have been lowered -74 to 61- making it more difficult for pupils to obtain places in these classes. Finding it difficult to access the curriculum in mainstream class, be underperforming and would benefit greatly from accessing such a provision.</p> <p>Closing classes have to attend mainstream with no extra support- causing disruption- having detrimental effects on the other pupils in class.</p> <p>Teachers in mainstream class put under more pressure</p> <p>Mainstream teachers will require additional training.</p>	<p>The responder's views are noted.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p>

		<p>Pupils with significant learning difficulties will find it more difficult to function and progress.</p> <p>Currently pupils with complex needs perform well and make good progress in current class arrangements- both academically and socially.</p> <p>Proposal 2- Moving class Penrhys primary school to Maerdy Primary school make it less accessible to many pupils in the Rhondda Valley. Journey should be reasonable. Taking away a through provision form the accessible school. KS3 provision in Treorchy comprehensive- making transition links with KS3 class very difficult due to the distance.</p> <p>Proposal 3 Definite need for an observation unit in Foundation Phase. Will there be a suitable placements.</p> <p>Proposal 4 Definite need for extra provision in KS3.....concern due to travel distance</p>	<p>The responder's opinion is noted. Placement will be identified and actioned as appropriate to the needs of the pupils. Distance will not be a barrier to implementing robust transition arrangements for pupils.</p>
Anonymous	Questionnaire	<p>The school has always offered this facility and should continue to</p> <p><b>Key themes from Penrhys School consultation responses:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distance/travel time for pupils being relocated</li> <li>2. Impact upon pupils</li> <li>3. LSCs currently hosted by smaller mainstream settings</li> <li>4. Transition of current LSC pupils to new LSC settings</li> <li>5. Redeployment of staff and changes of terms and conditions of employment</li> <li>6. Inclusion of SEN pupils within mainstream settings</li> <li>7. Criteria for specialist placement</li> <li>8. Closure of mainstream settings</li> <li>9. Rationale for change</li> <li>10. Loss of LSC provision from within current school setting and loss of teaching staff</li> <li>11. Discussions about individual pupils provision</li> <li>12. Meeting SEN/ALN of LSC pupils relocated provisions</li> <li>13. Changes to capacity for LSCs proposed to relocate to Maerdy and Porth Community School</li> <li>14. Reducing funding for specialist provision</li> </ol>	<p>The responder's views are noted.</p>

<b>3. Caradog Primary School Proposals</b>			
<b>The following are the comments raised during consultation regarding the proposal to close/relocation of the LSCs at Caradog Primary The responses disagreed with the proposal</b>			
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Type of Consultation response</b>	<b>Comment/Points Raised/ Additional Information from respondent</b>	<b>LA Response</b>
Grandparents whose grandchild attends Caradog Primary School	Questionnaire	Kids like xxx don't like change. Keeps asking why he got to change school.	See Summary of Key Issues The LSCs in Caradog are based in a Victorian building that is not easily accessible for pupils with additional learning needs/disabilities.
Parent of a pupil at Caradog Primary School	Questionnaire	Caradog is a fantastic school with complete access and facilities throughout purposefully for my daughter X in the LSC. The staff are well experience and very accommodating. Caradog has the facilities to accommodate infants and juniors. They have everything at Caradog school for a smooth transition. Specific information regarding XX was submitted	See Summary of Key Issues
<b>Key themes from Caradog Primary School consultation responses:</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussion about individual pupils' provision</li> <li>2. Rationale for change</li> </ol>			

<b>4. Darren Park Primary School Proposals</b>			
<b>The following are the comments raised during consultation regarding the proposal to re-designation of the LSCs at Darran Park. The response disagreed with the proposal</b>			
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Type of Consultation response</b>	<b>Comment/Points Raised/ Additional Information from respondent</b>	<b>LA Response</b>
Regarding Darran Park Primary School	Email	<p>Firstly I would like to comment on the amount of jargon used in your letter. I feel the language used is mostly inaccessible to the layman. This is unfair and would appear that you are aiming to 'put off; potential attendees to the aforementioned drop in session.</p> <p>Am I correct in my understanding that you are trying to get rid of the additional learning needs (ALN) class in favour of mainstreaming the pupils with additional learning/ learning support needs?</p> <p>Are these surplus capacity issues a direct result of the merging of, and subsequent closure of North Road school?</p>	<p>The LA acknowledges your comment regarding the jargon in the letter and will review the content in light of your concerns. There was no intention to put off people from attending the session as the LA welcomes and encourages all stakeholders to take part in the consultation.</p> <p>No the proposal is to re-designate or change the function of the LSC in Darran Park to be an Early Years Assessment and Intervention Class for pupils of nursery age who have significant complex learning difficulties.</p> <p>No the proposal aims to address the need to provide specialist early intervention for nursery aged pupils with significant complex learning difficulties.</p>

		<p>If I am incorrect in my understanding, is it that you are proposing to cut the learning support assistance already provided to the pupils in need at Darran Park?</p> <p>Could you also outline the advantages of mainstream inclusion for pupils requiring learning support? How is it possible to take a preventative approach to pupils in the primary school when, many of the additional learning needs aren't diagnosed until many children are of Junior School age?</p> <p>What is the current imbalance between primary and secondary provisions?</p>	<p>The consultation does not include a proposal to reduce learning support assistance to pupils in need at Darran Park.</p> <p>This question is not relevant to the LSC consultation.</p> <p>For children assessed as having significant additional learning needs from birth onwards there are recognised assessment processes and intervention/strategies/specific educational approaches that are effective in providing early intervention and preventative approaches for pupils with ALN both in special and mainstream schools.</p> <p>The consultation also includes proposals to open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Treorchy Comprehensive School and a Key Stage 3/4 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in Ysgol Nant Gwyn in order to enhance secondary LSC provision in line with the outcome of analysis of pupil need.</p>
<p><b>Key themes from Darren Park Primary School consultation responses:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impact upon pupils</li> <li>2. Criteria for specialist placement</li> <li>3. Rationale for change</li> <li>4. Discussion about individual pupils provision</li> </ol>			

<b>5. Heol y Celyn Primary School Proposals</b>			
<b>The following are the comments raised during consultation regarding the proposal to close the LSCs at Heol y Celyn. The responses disagreed with the proposal</b>			
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Type of Consultation response</b>	<b>Comment/Points Raised/ Additional Information from respondent</b>	<b>LA Response</b>
Parent of a pupil in Heol Y Celyn Primary school	Email	<p>As you can appreciate I do not want him removed from Heolycelyn but in fact stay in Heolycelyn until he goes to comp with his friends. I have found out how detrimental transition to another school can be. He is statemented and I also do not want him dropped into mainstream and forgotten about resulting in being lost in the system.</p> <p>I have observed other classes being closed down and that you are in fact preparing the school for the transition to the super school in Hawthorn. I understand that finding money is difficult however if you snip the corners of all schools instead of totally chopping up the support learning classes for the disabled children you may also find the same if not more money.</p> <p>I ask you keep the Learning Support Class at Heol Y Celyn open simply because it is a fundamental need for all the disabled children in it. So dragging them out and placing them in another school would be detrimental to their health and mental state, without even taking into consideration the speed you want this done by.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues



**Key themes from Heol Y Celyn consultation responses:**

1. Discussions about individual pupils provision
2. Reducing funding for specialist provision
3. Impact upon pupils
4. Transition of current LSC pupils to new LSC settings

**6.Generic Responses to the Consultation**

The following are the comments raised during consultation regarding the proposal to re-align LSC provision within RCT.

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Type of Consultation response</b>	<b>Comment/Points Raised/ Additional Information from respondent</b>	<b>LA Response</b>
Union representative NASUWT Cymru	Email	<p>Having spoken to stakeholders in the Primary School settings that may be affected by the proposals to close and relocate LSC provision there is concern about the mobility of pupils, the diminishing support for SEN pupils within local communities and the withdrawal of specialist support for pupils with CLD for example. In the case of Penrhys and Heol y Celyn there are concerns about the choices that pupils and parents have in order to continue accessing vital, specialist support without the pupil having to travel some distance to access it.</p> <p>As part of the consultation we would like to see detailed data relating the numbers and local distribution of pupils eligible for LSC entry and if the proposals are allowed to go ahead in their present form, the locations of the LSC that can best meet their needs.</p>	<p>See Summary of Key Issues</p> <p>Noted</p>

		<p>In the 2014 report which saw significant changes to SEN provision as a first phase model – <i>a number of statements were included in the email</i> LSC staff feel that these ‘pupil centred’ arguments are as valid now as they were in 2014? While we are aware of the financial benefits associated with the recent proposals (I note that RCT spends in the region of £3.1m annually on the provision of LSC’s and there are currently approximately 330 pupils accessing the 46 LSC provisions within RCT), ‘individual’ pupil needs within their local communities still have to be met.</p> <p>There has been disclosure relating to the actual fall in numbers of pupils in the LSC settings in for example Penrhys and Heol y Celyn but issues have also been raised about whether changes to the GCA have contributed to this. It is suggested that GCA adjustments relating to entry and exit scores and criteria may well have discourage parents and carers from accessing provision in the present settings.</p> <p>The consultation NASUWT Cymru expects the local authority to respond to this and publicise criteria and scoring data that reflects trends over time.</p> <p>It is likely that existing teaching and support staff will be affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>Clarity is sought regarding the impact and performance of the learning support classes. I note from the proposal documentation that whole school performance has been referenced (‘school’s current performance’ and ‘prospects for improvement’) but there are worries that positive comments and outcomes attributed to the LSC provision in some settings have not been disclosed.</p>	See Summary of Key Issues
RCT NEU	Email	<p><b>General Principles</b></p> <p>It was once said that pupils in RCT did not need to have statements as their needs were met by the wide number of provisions available across the county.</p> <p>The closure of classes and the tightening of criteria for entry to classes seems to do little to support this notion going forward.</p> <p>Closing classes reduces the opportunity for pupils to receive the tailored support in small settings that they need.</p>	<p>The responder’s opinion is noted.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p>

		<p><b>Re-designation of classes at Darren Park/Llantrisant</b> Seems entirely reasonable and sensible. there may be a greater need for more classes of this type as the earlier pupils receive appropriate support the more successful the outcome.</p> <p><b>Closure of classes at Heol Y Celyn</b> Understand the lack of pupils in the classes at Heol Y Celyn. This would appear to be based on more stringent entry criteria and the need for schools to have completed the fullest graduated response. It leaves Pontypridd area with no provision for pupils with complex difficulties.</p> <p><b>Closure of Pontygwaith</b> Significant low numbers at Pontygwaith over the last few years. Given the proximity to Penrhys, Darren Park and Maerdy the closure seems logical. When completed with the lack of pupils.</p> <p><b>Closure of 1 FP at Penrhys and movement of 1 FP to Maerdy</b> Given the arguments put forward in the documentation of the proposal this seems to be in opposition to those arguments. Two KS2 classes left at Penrhys- therefore no long term provision to progress through in the same establishment which seems to be the core argument for moving the one FP class to Maerdy. More sensible for classes left to be of flexible designation so that should pupil need arise then one can operate as an FP class whilst the other operates as a KS2. This could be built in over time so no further realignment necessary.</p>	<p>There is LSC provision for pupils with complex needs in Gwaunmeisgyn Primary which could be accessed by pupils in the Pontypridd area.</p> <p>The responder's opinion is noted.</p> <p>The proposal to close one FP class and relocate the other FP class to Maerdy ensures that the impact upon pupils currently accessing the LSC provision at Penrhys is minimised, thus affecting only one pupil.</p> <p>In relation to flexibility the LA has to continuously review its LSC provision across the LA to ensure that it meets the needs of learners with significant SEN. The situation at Penrhys will continue to be subject to monitor and review in this context. Having 2 LSC provision in the same school setting allows the LA to be</p>
--	--	---	--

		<p><b>Closure of KS2 at Caradog and movement of FP class to Cwmbach</b> Caradog has through provision. It has access issues but much work has been done to overcome these issues and make the school a suitable environment.</p> <p>In closing the KS2 class pupils will have to transfer to Cwmbach..... significant impact on learners who are part of the Caradog School Community.</p> <p><b>Opening of new classes at Nant Gwyn and Treorchy</b> No issue with the opening of new classes, however would wish to ensure that all posts are ring fenced to those whose posts will be made redundant through the closure of the classes.</p> <p>No sensible through provision for the SEBD pupils or Complex Needs pupils- the KS2 SEBD provision is in Bodringallt, which is now part of the Treorchy cluster whilst the KS2 complex provision is at Penrhys which is part of the Tonypandy Cluster- unfair for these pupils..... no social support from their peers as they move to secondary provision.</p> <p><b>Movement of KS2 communication disorder class from Hafod to Porth</b></p>	<p>flexible with the designation of educational phase of the LSC.</p> <p>Minor reasonable adjustments were undertaken to ease access for pupil with mobility issues in Caradog Primary. However the site is severely constrained. There is no dedicated parking or drop off area on site for pupils to easily access school provision. The geographical nature of the school means that future adaptations are unachievable.</p> <p>See Summary of Key Issues.</p> <p>Should the proposals proceed further discussions will be held with HR and Union representatives in order to agree the appointment process. The LA will need to be satisfied that staff can meet the essential criteria necessary to fulfil the requirements of the new posts in order to appoint the staff in question.</p> <p>The responder's views are noted. The LA continuously reviews its LSC provision across the LA to consider how it can improve LSC provision.</p> <p>See Summary of key Issues.</p>
--	--	--	---

		<p>Understand the principle of creating a through provision.....benefit of the class being situated at Hafod.</p> <p>The facilities available to pupils.....within a very short walking distance are superb. The class in Hafod is a core part of the school community..... and there is great concern that this benefit will be lost in a bigger establishment.</p> <p><b>Closure of Penywaun KS2 SEBD</b></p> <p>Understand the logic of closing class, however surprised by the lack of need for this provision in this location.</p> <p>Has sufficient investigation been carried out as to why no pupils have been place here?</p> <p>Growing number of pupils across the whole of RCT exhibiting behaviour that would normally indicate a need for placement such as this class- lack of pupils being placed is puzzling.</p>	<p>The LA has undertaken an analysis of current and projected pupil need prior to developing the proposal. Data indicates that additional capacity for pupils with significant Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) is needed in KS3/4, hence the proposal to open a KS3/4 SEBD provision.</p>
Transportation Manager RCT	Email	<p>I accept that the proposals aim to address surplus capacity issues in key provisions, allowing existing resources to be re-directed to enhance capacity for mainstream inclusion, early intervention and preventative approaches, as well as addressing the current imbalance between the number of primary and secondary provisions, transition and accessibility issues. Having reviewed the proposals from a transport perspective (attached), I suggest that the estimated full year impact will be in the region of £120,000 in a full financial year. Provision for this needs to be taken into account and provision made as part of the 21st Century Schools Modernisation Programme.</p>	<p>The responder's views are noted.</p> <p>The increase in transport cost relates in the main to transport to the proposed new LSC provisions. The establishment of these LSCs has been based on analysis of pupil need.</p>
<p><b>Key themes from Generic Consultation Responses:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Transport implications</li> <li>2. Impact upon pupils</li> <li>3. Redeployment of staff and changes of terms and conditions of employment</li> <li>4. Inclusion of SEN pupils within mainstream settings</li> <li>5. Criteria for specialist placement</li> <li>6. Rationale for change</li> </ol>			

7. General agreement with need for Key stage 3/4 provision

Appendix 1c

Timetable of Consultation Events

Timetable of School Council Meetings

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Date
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	School Council	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	Staff	
	Parents	
Penrhys Primary School	School Council	7 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	Staff	
	Parents	
Caradog Primary School	School Council	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	Staff	
	Parents	
Hafod Primary School	School Council	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	Staff	
	Parents	
Darran Park Primary School	School Council	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	Staff	
	Parents	
Llantrisant Primary School	School Council	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Date
Maerdy Primary School	School Council	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Pontygwaith Primary School	School Council	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Porth Community School	School Council	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	School Council	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Treorchy Comprehensive School	School Council	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Cwmbach Primary School	School Council	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Penywaun Primary School	School Council	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018

DRAFT

<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Caradog Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Caradog Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	8/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	7 LSC Staff
<b>Number of School Council representatives:</b>	7	<b>Number of Parents: &amp; Governors</b>	Approximately 12 LSC parents a Govern Body representative
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	Staff, pupils, parents Headteacher, Chair of Governors		
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Kate Hill, Lisa Carter, Clare Jones (Union), Nicole Pearce and Louise Richards (HR).		
<b>Staff</b>			
<p>LC introduced proposals, explaining the consultation process and rationale for the proposals following which a number of questions and concerns were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the building be adapted to suit pupil's needs- will money be available? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The proposed school for the relocation of the class has benefited from 21<sup>st</sup> Century investment and is fully accessible. Individual pupil requirements will be reviewed should the proposal be progressed</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What support will be put in place for pupils regarding transition? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Robust transition support will be put in place with the support of the LA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What's the implication for staff? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ NP provided information regarding consultation with unions and the managing change policy. Staff were advised whilst we recognised this was a concerning time we are still only at the proposal stage. Once this has been formally agreed to proceed LA staff will work with union representative to agree how the proposals will be implemented</li> </ul> </li> <li>• General comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can understand need to close classes, with no pupils but these classes are full.</li> <li>○ Understand closures due to under capacity, understand through provision, but this school/ class doesn't have these concerns.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			



## Pupils

LC introduced proposals or ideas to change to the group

- Pupils were asked 'do you know why we are here?' how do you feel about that idea?
  - You want to close our classes- SEN
  - Cwmbach Primary- modern
  - Less people in yard- miss the pupils, feel different
- General comments:
  - Like the fact that SEN pupils have same opportunities as everyone else
  - What happens to resources of class? - Equipment may move or if owned by school will stay, money will be used to open more secondary classes.
  - What would happen to teachers? - Could apply for post, retire, or apply new post.
  - Classes should stay
  - What happens to pupils if they don't like new school
  - School raised lot of money for one pupil, would that pupil have a room for equipment- Yes would make sure.

## Parents

KH introduced LA Officers and explained the consultation proposals, rationale for the proposal and the consultation process, parents and Governors were given opportunity to raise concerns/questions:

- Why Cwmbach- can see fabulous school, but disappointed with class size. How many pupils will be in class?
  - Cwmbach has benefited from extensive 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools investment and is fully accessible, class sizes will remain in line with current level, (8 FP and 10 KS2 depending on the needs of the pupils attending the provision)
- Will children have links with other pupils in the school?
  - Yes all LSC classes are expected to integrate with mainstream pupils
- What if pupils don't want to go? What are the chances of mainstream with support, LSC or Special School?
  - Meetings will be held with appropriate staff and parents to discuss the most suitable placement for each individual pupil when the outcome of the proposals are known
- General comments:
  - Fantastic staff very supportive, concerned KS2 teacher will not move with class. If class teacher was moving parents would not be concerned
  - Caradog is an inclusive school, pupils understand SEN pupils
  - Significant number of pupils require support- why not more classes, Cwmbach is not set up and will need significant money spend on getting it ready
  - Understands the importance of through provisions, but school has that here why move it

- Class is a comfort to the pupils that is meeting the needs of the pupil.
- One specific pupil – concerns regarding size of classroom no room to move around, the need for a dedicated room for equipment, and storage, disabled toilet around the other side of the building no hoist.

DRAFT

## Learning Support Class Review Consultation Event 2018

<b>School Name:</b>	Penrhys Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Penrhys Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	7/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	8
<b>Number of School Council Representatives:</b>	5	<b>Number of Parents and Governors:</b>	40+
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	Staff, pupils, parents		
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Ceri Jones, Lisa Carter, Alice Holloway, Nicole Pearce HR Clare Jones (Union), Mark Cleverley (Union)		

### Staff

CJ introduced proposals, explaining the consultation process and rationale for the proposals following which a number of questions and concerns were raised:

- Attendees sought clarification on reasoning of proposal to close the provision in Penrhys to make a through provision in Maerdy Primary School
  - CJ reiterated the rationale for change: reduction of surplus places, the ambition to increase the number of schools with through provision, reduction in transition unnecessary for SEN pupils
- Concerns were raised that KS2 provision will reduce in Penrhys due to no feeder pupils from a FP class.
- Officers were questioned as to the long term plan of the LA. Was it the intention to close all classes in Penrhys as the pupils decrease through the years?
  - CJ advised that the LSC proposals were separate to 21<sup>st</sup> Century proposals and we were not aware of any intentions to close the school
- Travelling within Rhondda to Maerdy will further the distance the pupils will need to travel – Penrhys is closer, has this not been taken into consideration? It was raised that the distance from Rhondda (Penrhys area) to Maerdy isn't fair on Foundation Phase Pupils
  - Pupils accessing provision have to do so within the timescales set within the Learner Traveller Policy
- Penrhys covers more cluster areas - why not move classes from Maerdy to Penrhys. Why relocating? The responses above were re-iterated
- Reports that received a phone call from SEN (3 years ago) changing classes' provision from Foundation Phase to KS2.
  - CJ explained that was prior to when she was in post and was not aware of the discussion. There has been no formal re-designation of classes in Penrhys. Headteachers of LSC are asked on occasions to be fluid with numbers/provision in order to meet the needs of the pupils at any particular time
  - What are the benefits for Penrhys Community over Maerdy?

- It was explained that Maerdy has a KS2 class at the moment and the proposals would enhance this provision, reduce unnecessary transition for pupils
- CJ and MC explained the importance of responding to consultation
- NP explained the HR process and procedures of discussing options with everyone in the affected schools. The following matters were raised:
  - Where would staff go?
  - Would staff in schools affected be ring fenced?
  - Questions regarding jobs- other provisions/ new provisions ring fencing?
  - 2 LSA's interested in leaving
  - Will you be looking at skill sets of staff
  - Staff asked about opportunities within proposals
- HR advised guidelines and procedure will be followed
- Staff were advised that whilst we recognised this was a concerning time we are still only at the proposal stage. If there is agreement to proceed LA staff will work with union representatives to agree how the proposals will be implemented
- Is the plan to close all 4 classes
  - CJ advised group that the LA is required to regularly review its LSC provision on a regular basis to ensure it meets the needs of SEN pupils

### Pupils

CJ introduced LA officers and explained the reason where they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea

- CJ asked – do you know what school class will be moving too?
  - The pupils were aware of Maerdy Primary and where it was, one pupil explained they had worked with pupils from the school before
  - The majority of pupils nodded- but did not respond verbally
- CJ was asked - What will happen to the pupils? Where will all the children go if class is closed?
  - CJ explained that currently the class only has 1 pupil and he/she would move with the class
- Headteacher prompted pupils as they had gone quiet
- LC asked pupils what did they think?
  - One pupil answered 'fine in general but would prefer the class to stay'
- Headteacher reported a comment from a year 6 pupil who couldn't attend the meeting that' he was once in the LSC when he first started school, and feels it helped him a lot as from that extra support he was able to move into a mainstream class for the rest of his education- as there was a cross provision there.
- What will happen with the class?
  - CJ explained decision would be for the Headteacher and school council in the new school
- One pupil raised concerns that would they need new jumper

- CJ explained that yes they would need a new uniform

## Parents

CJ introduced LA Officers and explained the consultation proposals, rationale for the proposal and the consultation process. Parents and Governors were given opportunity to raise concerns/questions:

- What is the reason for drop in the numbers in the provision? What happens to the pupils who don't meet criteria but will not cope in mainstream? The classes could be full- but due to the drop in criteria- these pupils are in mainstream classes. Criteria is so low so there is no support. Why not fill the LSC classes. A lot of children miss out because of criteria.
  - Criteria for LSC placement is a separate issue to the proposal being discussed today
- What does minimising impact mean? This will have a massive impact need continuity for pupils in these classes.
  - It was explained that the proposal would impact on one pupil
- How are pupils supported in comprehensive school who have additional needs but only have hours instead of being in a LSC? What are the plans for mainstream teachers, of pupils who need additional support? How can teachers help those in a 30+ class?
  - RCT has an Inclusion Agenda that requires all schools to support all learners
- Concerned that the decrease in number of pupils in LSCs will then decrease the whole schools numbers and school would close
  - CJ explained that the LSC proposals were not related to any other proposals relating to the school
- Is it about money? Funding not available- pupils in mainstream are struggling but don't meet criteria. Mainstream can't meet these pupils' needs – but closing classes.
  - It was explained that these proposals are not a cost saving exercise and that the funding was being used to better support SEN pupils by opening new provisions in the area
- What happens to potential nursery children coming into school with no Foundation Phase provision?
  - Pupils will have same opportunity to access LSC provision via placement panel
- How can we close classes with experience? Don't think class should close- the class/ classes are needed?
  - Data reports that there are diminishing numbers of pupils requiring LSC FP provision
  - Response from audience that data does not reflect the need or reality
- General points raised:
  - Why are we actually in the meeting? The decision has already been made.
  - Classes are working well why change them?
  - Best progress made in LSC classes
  - Parent of a pupil who was in a mainstream class in previous school and this had not worked well but when he went to Penrhys he became model student- the brother is now home schooled
  - Not just impacting on 1 pupil - low criteria has impacted on class entry
  - Concerns over school closure

- Can't understand decision
- Teachers in school put everything into pupils. They don't care about the results just what works best for pupils
- They feel that this change affects the whole school not just one pupil
- It is a nurturing school
- Classes were full leading up to this proposal then class numbers fell which was convenient for proposal.

DRAFT

<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Cwmbach Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Cwmbach Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	15/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	2
<b>Number of School Council representatives:</b>	15	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	
<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	School Council	<b>Number of Governors</b>	2
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Lisa Carter and Alice Holloway		
<b>Pupils</b>			
<p>LC introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils raised that there will be more children with Additional learning Needs coming into the school.</li> <li>• Pupils thought it was a good idea</li> <li>• They liked the idea of LSC teacher having more people to discuss ideas with</li> <li>• Current LSC pupils will have new friends</li> <li>• One pupil commented that as there would be 2 classes there would be more pupils to play with</li> <li>• Is the classroom space big enough for all the new children? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ LC responded that the class was big enough but if a volunteer would like to take LC and AH to see the new class after the meeting that would be great</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pupils asked a number of prescriptive questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do any of the children have 1:1's?</li> <li>○ Will any of the teachers in any of the schools lose their jobs?</li> <li>○ Will Mrs Kirby have more support as in adult support in class?</li> <li>○ How many children will be in my class in September?</li> <li>○ LC explained to the group that unfortunately she could not give specific answers to the questions at the moment due to the 'idea' only being at the proposal stage, once we know if the idea is going ahead we will know more detail</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Why are you planning this change?</li> </ul>			

- It was explained that a review of provision had been undertaken and it was evident that the Service was not meeting the needs of pupils and changes needed to be made such as increasing provision, closing provision that was underutilised, relocating classes. As Cwmbach currently has a KS2 class we would like another class for FP pupils to create through provision. Considered two perspectives as pupils didn't want the move not be good for other schools/pupils
- Will we have to move class again?
  - Headteacher explained that there had been a move of classrooms over the summer holiday. LC responded as far as she was aware the class would not be moving

### Staff

- Why aren't there pupils in the classes that are closing as they were aware of pupils in mainstream who need the support?
  - It was explained that any pupils requiring a placement are presented at panel following receipt of graduated response and any supporting information. If pupil meets criteria then placement is offered as appropriate.



Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018			
<b>School Name:</b>	Maerdy Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Maerdy Primary school		
<b>Date</b>	9/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	2
<b>Number of School Council representatives:</b>	14	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	0
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	School Council	<b>Number of Governors</b>	4
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Kate Hill and Alice Holloway		
Pupils			
<p>KH introduced LA officers and proposals/ changes made in the consultations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils explained how they had gone into the schools existing LSC class to see how it differed from their class- all pupils liked the class and how the pupils learnt.</li> <li>• Learning at the right level in the LSC</li> <li>• More attention = learn better in small classes.</li> <li>• Thinks it is good progression</li> </ul> <p>KH asked were the pupils included in schools activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pupils are included in swimming, trips and playtime.</li> </ul> <p>KH asked how would you feel about having younger pupils?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All agreed it was ok.</li> <li>• Pupils asked where would the class be? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ KH explained this would be up to school and Headteacher</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How long is the process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The process and the time frame to have things agreed was explained to the pupils</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How did we come up with the idea? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ KH explained that we look at all the LSC classes within RCT and looks at what is best for all pupils.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Will Miss Bradbury leave? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No not in connection with this proposal</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The pupils were asked how do you feel about the proposal?</p>			

- Pupils replied excited to get to know the other children
- Happy as younger children need to learn.
- Good idea
- Teachers can help them and one another
- Children get to learn better.

### **Governors**

- Will the school/ Headteacher have a say in the staffing of the class?
  - If the proposal is progressed then the LA will be working closely with Unions and HR to undertake the appointment process

DRAFT

<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Ysgol Nant Gwyn		
<b>Venue:</b>	Ysgol Nant Gwyn		
<b>Date</b>	9/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	2
<b>Number of School council representatives:</b>	5	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	
<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	School Council	<b>Number of Governors</b>	2
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Kate Hill and Alice Holloway		
<b>Pupils</b>			
<p>KH introduced LA officers and proposals/ changes made in the consultations. Questions were asked relating to the organisation of the class and how this would fit within the wider school organisation. Discussion followed between KH and pupils in relation to how mainstream pupils would include pupils from the class into the school and any concerns they might have. KH explained staffing structures, supervision and how current SEBD class functions in another secondary school. Example of questions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many in class?</li> <li>• Would they have an LSC for each special educational need?</li> <li>• How much will this cost us?</li> <li>• What would the negatives of the proposals be? Putting all the different needs together?</li> <li>• Would there be a mix of girls and boys?</li> <li>• Would they start in class or mainstream?</li> <li>• Stigma of being in the class? How would we help to stop bullying?</li> <li>• Would teachers from our schools go into the class?</li> <li>• Who are the teachers employed by school or council?</li> <li>• How may the younger pupils feel regarding the class?</li> <li>• Would the younger pupils know what it means?</li> <li>• How would breaks be managed?</li> <li>• Do pupils have a choice to go in the class?</li> <li>• What if parents agree to the class but the child may not want to go?</li> <li>• Stigma- then going into mainstream for some lessons</li> </ul>			

- Would the pupils still do exams?
- Would you put pupils from mainstream into the class who have bad behaviour?
- Would you mix pupils who have autism with pupils with behavioural needs?
- What is the process of opening it?

KH replied to all questions raised as fully as possible, she then explained the process of the consultation report, statutory notice and next steps

### **Governor**

Governors asked how mainstream pupils would be supported if they were exposed to inappropriate behaviour, KH explained how LA would work with whole school to prepare them for opening the class.

Governors would like a meeting to be held with all parents to explain how the class would function within the school.

## Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018

<b>School Name:</b>	Penywaun Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Penywaun Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	15/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	1
<b>Number of School Council representatives:</b>	10	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	
<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	School Council	<b>Number of Governors</b>	
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Lisa Carter and Alice Holloway		
<b>Pupils</b>			
<p>LC introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea. Pupils stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class could be used for something else</li> <li>• Concerned they were losing staff</li> <li>• Why cut budget of teachers-             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Explained that budget is not being cut, but we are using resources to open other classes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What happens to pupils and teachers-             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It was explained that no pupils or staff will be affected</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pupils were happy for the class to close</li> </ul>			

<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Pontygwaith Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Pontygwaith Primary school		
<b>Date</b>	9/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	HT
<b>Number of Pupils:</b>	9	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	1
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	School Council	<b>Number of Governors</b>	
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Kate Hill and Alice Holloway		
<b>Pupils</b>			
<p>KH introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea. Pupils stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils felt the school was quiet since the class had not had any pupils in there.</li> <li>• Liked having the class as part of the school</li> <li>• Sad the children in the LSC aren't in the school anymore, nursery class is now the old LSC</li> <li>• KH explained what through provision meant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pupils thought this was a good idea that children didn't have to move.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<b>Governor</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where are the pupils who should be in Pontygwaith LSC?</li> <li>• What/ how would children get to Maerdy primary school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pupils attending LSC are entitled to transport in line with the Learner Travel Policy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Questions regarding Consultation. RCT Governors Association? Should special schools have been told? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consultation has been undertaken in line with the Welsh Governments School Organisation Code</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018			
<b>School Name:</b>	Porth Community School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Porth Community School		
<b>Date</b>	20/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	
<b>Number of Pupils:</b>	5	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	
<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	School Council	<b>Number of Governors</b>	
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Kate Hill		
Pupils			
<p>LC introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea. Pupils stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's a good idea- if people with problems to help and support</li> <li>• The unit – English, Science, Maths, PE- in mainstream with support</li> <li>• Sometimes we get slowed down by student with autism- extra help would be good.</li> <li>• Would need to think about how children in unit are treated by other pupils- school mocking/name calling.</li> <li>• For the younger children might need to think about a place that is safe to play- providing choice couldn't force children to be separated- causes segregation must integrate.</li> <li>• Generally a good idea</li> </ul>			

Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018			
<b>School Name:</b>	Treorchy Comprehensive School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Treorchy Comprehensive School		
<b>Date</b>	16/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	1
<b>Number of Pupils:</b>	13	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	
<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	School Council	<b>Number of Governors</b>	2
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Lisa Carter and Alice Holloway		
Pupils			
<p>KH introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea. Pupils had numerous questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the LSC's in other schools how much do these pupils integrate into the mainstream classes?</li> <li>• There are lot of pressures on pupils would pupils in the LSC's feel too much pressure?</li> <li>• Where would the class go?</li> <li>• Will the students in the class have different needs?</li> <li>• In the future would more classes be put in place once the proposed class is in place?</li> <li>• What would be done to ensure these pupils have the support- not treated difficulty?</li> <li>• With the integrated classes would the mainstream teachers have training to help support pupils from the LSC class?</li> <li>• Would there be a cost for the training of these teachers?</li> <li>• Would the pupils in the LSC have breaks in between lessons?</li> <li>• Would this class be taught by teachers in school or LA?</li> <li>• Some pupils have their own key to toilets due to the locked toilet policy.</li> <li>• Already have a pupil in their school who is in a wheelchair and she has access to everything.</li> <li>• Will the class be run the same as other classes?</li> <li>• Dinner lines can be long? Suggested possible different lunch times?</li> <li>• Will they have different classes or just 1?</li> <li>• If they are integrated into the mainstream class will they have a support worker with them?</li> <li>• Would pupils be involved in extra circular activities?</li> </ul>			



- If they are disruptive in class what actions will be taken if they do this repeatedly?
- Would they stay in one class?
- Would they have a resource bank?
- Will mainstream teachers be supported by LSC teachers?
- Will it impact the current pupils?
- Would they use the same teachers? i.e. PE teachers?
- Will there be just one teacher?
- How would PE work? Certain activities?
- If child does not adapt would they move? Or help? Or stay?
- School trips - would they be involved?
- Off timetable days would they be included?
- Would they come to assembly?
- Prep – system – finish work in these lessons - could the LSC pupils access these?
- Would they need a timetable and panel?
- Could pupils in mainstream classes in Treorchy go into the new LSC class if they needed to?
- How about bullying? Pupils suggested possible split dinners, breaks would / may eliminate the bullying side of it.
- Detention - would the LSC pupils have an LSA present? Detention can have up to 60 minutes so how would that work?
- Year 10 and 11- go out into community for lunch. Would they be able to?
- Extra-circular activities - would their taxis be able to pick them up later?
- Parents' views - what has been done to gain their views?
  - LC responded to the questions as fully as possible

### Governor

#### Governors questions

- Would the school be able to accommodate for more pupils as in 2020 the school would have reached its capacity?
- 1:1 in class would there be same one in class? Assigned to that class?
- Would all pupils in RCT come to the school or those just in the catchment area?
- Has the school been inspected for suitability/accessibility? Lots of steps?
- Do some pupils have one to one workers? Would they come along with them?
- Accessibility for washroom, toilets?
- Locked door policy?

- Transport? Taxis leave earlier.
- Where does the figure 14 come from for the capacity of the class?
- Will pupils be here for term? Year?
- Accessing the swimming pool?
- Concerned regarding bullying?
- Teacher aspect what is the ratio? 1 Teacher 2 LSA's
- Cabinet looks at proposals on a school by school basis.

### Staff

- Already have a lot of pupils with specialist needs in the school and we cope well.

DRAFT

<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Heol Y Celyn Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Heol Y Celyn Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	6/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	1 Teacher, LSA absent due to sick, 1 Teacher relocated
<b>Number of Pupils:</b>	4	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	1
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	Staff, pupils, parents	<b>Number of Governors</b>	2
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Kate Hill, Lisa Carter, Nicole Pearce (HR) session		
<b>Staff</b>			
<p>KH introduced proposals, explaining the consultation process and rationale for the proposals following which a number of questions and concerns were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns were raised over class closing</li> <li>• A member of staff expressed interest in moving to KS 3/ 4 Provision</li> <li>• KH explained rationale behind class closing</li> <li>• Headteacher understood need to re-align resources due to low pupil numbers</li> <li>• Staff and Headteacher expressed concerns that a week previous during 21<sup>st</sup> Century meeting they had been led to believe class would move to new Hawthorn site.</li> </ul>			
<b>Pupils</b>			
<p>LC introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerned that pupils will not have support, but happier when explained they could access different provision, to meet their needs.</li> <li>• Liked having SEN pupils within School</li> <li>• Thought pupils would be ok in mainstream, pupil quoted 'they' would be fine.</li> <li>• Pupils were concerned as they may lose their singing teacher.</li> </ul>			
<b>Parents</b>			
<p>KH introduced LA Officers and explained the consultation proposals, rationale for the proposal and the consultation process, parents and Governors were given opportunity to raise concerns/questions:</p>			

- The parent who attended was concerned regarding their son, impact of the decision as she would like him to remain in Heol Y Celyn with support.
  - Parent advised that annual review would be held and parents/ professionals could discuss what was suitable to meet pupils needs - mainstream with support or nearest LSC Gwaunmeisgyn.
- Hadn't had a copy of the document but had received letter, hard copy provided at meeting.
  - LC explained rationale for proposals and consultation process.

DRAFT

<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Llantrisant Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Llantrisant Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	15/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	2 (teacher and LSA) LSA absent due to sickness
<b>Number of Pupils:</b>	4	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	1
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	Staff, pupils, parents	<b>Number of Governors</b>	
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Lisa Carter, Ceri Jones, Headteacher Mrs L Davies, Clare Jones (Union) and Paul Hughes (HR)		
<b>Staff</b>			
<p>CJ introduced proposals, explaining the consultation process and rationale for the proposals following which a number of questions and concerns were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.2 teacher in Llantrisant LSC was unable to attend</li> <li>• Aim of the proposal is to create provision for early years pupils with significant needs. It is anticipated that there will be close links with Special School to support management of classes.</li> <li>• Is ratio higher- looking at pre-school pupils or same as it is currently? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Capacity of 8</li> <li>○ Staff were positive regarding the more restricted age range and agreed it is difficult to cover range of needs and ages currently</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Flying Start are allocating 1:1, but then pupils start at school and parents have with high expectations for 1:1 support</li> <li>• Disabled toilet is currently being reviewed by LA officers</li> <li>• Would pupils be statemented? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advised this would not necessarily be the case.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Concerns raised over funding - H/T would like additional funding for resources. School employs lunchtime supervisor. Need more for sensory equipment.</li> </ul>			
<b>Pupils</b>			
<p>LC introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explained class would stay but would possibly have younger pupils.</li> </ul>			

- Pupils were concerned that the older pupils could be left out, younger pupils could be scared of older pupils.
- Good idea, happy that pupils will have support
- If they come into class at a younger age they have got more time to change things
- A pupil stated his concern that we needed to make sure pupils are safe, don't fall over, not too many of them in class
- Is playground safe for them? Do you have resources to keep them safe?
  - Confirmed that yes there is sufficient funding
- Pupil stated that age group needs to be around same

### Parents

CJ introduced LA Officers and explained the consultation proposals, rationale for the proposal and the consultation process, parents were given opportunity to raise concerns/questions:

- Ceri explained plans for class to make the provision early years setting for pupils to have a period of time for observation, intervention and assessment before placement in longer term.
- The parent felt it was a good idea, understands that many pupils have difficulties
- Parent asked a direct question concerning her daughter's placement if diagnosed with ASD. What provision is there in Porth and Ysgol Nant Gwyn? Explained the nature of the provisions
- No concerns raised regarding the consultation

<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Darran Park Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Darran Park Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	14/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	6 (2 LSC, Chair Governor, Teacher, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, SENCo)
<b>Number of Pupils:</b>	9	<b>Number of Parents:</b>	
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	Staff, pupils, parents	<b>Number of Governors</b>	
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Lisa Carter, Kate Hill and Nicole Pearce (HR), Clare Jones (Union)		
<b>Staff</b>			
<p>KH introduced proposals, explaining the consultation process and rationale for the proposals following which a number of questions and concerns were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will class look like, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Explained rationale of having an assessment centre</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Change of designation of class what is impact on staff of change in designation of class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HR confirmed staff will move forward with the class</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Maternity leave end of January – concerned as to what she would be coming back to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HR advised that she will be kept informed of all stages, CJ (union) explained protection of Maternity leave</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Query over possible VER- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Common question - decisions will be made after consultation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Re-designation is a good idea and very much needed</li> <li>• LSA interested in VER</li> </ul>			
<b>Pupils</b>			
<p>LC introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Happy for class to stay</li> <li>• Like having class in school</li> <li>• Would like more pupils in class</li> <li>• Expand to including KS2</li> </ul>			

Learning Support Class Review Consultation Events 2018			
<b>School Name:</b>	Hafod Primary School		
<b>Venue:</b>	Hafod Primary School		
<b>Date</b>	13/11/2018	<b>Number of School Staff:</b>	3
<b>Number of Pupils:</b>	12	<b>Number of Parents &amp; Governors</b>	50+
<b>Type of meeting:</b>	Staff, pupils, parents		
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Lisa Carter, Rachel Williams, Ceri Jones and Nicole Pearce (HR), Clare Jones (Union)		
Staff			
<p>CJ introduced proposals, explaining the consultation process and rationale for the proposals following which a number of questions and concerns were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rationale behind proposals, equity in line the peers across RCT, where there is one provision LA proposes to create through provisions. Porth is a fully accessible environment, sensory room facility, 21<sup>st</sup> century school, CJ appreciate change is difficult and a time of anxiety but positive change.</li> <li>• Could you comment on how 3-16 provision is better <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The building has been built with inclusion in mind, brand new resources, the proposed move of the class is not about the quality of education in Hafod. The key is to have through provision on same site.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Why wasn't LSC part of changes to Porth at the start? Why was Hafod picked? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussed transition as pupils came in at various stages- only 1 provision.</li> <li>○ Advantage for staff – more support for LSC staff in through provision to share expertise, referrals to specialist advice / support.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Evidence of through provision- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Easy for current class to be included in whole school activities, flexibility to call on other members of staff if concerned over issue. KS 3/4 LSCs have been successful/well established. Foundation Phase LSC successfully relocated to Porth in September. No evidence that we cannot expect the LS2 LSC to receive same support and be successful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hafod provide the opportunity to walk to facilities, extra curricula, Porth is not accessible to train station, no playing fields <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ every school is expected to develop links with community</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Staff have support of Headteacher, governors, feel supported in this school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provision working well, the proposed change is no reflection on leadership or school.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Can staff visit school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Of course not a problem. This can be arranged</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			



- What if pupils do not want to move?
  - Individual discussions would take place with parents
- Is it cost neutral?
  - This is not a cost saving exercise
- Reference was made to the name of class name CDC/ASD
  - It was explained that the criteria remains unaltered.
- Transition and inclusion- scope for integration this would be more limited in Porth
  - Inclusion has to be important part of provision
  - All LSCs and Headteachers are expected to ensure transition is positive and part of developing life skills. Mainstream pupils have opportunity to stay in same school the proposal would provide more equity of opportunity
- What would be new class size?
  - LA does not stipulate a maximum number of pupils within a class as it depends on the needs of the pupils attending, no proposal to change capacity 10/11. There will be no changes to panel process
- How will class be run?
  - Operation of class will remain the same
- One LSA reported that the relocation would mean a reduction in income as she does additional jobs in Hafod
- General comments:
  - Reported as successful in summer by RW
  - Concerns over wider community and school as a whole
  - On paper it is a good idea, but strength of feeling in school
  - Staff will make proposal work if it proceeds
  - Disappointed no personal contact was made with staff before consultation - followed code understands it is difficult
  - Inclusion – pupils are included at lunch time, play time, plays at Christmas, representation on school council. Hafod School has lots to offer
  - Evidence of successful through LSC provision within RCT. CJ reported that Porth SLT is committed to hosting the class which is key to the success of a LSC
  - Splitting siblings

### Pupils

CJ introduced LA officers and explained the reason why they had been asked to attend the meeting in order to discuss the proposals/ possible changes made in the consultations. Explained what the 'idea' or proposal was and pupils were asked what they thought of the idea

- Pupils explained that Dosbarth Coch are their friends
- One pupil was concerned that Porth only has a small yard

- A pupil asked if school was closing
  - Explained the idea was to move the LSC not close the mainstream school
- Does the school have stairs and elevator?
  - CJ responded yes it does it is fully accessible, everyone can move around safely
- Would they be in a yard on their own?
  - Responded no everyone will be together
- Concerns over School trips, Christmas concerts and tournaments would Dosbarth Coch still be included
  - CJ advised yes pupils will be included in all school activities
- Concerned pupils will be unsettled
  - It was explained that there would be lots of pupils there, opportunity to make new friends
- General comments
  - Pupil explained that they go into class during golden time - feels they will miss LSC pupils
  - School needs Dosbarth Coch like rainbows need red- wouldn't feel complete.
  - LSC pupil concerned it will be too big
  - Concerned over bullying- referred to an incident that had occurred when Hafod pupils went on Llangranog Trip
  - Staff are kind to school pupils and would be missed
  - Not just Dosbarth Coch that will be upset -staff and pupils also upset
  - One pupil stated it was bigger place, locked gates, pupil not worried but confused because leaving before 11 years old
- What happens if class pupils do not want to leave?
  - Meetings will be held with parents to discuss options

### Parents

CJ introduced LA Officers and explained the consultation proposals, rationale for the proposal and the consultation process, parents were given opportunity to raise concerns/questions:

- The group had prepared a number of questions which the LA representatives responded to and were submitted formally as a written consultation response. The list of questions and responses are detailed in Appendix 2.
-



## **Rhondda Cynon Taf Council**

### **Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire**

#### **Learning Support Class Proposals**

## Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire

**Directorate:** Education & Inclusion Services

**Service Area:** Access & Inclusion Service

**Responsible Officer:** Ceri Jones

**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project:** Re-alignment of Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

The project is to:

Re-align LSC provision within RCT in order to better support Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils ensuring provision meets current and projected pupil needs.

**2. Policy Aims,** you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it? How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

This proposal is fully outlined in a detailed consultation document that has been distributed to all interested parties and stakeholders, it is also available on the Council's website for any person to view or download.

Rhondda Cynon Taf has an excellent range of SEN provisions attached to mainstream schools. However, it has become increasingly apparent that the range of LSC provisions currently available is disproportionate to the level of need in some areas (e.g. Complex Learning Difficulties). In view of this, an in-depth data analysis exercise was undertaken to inform proposals for change in relation to LSC provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The data we have used to realign provision includes:

- Current capacity within each LSC

- Requested placements over the last 3 academic years
- Transitional data
- Primary needs of pupils
- Outcome of requests for placements

### *Educational Considerations*

Considerable changes are planned in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of pupils with SEN/additional learning needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET) was introduced in January 2018. The Act requires local authorities to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient. The Act will be supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory Additional Learning Needs Code of Practice. The current draft Code is based on the following principles:

- meeting the needs of pupils with ALN should be part of a whole school approach to school improvement
- pupils must be supported to participate in mainstream education and in the National Curriculum as fully as possible wherever this is feasible.

Until the anticipated implementation of the new ALN Code of Practice in September 2020, Local Authorities (LAs) are required to comply with the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002) and fulfil their statutory duties towards children with SEN. The Code states that children and young people have SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for a special educational provision to be made for them. Early years settings and schools are required to adopt a graduated response to meeting SEN at Early Years/School Action and Early Year/School Action Plus of the Code of Practice. For learners with the most significant SEN, a Statement of SEN is issued by the LA and statutory provision put in place.

Rhondda Cynon Taf currently delegates £3.3 million Additional Needs Funding (ANF) to mainstream schools to ensure that both non-statutory and statutory mainstream provision for learners with severe and persistent needs is robust and supports mainstream inclusion.

For pupils with more significant needs who experience difficulties in coping with mainstream education, more specialist placements are required. Rhondda Cynon Taf has a range of specialist provisions which includes, 46 LSCs, 2 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and 4 Special Schools. These placements are agreed by Access and Inclusion Service panels.

RCT has an excellent range of LSC provisions attached to mainstream schools. However, it has become increasingly apparent that the range of LSC provisions currently available is disproportionate to the level of need in some areas. In view of this, an in-depth data analysis exercise was undertaken to inform proposals for change.

Data analysis confirms that:

- some primary provisions have significant surplus capacity;
- there is currently insufficient provision in the secondary sector;
- the absence of cross phase specialist provision on some school sites means that some learners experience unnecessary transitions;
- some LSCs would benefit from relocation to fully accessible schools that have benefited from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Modernisation and investment;
- there is insufficient provision to meet the needs of learners in the early years.

Feedback from schools suggests that LSCs for social, emotional and behavioural needs do not currently have sufficient staffing to effectively meet need.

In light of these findings, the proposals for change seek to achieve the following aims:

- developing a robust continuum of provision that effectively addresses a wide range of need across all key phases/stages;
- reduction in surplus LSC places through the effective rationalisation and re-alignment of existing LSC provision to address identified gaps in provision;
- avoiding unnecessary transition across schools by establishing cross phase specialist provisions within individual schools where possible;
- creating capacity for outreach support from special schools and providing effective early intervention and prevention in the early years;
- establishing LSC provisions in fully accessible settings that provide a learning environment fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Proposed changes**

- 33 SEN mainstream LSCs remain unaltered
- 6 SEN mainstream LSCs close
- 3 SEN mainstream LSCs are relocated
- 2 SEN mainstream LSCs are opened
- 2 SEN mainstream LSCs are re-designated

### **What are the financial implications of the proposal?**

The LA proposal if agreed will have a positive impact on pupils with SEN across RCT as it will mean that the funding will be re-directed to establish provisions that address areas of growing need. The proposal will ensure that the County Borough Council continues in its commitment to effectively meeting the needs of learners with SEN and resources will be reinvested to address gaps in existing provision and to improve the quality of provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The schools will be delegated sufficient funding to establish the proposed provisions. These costs will cover staffing and capitation. The proposals do not involve any transfer or disposal of land.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on school pupils?**

Many of the proposals do not impact on learners as many of the proposed closures are for settings where there are no existing learners or considerable surplus capacity. However, suitable arrangements will be put in place in consultation with all involved to ensure that appropriate provision is made for any learners affected by the changes. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice, or alternative specialist provision appropriate to the pupils' individual needs. Interim arrangements could be put in place to maintain continuity in the existing school if this was deemed appropriate. This could include access to a specialist teacher and learning support assistant input to support mainstream inclusion. This could be put in place until the need for specialist provision within the pupils' current key stage ceases. Person centred planning will be undertaken in consultation with parents, carers and relevant professional and bespoke arrangements put in place if required so as to minimise the impact on pupils and their families.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate specialist setting.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. Have a flying start in life;
2. Have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. Enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. Have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. Are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race cultural identity recognised;
6. Have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. Are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits children in their communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

### **Implications for staff of the LSC**

- All LSC staff are appointed by the LA and are contracted to work in any appropriate LSC provision. This is subject to the needs of the LA and the skills set of the staff in question. Any additional necessary resources will be provided to support the realigned provisions. Every effort will be made to redeploy any displaced staff and to minimise the risk of redundancy.

### Implications on the local communities?

This proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities for the following reasons:

- *Proposed closures:* there are currently very low numbers of pupils attending the majority of provisions; 4 of the LSCs proposed for closure will have no pupils in attendance
- *Proposed relocations:* the proposed host schools have sufficient capacity to provide enhanced opportunities to access high quality cross phase educational provision in modern and accessible school buildings.
- *Proposed re-designations:* there are currently very low numbers of pupils attending the provisions proposed for re-designation. 1 of the 2 provisions will have no pupils affected by the proposal. The second provision has a surplus capacity of 90%.
- *Proposed new provisions:* More local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community and the new provisions will address a gap in existing provision. There will be less demand for transporting children out of area to receive their education and this should impact positively on the environment. The schools will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of LSCs will enhance the overall capacity of the host schools to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the school.

### 3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate

Members of the public    Staff    **Both**    **Other**

Please state: SEN children aged 3-16 living in RCT, parents and carers of the children

### 4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:

New    Review    Cessation

The proposal covers all 3 areas. There are 13 schools affected.



## 5. Identifying Impacts

Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager's guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Young – Yes Old - Yes			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate placements which are well matched to pupil's primary needs</li> <li>• improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to the effective meeting of pupil needs</li> <li>• greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in local community schools</li> <li>• improved learning provisions which provide better value for money and improved life chances for our most vulnerable learners</li> </ul>
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			The review of LSC provision will allow the LA to better meet the needs of its SEN pupils.
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Welsh Language			Yes	
Carer			Yes	

Evidence

6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet – October 2018.  
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal – October 2018.

7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

LSC re-alignment will inevitably cause some limited disruption and uncertainty for a period of time, although previous experiences has demonstrated that any potential difficulties can be minimised when managed effectively. Provisions have been selected based on considerable surplus capacity issues. Preventative measures will be taken to ensure that any potential negative impact on children's education and wellbeing are avoided or minimised.

The change in provision has some implications for a relatively small number of pupils attending the provisions as a change in provision may be needed. Bespoke packages of support will be put in place to eradicate or minimise any potential negative impact. The re-location of some LSC provision aims to provide more continuity for our most vulnerable learners to access cross phase specialist provision, reduce unnecessary transition and travel with the opportunity to provide through provision for all primary ages.

The closure and re-designation of some LSCs will enable the LA to re-direct much needed resources to areas of greater need. Without closing and re-designating the named LSC provisions, the LA will not be able to implement the plan for the proposed re-alignment for the LSCs across the LA. Implementing this plan will be of benefit to all pupils with SEN across RCT and will ensure greater equality and access to specialist provision.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposals outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for the pupils and parents.

### **Involvement & Consultation**

#### **9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?**

The following consultation meetings are to be held:

<b>School Affected</b>	<b>Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b>Heol Y Celyn Primary School</b>	<b>School Council</b>	<b>14:00 - 14:30</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>Heol Y Celyn Primary School</b>
	<b>Staff</b>	<b>14:30-15:30</b>		
	<b>Parents</b>	<b>15:30-16:30</b>		
<b>Penrhys Primary School</b>	<b>School Council</b>	<b>14:00 - 14:30</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>Penrhys Primary School</b>
	<b>Staff</b>	<b>14:30-15:30</b>		
	<b>Parents</b>	<b>15:30-16:30</b>		
<b>Caradog Primary School</b>	<b>School Council</b>	<b>14:00 - 14:30</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>Caradog Primary School</b>
	<b>Staff</b>	<b>14:30-15:30</b>		
	<b>Parents</b>	<b>15:30-16:30</b>		
<b>Hafod Primary School</b>	<b>School Council</b>	<b>14:00 - 14:30</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>Hafod Primary School</b>
	<b>Staff</b>	<b>14:30-15:30</b>		

	Parents	15:30-16:30		
Darran Park Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Darran Park Primary School
	Staff	14:30-15:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		
Llantrisant Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Llantrisant Primary School
	Staff	14:30-16:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Time	Date	Venue
Maerdy Primary School	School Council	9:30 - 10:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Maerdy Primary School
Pontygwaith Primary School	School Council	10:30 -11:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Pontygwaith Primary School
Porth Community School	School Council	11:30 - 12:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Porth Community School
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	School Council	12:30 - 13:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Ysgol Nant Gwyn
Treorchy Comprehensive School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Treorchy Comprehensive School
Cwmbach Primary School	School Council	9:30 - 10:00	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Cwmbach Primary School

<b>Penywaun Primary School</b>	<b>School Council</b>	<b>10:30 - 11:00</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>Penywaun Primary School</b>
--------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------

Schools are also being offered opportunities for consultation with pupils, via meetings of their School Councils as detailed in the table above.

Interested parties are also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ  
Or email [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)

### **Monitoring & Review**

#### **10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?**

The Council's Access & Inclusion Service will be fully engaged in supporting the head teachers and governing bodies during the first year or so.

### **Addressing the Impact**

#### **11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?**

- Continue the Policy

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

The evidence outlines in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach.

## 12. Action Plan

You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
If the proposal process undertake the statutory consultation process to implement the proposals	Access & Inclusion Service	February 2019		

13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None.
-------

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team  
 The Pavilions  
 Cambrian Park  
 Clydach  
 CF40 2XX  
 Email: [equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk)

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Job Title: Director of Education & Inclusion Service

DRAFT



**Consultation on the**

**REVIEW OF LEARNING**

**SUPPORT CLASS**

**PROVISION WITHIN RHONDDA**

**CYNON TAF**

October 2018



## **Table of Contents**

### **Section 1**

- Introduction
- Who will we consult?
- What will the consultation process entail?
- What do you now have to consider?
- How do you make your views known?

### **Section 2**

- Background
- Overview of the Proposals
- What is the basis for this proposal?
- What is the educational case for the proposal to re-align Learning Support Classes?
- What are the financial implications of the proposal?
- What is the likely impact of the proposal on school pupils?
- What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the Learning Support Classes?
- What is the likely impact of the proposals on the local communities?
- What are the disadvantages of these proposals?
- What alternative options have been considered?
- Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments.

### **Section 3**

- Learning Support Class Proposed Closures
- Background to the proposed closure of Learning Support Classes
- Information on schools affected by the proposals

### **Section 4**

- Learning Support Class Proposed Relocations
- Background to the proposed relocation of Learning Support Classes
- Information on schools affected by the proposals

### **Section 5**

- Learning Support Class Proposed Re-designations
- Background to the proposed re-designation of Learning Support Classes
- Information on schools affected by the proposals

### **Section 6**

- Proposed New Provisions
- Background to the proposed opening of new Learning Support Classes
- Information on schools affected by the proposals

## **Section 1**

### **Introduction**

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on proposals for the realignment of mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within RCT.

The proposals will address surplus capacity issues in key provisions allowing existing resources to be re-directed to enhance capacity for mainstream inclusion, early intervention and preventative approaches. In addition, the proposals will address the current imbalance between the number of primary and secondary provisions, transition and accessibility issues.

The proposals seek to achieve the following aims:

- developing a robust continuum of provision that effectively addresses a wide range of need across all key phases/stages
- reducing surplus LSC places through the effective rationalisation and re-alignment of existing LSC provision to address identified gaps in provision
- avoiding unnecessary transition across schools by establishing cross phase specialist provisions within individual schools where possible
- creating capacity for outreach support from special schools and providing effective early intervention and prevention
- establishing LSC provisions in fully accessible settings that provide a learning environment fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

To achieve these aims, the proposals for change include:

***i) The closure of key LSCs due to no confirmed placements, diminishing numbers or poor access for learners with physical or medical needs***

It is proposed that the following closures take effect from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019 at:

- 3 Foundation Phase LSCs for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Pontygwaith Primary School, Penrhys Primary School and Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- 2 Key Stage 2 LSCs for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Caradog Primary School and Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- 1 Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties (SEBD) in Penywaun Primary School.

It is not an efficient use of Council resources to allow the provisions to remain open due to considerable surplus capacity issues, including 4 provisions with no learners in 2019 and one 80% surplus capacity. Resources would be better utilised if re-directed to establish new provisions in areas of identified needs, and located in settings where there is good access for learners with physical and/or medical needs.

***ii) LSC relocations to ensure cross phase provisions in single sited, accessible school buildings***

It is proposed that the following relocations take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:

- 2 Foundation Phase LSCs for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Penrhys Primary School and Caradog Primary to relocate to Maerdy Community School and Cwmbach Primary School respectively so as to create a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2.
- 1 Key Stage 2, the LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders at Hafod Primary School to relocate to create a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 3/4 at Porth Community School.

It is proposed that the above relocations of LSCs are undertaken to ensure cross phase provisions on single school sites in premises which are more accessible and better equipped to meet a range of needs. The proposals will ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and relocation to new and significantly improved premises which have benefited from the considerable 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation Programme investment.

***iii) Proposed LSC re-designations to ensure a better match of provision to identified need***

It is proposed that the following re-designations take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:

- 1 Foundation Phase LSC for Complex Learning Difficulties in Darran Park Primary School and 1 Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant Primary School to become 2 Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs.

The Early Years LSCs will enhance current provision available for children of non-statutory school age, providing early assessment and intervention within a mainstream context and timely access to specialist support and expertise. The above re-designations and strengthened partnership arrangements with special schools will enhance the continuum of specialist support and provision for pupils in the early years.

***iv) Proposed development of new provisions***

It is proposed that two LSCs for Key Stages 3/4 are established in September 2019:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Treorchy Comprehensive School
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in Ysgol Nant Gwyn

## **Who will we consult?**

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of the following schools: Heol Y Celyn Primary; Penrhys Primary; Penywaun Primary; Pontygwaith Primary; Caradog Primary; Cwmbach Primary; Maerdy Community Primary; Hafod Primary; Darran Park Primary; Llantrisant Primary
- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Ysgol Nant Gwyn, Ferndale Comprehensive School, Aberdare Community School, Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School, Porth Community School and Treorchy Comprehensive School
- Other Governing Bodies of neighbouring primary and secondary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Minister for Education and Skills
- Assembly Members for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Pontypridd and Cynon Valley
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- Teaching and Support staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities First Partnerships
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Neighbouring local authorities

## **What will the consultation process entail?**

The consultation will start on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018 and will be completed at 5pm on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in January 2019. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council website and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk).

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report, based on the feedback, and decide whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal for the foreseeable future.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal Statutory Notices will be published in February 2019 providing a 28 day notice period for objections.

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act (2013) requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education & Inclusion Services' will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and his/her response to them within 28 days of the end of the objection period. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's website and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed in Appendix 1.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the objection report at the next available Cabinet meeting to determine the outcome of the statutory notice.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal, the implementation date is the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2019.

### **What do you now have to consider?**

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed changes to LSC provision within RCT.

We would like you to consider the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposals.

### **How do you make your views known?**

A consultation questionnaire is attached (Appendix 1), and is also available on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk). The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Council's Cabinet. Schools will also be offered opportunities to consult with pupils and are advised to consult with School Council representatives to seek pupil views. You are also welcome to put your views in writing to:

*Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Education Directorate, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon CF45 4UQ*

*Telephone: (01443) 744333      E-mail: [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)*

*Fax: (01443) 744024*

All correspondence should be received no later than the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the Statutory Notice.

The majority of the schools affected by this proposal are English medium schools and therefore the consultation documents have been distributed in English based on the chosen language medium for education. Welsh and English copies of the consultation document have been provided to the Welsh medium schools and to the Welsh Department of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School. If a Welsh language copy of the

consultation document is required by the English medium sector, please contact the address overleaf.

Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meetings.

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Time	Date	Venue
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Heol Y Celyn Primary School
	Staff	14:30-15:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		
Penrhys Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	7 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Penrhys Primary School
	Staff	14:30-15:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		
Caradog Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Caradog Primary School
	Staff	14:30-15:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		
Hafod Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Hafod Primary School
	Staff	14:30-15:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		
Darran Park Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Darran Park Primary School
	Staff	14:30-15:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		
Llantrisant Primary School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Llantrisant Primary School
	Staff	14:30-16:30		
	Parents	15:30-16:30		

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Time	Date	Venue
Maerdy Primary School	School Council	9:30 - 10:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Maerdy Primary School
Pontygwaith Primary School	School Council	10:30 -11:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Pontygwaith Primary School
Porth Community School	School Council	11:30 - 12:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Porth Community School
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	School Council	12:30 - 13:00	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Ysgol Nantgwyn
Treorchy Comprehensive School	School Council	14:00 - 14:30	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Treorchy Comprehensive School
Cwmbach Primary School	School Council	9:30 - 10:00	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Cwmbach Primary School
Penywaun Primary School	School Council	10:30 - 11:00	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Penywaun Primary School

DRAFT

## Section 2

### Background

RCT has an excellent range of SEN provisions which allows the majority of pupils to attend schools near to where they live. These include 46 LSCs attached to mainstream settings, 4 special schools and 2 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). In addition to this, £3.3M is made available via delegated Additional Needs Funding (ANF) annually to support pupils with severe and persistent needs in mainstream settings. This is in line with RCT's vision for inclusive education and the right for children with SEN to be educated in their local mainstream school where appropriate.

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002) provides detailed guidance on the duties and responsibilities of local authorities (LAs) in meeting the SEN of children and young people. Children and young people have SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for a special educational provision to be made for them. A learning difficulty is evident when children and young people have:

- significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children and young people of the same age; or
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children and young people of the same age in schools within the area of the locality.

The SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002) recommends that early years and school settings adopt a graduated response to meeting SEN. A graduated response means that progressively greater expertise and support can be brought in to address the difficulties a child or young person may be experiencing. Additional or different provision should be made at Early Years/School Action, Early Years/School Action Plus or a Statement of SEN depending on the severity of the child/young person's level of need.

Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with SEN should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with them receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty calls for, the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources. For those pupils who have very significant needs, more specialist placements are required and this might result in a placement in one of our specialist provisions. These placements are agreed by Access and Inclusion Service panels.

It has become increasingly apparent that the range of LSC provisions currently available is disproportionate to the level of need in some areas (e.g. Complex Learning Difficulties). In view of this, an in-depth data analysis exercise was undertaken to inform proposals for change in relation to LSC provision within RCT.

Data analysis confirmed that:

- some primary provisions have significant surplus capacity
- there is currently insufficient provision in the secondary sector
- the absence of cross phase specialist provision on some school sites means that some learners experience unnecessary transitions



- some LSCs would benefit from relocation to fully accessible schools that have benefited from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Modernisation and investment
- there is insufficient provision to meet the needs of learners in the early years.

Feedback from schools also suggests that LSCs for social, emotional and behavioural needs do not currently have sufficient staffing to effectively meet need.

In light of these findings, the proposals for change are aimed at:

- developing a robust continuum of provision that effectively addresses a wide range of need across all key phases/stages
- reduction in surplus LSC places through the effective rationalisation and re-alignment of existing LSC provision to address identified gaps in provision
- avoiding unnecessary transition across schools by establishing cross phase specialist provisions within individual schools where possible
- creating capacity for outreach support from special schools and providing effective early intervention and prevention in the early years
- establishing LSC provisions in fully accessible settings that provide a learning environment fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## Overview of the Proposals

RCT County Borough Council wishes to seek the view of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposals to proceed with:

### ***i) LSC closures due to diminishing numbers or no confirmed placements, or significant access issues for learners with medical and physical needs***

It is proposed that the following closures take effect from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019 at:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Heol y Celyn Primary School – no pupils in September 2019
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Heol y Celyn Primary School – 2 pupils in September 2019
- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties (x1 class) in Penrhys Primary School – no pupils in September 2019
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties in Penywaun Primary School – no pupils in September 2019
- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Pontygwaith Primary School – no pupils in September 2019
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Caradog Primary School

### ***ii) LSC relocations to ensure accessible cross phase provisions and/or more accessible school buildings***

It is proposed that the following relocations of key LSC provisions take effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Caradog Primary School to Cwmbach Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2.
- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Penrhys Primary School to Maerdy Community Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) thus creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 3/4.

***iii) Re-designations of LSCs to ensure a better match of provision to identified need in the early years***

It is proposed that the following provisions are established from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Darran Park Primary and Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant Primary to become Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under compulsory school age with significant presenting needs.

***iv) Proposed new provisions***

It is proposed that two new LSCs provisions to be established from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ysgol Nant Gwyn
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Treorchy Comprehensive School

**What is the basis for this proposal?**

Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 requires LAs to regularly review arrangements for supporting pupils with SEN and to ensure that provision is sufficient and meets the needs of its communities.

The priority for the Education Directorate is to continue to focus on driving up standards in schools and early years settings, and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. If the cycle of deprivation and underachievement is to be broken, a top quality education that meets the needs of all children and young people is essential. There are considerable benefits to be gained from the realignment of LSCs in ensuring the SEN of all children and young people are met and outcomes for pupils are improved.

The proposed realignment of LSCs will ensure that the LA has an enhanced focus on providing more effective mainstream inclusion opportunities for pupils with a wide range of SEN. The proposals ensure that the best possible use of resources and a more equitable continuum of provision is achieved for pupils with significant SEN.

The importance of mainstream inclusion for pupils with SEN is reflected in the revised Estyn Common Inspection Framework which highlights that judgements of achievement for all learners including those with additional learning needs should take account of progress made in relation to agreed learning goals from individual starting points. The framework also recognises the positive impact that the expertise within a LSC can have on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for learners with SEN across the whole school.

The proposals provide an effective local solution and provision for pupils with significant SEN thus reducing transport costs and the LA's carbon footprint.

## **What is the educational case for the proposal to re-align LSC?**

The advantages of implementing the proposed changes includes:

- an enhanced focus on improved mainstream LSC provision which provides improved life chances for our most vulnerable learners
- a reduction in surplus places in some specialist provisions and redirection of resources to areas of identified need
- more efficient and effective use of LA resources and a reduction in the cost of per placement costs
- appropriate continuum of provision which is well matched to pupils' primary needs
- compliance with one of the underpinning principles of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales that all pupils should access mainstream education where possible
- improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to effectively meeting pupil needs
- enabling greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils by reducing the number of transitions SEN pupils make between school phases and increasing the number of cross phase provision on single sites
- greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in local community schools
- providing effective local solutions and provision for pupils with significant SEN thus reducing transport costs and the LA's carbon footprint
- ensuring that LSC provision is situated within education settings that are accessible and appropriate for the needs of pupils with wide ranging needs, including physical and medical needs
- improving the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils.

## **What are the financial implications of the proposal?**

The LA proposal if agreed will have a positive impact on pupils with SEN across RCT as it will mean that the funding will be re-directed to establish provisions that address areas of growing need. The proposal will ensure that the County Borough Council continues in its commitment to effectively meeting the needs of learners with SEN and resources will be reinvested to address gaps in existing provision and to improve the quality of provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The schools will be delegated sufficient funding to establish the proposed provisions. These costs will cover staffing and capitation.

The proposals do not involve any transfer or disposal of land.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on school pupils?**

Many of the proposals do not impact on learners as many of the proposed closures are for settings where there are no existing learners or considerable surplus capacity. However, suitable arrangements will be put in place in consultation with all involved to ensure that appropriate provision is made for any learners affected by the changes. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice, or alternative specialist provision appropriate to the pupils' individual needs. Interim arrangements could be put in place to maintain continuity in the existing school if this was deemed appropriate. This could include access to a specialist teacher and learning support assistant input to support mainstream inclusion. This could be put in place until the need for specialist provision within the pupils' current key stage ceases. Person centred planning will be undertaken in consultation with parents, carers and relevant professional and bespoke arrangements put in place if required so as to minimise the impact on pupils and their families.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate specialist setting.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

8. Have a flying start in life;
9. Have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
10. Enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
11. Have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
12. Are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race cultural identity recognised;
13. Have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
14. Are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits children in their communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the LSC?**

All LSC staff are appointed by the LA and are contracted to work in any appropriate LSC provision. This is subject to the needs of the LA and the skills set of the staff in question. Any additional necessary resources will be provided to support the realigned

provisions. Every effort will be made to redeploy any displaced staff and to minimise the risk of redundancy.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on the local communities?**

This proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities for the following reasons:

- *Proposed closures:* there are currently very low numbers of pupils attending the majority of provisions; 4 of the LSCs proposed for closure will have no pupils in attendance
- *Proposed relocations:* the proposed host schools have sufficient capacity to provide enhanced opportunities to access high quality cross phase educational provision in modern and accessible school buildings.
- *Proposed re-designations:* there are currently very low numbers of pupils attending the provisions proposed for re-designation. 1 of the 2 provisions will have no pupils affected by the proposal. The second provision has a surplus capacity of 90%.
- *Proposed new provisions:* More local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community and the new provisions will address a gap in existing provision. There will be less demand for transporting children out of area to receive their education and this should impact positively on the environment. The schools will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of LSCs will enhance the overall capacity of the host schools to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the school.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this proposal. This will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that they include pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The assessment will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment is available on request.

### **What are the disadvantages of these proposals?**

LSC re-alignment will inevitably cause some limited disruption and uncertainty for a period of time, although previous experiences has demonstrated that any potential difficulties can be minimised when managed effectively. Provisions have been selected based on considerable surplus capacity issues. Preventative measures will be taken to ensure that any potential negative impact on children's education and wellbeing are avoided or minimised.

The change in provision has some implications for a relatively small number of pupils attending the provisions as a change in provision may be needed. Bespoke packages of support will be put in place to eradicate or minimise any potential negative impact. The re-location of some LSC provision aims to provide more continuity for our most vulnerable learners to access cross phase specialist provision, reduce unnecessary transition and travel with the opportunity to provide through provision for all primary ages.

The closure and re-designation of some LSCs will enable the LA to re-direct much needed resources to areas of greater need. Without closing and re-designating the named LSC provisions, the LA will not be able to implement the plan for the proposed re-alignment for the LSCs across the LA. Implementing this plan will be of benefit to all pupils with SEN across RCT and will ensure greater equality and access to specialist provision.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposals outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for the pupils and parents.

### **What alternative options have been considered?**

To do nothing would be an inefficient use of resources and would result in inadequate provision in areas of identified need. To use the closure of provisions as an opportunity to make efficiencies would not be in keeping with the LA's commitment to developing high quality provision for some of our most vulnerable residents. There is clearly identified need for this provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf and it would be in children and young people's interest to address this.

Some consideration was given to re-directing resources to further enhance the capacity of mainstream schools to meet need in local community schools. However, in so doing this could make the continuum of provision more fragmented which could in turn enhance pressures for special school and PRU placements.

Whilst alternative options have been considered, these have not been pursued given the obvious benefits of implementing these changes. These are summarised as follows:

**Proposed closures:** the majority of proposed LSC closures are to take place in settings that have either no learners in attendance or have significant surplus capacity. Resources still need to be redirected to address gaps in existing provision. This suggested course of action is the only logical solution, which will enable the LA to make more effective use of scarce resources.

**Proposed relocations:** the proposed relocations have been specifically selected as they allow for greater opportunities for SEN pupils to access high quality cross phase educational provision within accessible school environments that have benefited from school modernisation and investment programmes.

**Proposed re-designation:** the LSCs selected for re-designation fall within the catchment areas of Ysgol Hen Felin and Ysgol Ty Coch, re-designating the provision

to Early Years settings will strengthen partnership arrangements with both special schools and will enhance the continuum of specialist support and provision for pupils in the early years thus enhancing the possibility of re-integration back into mainstream or assessment to inform more long-term specialist placement in an alternative setting.

*Proposed new provisions:* alternative secondary schools could be approached to establish a specialist provision. However, Ysgol Nant Gwyn and Treorchy Comprehensive School were selected because of their inclusive practice and success in supporting pupils with SEN in the mainstream and significant investment from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation Programme. Furthermore, the location of the settings will address local needs. Establishing these provisions will reduce the demand for special school/PRU placements which can then be safeguarded for pupils with more complex learning, medical and physical needs.

### **Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments**

Welsh Language and Community Impact Assessments are not required for these proposals. However, an Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared in respect of this proposal and will be published on the Council's website together with the consultation document that outlines the proposal in detail.

DRAFT

## Section 3

### Learning Support Class Proposed Closures

RCT County Borough Council proposes LSC closures to take place from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September due to no pupils attending the designated provisions or diminishing numbers: To achieve this, the proposal is to close the following LSCs:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties Heol y Celyn Primary School – no learners in September 2019
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties Heol y Celyn Primary School – only 2 learners in September 2019
- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties (x1 class) Penrhys Primary School – no learners in September 2019
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties Penywaun Primary School – no learners in September 2019
- Foundation Phase for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties in Pontygwaith Primary School – no learners in September 2019
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils Caradog Primary School with Complex Learning Difficulties

### Background to the proposed closure of LSC's

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 Cabinet considered the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning's report on the Review of Learning Support Class Provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Approval was given by Cabinet for the proposals to be consulted on in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2013).

Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's key priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable pupils will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our provisions are well matched to the needs of pupils is central to pupils achieving positive outcomes.

There are currently a number of LSC provisions that have no learners placed, have diminishing numbers or are situated in schools that have poor access. Allowing poorly utilised provisions to remain open is not an efficient use of Council resources. The resources would be better utilised if re-directed to enhance existing provision to meet need and to address identified gaps in provision. Ensuring that LSC provisions are based in full accessible schools fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is also a priority.

### Information on schools affected by the proposals

#### Heol Y Celyn Primary School

Heol Y Celyn Primary School is located at Holly Street, Rhydfelin, Pontypridd, CF37 5DB. This school is a bilingual provision and is situated in a CLASP modular building. It is in good repair. The school currently has 2 English medium Learning Support



Classes (LSC) designated to support 8-10 Foundation Phase pupils and 10 Key Stage 2 pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Heol Y Celyn from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Heol y Celyn Primary school are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code.

Pupil numbers (excluding nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	298	295	296	316	320	323	328	332	322

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	56	57	67	46	54	50	51	51	51

*Capacity of the school: 391*

Heol Y Celyn Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in June 2014 (follow up visit were undertaken in November 2015 and January 2017). The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	Adequate
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	Adequate

There are currently no pupils attending the Foundation Phase LSC provision for Complex Learning Difficulties. There will also be a surplus capacity of 80% in the Key Stage 2 provision for learners with Complex Learning Difficulties in 2019. It is proposed that both classes close in September 2019.

For the 2 pupils potentially affected by the Key Stage 2 proposal, suitable arrangements will be put in place in consultation with parents and professionals to ensure appropriate provision is made thus minimising any potential impact on the pupil and their families. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice or alternative specialist provision appropriate to individual need. The nearest LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties is at Gwaunmeisgyn Primary School (5.4 miles). All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate specialist setting in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy.

## Penrhys Primary School

Penrhys Primary School is located at Penrhys, Tylorstown, Ferndale, CF43 3PL. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a CLASP modular building plus a small extension. It is in poor repair. The school currently has 2 LSCs designated to support 16-20 Foundation Phase pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties and 2 LSCs designated to support 20 Key Stage 2 pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Penrhys Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Penrhys Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, nursery capacity separately is shown separately.

Pupil numbers (excluding Nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Penrhys Primary School	124	120	107	106	94	85	82	73	65

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Penrhys Primary School	22	14	16	5	10	10	9	10	9

*Capacity of the school: 130*

Penrhys Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in October 2017. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

By September 2019, there will be 1 pupil accessing the x 2 Foundation Phase LSC provisions for Complex Learning Difficulties. It is proposed that 1 LSC with no pupils in attendance in September 2019 is closed. No pupils will be affected by this proposal.

## Penywaun Primary School

Penywaun Primary School is located at Coed Glas, Penywaun, Aberdare, CF44 9DR. The school is an English Medium provision and is situated in a modern brick and block style building. It is in good repair. The school currently has 1 LSC designated to support 8-10 Key Stage 2 pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and 1 LSC designated to support 10 Key Stage 2 pupils with Communication Disorders.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Penywaun Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Penywaun Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, we have shown the nursery capacity separately.

Pupil numbers (excluding Nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Penywaun Primary School	200	198	204	176	169	155	141	131	125

Nursery pupil number and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Penywaun Primary School	33	35	19	20	22	22	20	21	21

*Capacity of the school: 253*

Penywaun Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in March 2017. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

The class for pupils with SEBD has not been operational since September 2017 and no learners are currently attending the provision, No learners will be affected by this proposal. There is also a vacant teaching post in this setting.

## Pontygwaith Primary School

Pontygwaith Primary School is located at Graig Street, Pontygwaith, Ferndale, CF43 3LY. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a Victorian style building. It is in good repair. The school currently has 1 LSC designated to support 8-10 Foundation Phase pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Pontygwaith Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Pontygwaith Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, the nursery capacity is shown separately.

Pupil Numbers (excluding Nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Pontygwaith Primary School	143	175	164	166	167	154	149	145	137

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Pontygwaith Primary School	37	35	24	24	20	28	25	26	26

Capacity of the school: 182

Pontygwaith Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in March 2011. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

The class has not been operational since September 2017 due to diminishing numbers. No pupils will be affected by this proposal as there are no learners currently in the provision.

### **Caradog Primary School**

Caradog Primary School is located at 30 Clifton St, Aberdare CF44 7PB. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a Victorian style building. It is in good repair, but accessibility for pupils with complex physical and medical needs is not ideal. The school currently has 2 LSCs designated to support 8-10 Foundation Phase pupils and 10 Key Stage 2 pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties (CLD).

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Caradog Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Caradog Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, nursery capacity is shown separately.

Pupil Numbers (excluding nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Caradog Primary School	171	182	186	199	193	193	188	186	187

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Caradog Primary School	24	31	35	24	26	26	24	25	25

*Capacity of the school: 194*

Caradog Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in April 2014. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

There are currently 6 pupils attending the Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties with a predicted surplus capacity of 20% in September 2019. Access is an issue in this setting, particularly for learners with physical and medical needs. For those pupils affected by this proposal suitable arrangements will be put in place in consultation with parents and professionals to ensure that appropriate alternative provision is made thus minimising the impact on pupils and their families. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice or alternative specialist provision appropriate to individual need.

The nearest LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties will be Cwmbach Primary School (2.8 miles). This school is fully accessible due to the £6m investment as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century school programme. It will also house the Foundation Phase LSC for Complex Learning Difficulties which will minimise future transitions and ensure that there is cross phase provision on the one, fully accessible and modernised school site. All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate specialist setting in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy.

## **Section 4**

### **Learning Support Class Proposed Relocations**

RCT County Borough Council proposes to relocate 3 LSCs from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2019.

To achieve this, the proposal is to relocate the following LSCs:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Caradog Primary School to Cwmbach Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2.
- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Penrhys Primary School to Maerdy Community Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4.

### **Background to the proposed relocation of LSC's**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 Cabinet considered the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning's report on the Review of LSC Provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Approval was given by Cabinet for the proposals to be consulted on in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2013).

Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's key priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable pupils will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our provisions are well matched to the needs of pupils is central to pupils achieving positive outcomes.

It is proposed that relocations of LSCs are undertaken to premises which are more accessible and better equipped to meet a range of needs. The proposals will ensure greater compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and relocation to two significantly improved premises which have benefited from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation Programme and investment. The proposals will minimise unnecessary transition for pupils with significant needs, provide continuity in their educational placements and ensure that a higher number of specialist LSC provisions provide equity for pupils in LSCs so that they remain in one setting until transition to secondary provision

### **Information on schools affected by the proposals**

#### **Hafod Primary school**

Hafod Primary School is located at Wayne St, Pontypridd CF37 2NL. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a Victorian style building. It is in good repair. The school currently has 1 Learning Support Class (LSC) designated to support 10 Key Stage 2 pupils with Communication Disorder (CD).

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Hafod Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Hafod Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, nursery capacity is shown separately.

Pupil Numbers (excluding Nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Hafod Primary School	91	96	102	107	105	114	121	115	114

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Hafod Primary School	15	17	17	20	18	19	17	18	18

Capacity of the school: 113

Hafod Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in March 2016. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

There are currently 8 pupils attending the Key Stage 2 Communication Disorder LSC. It is proposed that they transfer to a newly established provision in Porth Community School (3-16). Those pupils affected by this proposal will access suitable support and transition to ensure that appropriate provision is made. This would involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice or alternative specialist provision appropriate to individual need. Pupils may transfer with the proposed relocation of the newly established LSC in Porth Community School which has recently received £11.6m investment as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Modernisation Programme and will provide a fully accessible cross phase provision for learners with ASD. All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate specialist setting in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy.

### **Caradog Primary School**

Caradog Primary School is located at 30 Clifton St, Aberdare CF44 7PB. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a Victorian style building. It is in good repair, but presents with significant access issues due to its location and structure. The school currently has 2 Learning Support Classes (LSC) designated to support 8-

10 Foundation Phase pupils and 10 Key Stage 2 pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties (CLD).

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Caradog Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Caradog Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, the nursery capacity is shown separately.

Pupil Numbers (excluding nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Caradog Primary School	171	182	186	199	193	193	188	186	187

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Caradog Primary School	24	31	35	24	26	26	24	25	25

Capacity of the school: 194

Caradog Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in April 2014. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

There are currently 8 pupils attending the Foundation Phase Complex Learning Difficulties LSC. However, accessibility for learners with physical and medical needs is an issue. For those pupils affected by this proposal, suitable arrangements will be put in place in consultation with all involved to ensure appropriate provision is made. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice or alternative specialist provision appropriate to individual need. Pupils may transfer with the proposed relocation of the LSC to Cwmbach Primary School. In light of learners needs and numbers a review of support needs will also be undertaken to assist with transition into a new setting. Cwmbach Primary School is fully accessible and has recently received £6m investment as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century school modernisation programme. This will provide cross phase provision on an accessible single school site. All pupils affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate specialist setting in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy.

### Penrhys Primary School

Penrhys Primary School is located at Penrhys, Tylorstown, Ferndale, CF43 3PL. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a CLASP style building. It is



in poor repair. The school currently has 2 LSCs designated to support 16 - 20 Foundation Phase pupils and 2 Key stage 2 LSCs to support 20 pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties (CLD).

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Penrhys Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Penrhys Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, nursery capacity is shown separately

Pupil Numbers (excluding nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Penrhys Primary School	124	120	107	106	94	85	82	73	65

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Penrhys Primary School	22	14	16	5	10	10	9	10	9

*Capacity of the school: 130*

Penrhys Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in October 2017. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

In September 2019, there will be 1 pupil attending a total of 2 Foundation Phase LSC provisions for Complex Learning Difficulties.

For the one child affected by the proposal to transfer the LSC provision to Maerdy Primary School, suitable arrangements will be put in place in consultation with all involved to ensure that appropriate provision is made. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice or alternative specialist provision appropriate to individual need. The pupil may transfer with the proposed relocation of the LSC to Maerdy Community Primary School which will have cross phased provision on site. The pupil affected by these proposals will be eligible for school transport to their nearest appropriate specialist setting in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy.

## **Section 5**

### **Learning Support Classes Proposed Re-Designations**

RCT County Borough Council proposes the re-designations of LSCs to ensure a better match of provision to meet identified need.

To achieve this, the proposal is to re-designate the following LSC provisions with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Darran Park Primary and Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant Primary to become Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under compulsory school age with significant presenting needs.

### **Background to the proposed re-designation of LSC's**

On the 3rd October 2018 Cabinet considered the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning report on the Review of LSC Provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Approval was given by Cabinet for the proposals to be consulted on in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2013).

Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's key priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable pupils will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our provisions are well matched to the needs of pupils is central to pupils achieving positive outcomes.

The proposal to enhance current Early Years LSCs provision will enable children of non-statutory school age to receive early assessment and intervention within a mainstream LSC context and timely access to specialist support to inform re-integration placements or more long-term specialist placements. These re-designations and an enhanced outreach role for special schools will also strengthen partnership arrangements and enhance the continuum of specialist support and provision for pupils in the early years.

### **Information on Schools affected by the proposals**

#### **Darran Park Primary school**

Darran Park Primary School is located at Brook Street, Ferndale CF43 4LE. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a modern style building. It is in good repair. The school currently has a Foundation Phase LSC for 8-10 pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Darran Park Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Darran Park Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The

numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code.

Pupil Numbers (excluding nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Darran Park Primary School	251	267	313	307	313	306	315	315	308

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Darran Park Primary School	50	44	57	49	52	56	51	53	53

Capacity: 359

Darran Park Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in September 2017. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

By September 2019, there will be 1 pupil with attending the Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties. Suitable arrangements will be put in place in consultation with parents and professionals to ensure appropriate provision is made thus minimising the impact on the pupil and their families. This could involve additional support in a mainstream setting of parental choice or alternative specialist provision appropriate to individual need. The nearest LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties will be Maerdy Community Primary School (1.9 miles).

### Llantrisant Primary School

Llantrisant Primary School is located at Coed Yr Esgob, Llantrisant, CF72 8EL. The school is an English medium provision and is situated in a modern style building. It is in good repair. The school currently has a Foundation Phase Observation and assessment Class for 8 – 10 pupils.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Llantrisant Primary School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Llantrisant Primary School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code. However, nursery capacity is shown separately.

Pupil Numbers (excluding nursery) and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Llantrisant Primary School	115	112	102	102	96	89	85	81	84

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Llantrisant Primary School	24	24	25	18	21	20	20	20	20

*Capacity: 155*

Llantrisant Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in November 2015. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

There are currently 5 pupils attending the Assessment and Observation LSC. No pupil will be affected by this proposal in September 2019.

## Section 6

### Proposed New Provisions

RCT County Borough Council proposes to create the following new LSCs provision with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2019:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ysgol Nant Gwyn
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Treorchy Comprehensive School

### Background to the opening of new LSC's

On the 3rd October 2018 Cabinet considered the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning's report on the Review of LSC Provision in RCT. Approval was given by Cabinet for the proposals to be consulted on in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2013).

Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's key priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable pupils will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our provisions are well matched to the needs of pupils is central to pupils achieving positive outcomes.

The proposal to increase KS3/4 provision addresses the increasing demand for secondary LSC provision and the imbalance between the number of LSCs within mainstream primary and secondary settings

### Information on schools affected by the proposals

#### Ysgol Nant Gwyn

Ysgol Nant Gwyn is located at Llewellyn Street, Penygraig, CF40 1HQ. The school is a newly created 3 – 16 English medium provision and is situated on a site that has benefited from extensive modernisation and extension through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Modernisation Programme. The school does not currently have LSC provision.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Ysgol Nant Gwyn from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Ysgol Nant Gwyn are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code.

Projected pupil numbers (new school therefore no historical information is available)

School Name	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	997	1002	987	962

Nursery pupil numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	15	20	20	20

Capacity: 1200

As this is a new education setting there are no Estyn reports currently available. This proposal does not adversely impact any children as it is proposed that the provision is established to meet an identified need.

### Treorchy Comprehensive School

Treorchy Comprehensive School is located at Pengelli, Treorchy, CF42 6UL. The school is an English medium provision and is situated on a site that has benefited from extensive modernisation through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century school modernisation programme. The school does not currently have LSC provision.

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Treorchy Comprehensive School from 2018-2020 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Ysgol Nant Gwyn are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code.

Pupil Numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23
Treorchy Comprehensive School	1630	1609	1648	1650	1643	1667	1689	1698	1719

Capacity: 1687

Treorchy Comprehensive was last inspected by Estyn in March 2016. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

The proposal will ensure that the current gap in secondary LSC provision for learners with Complex Learning Needs will be addressed.

**Consultation Response Pro-forma**

In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services', Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, CF45 4UQ or by fax to 01443 744024, or email to [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)

The Proposals

**Proposal 1: The closure of the following LSC in August 2019:**

- Heol y Celyn Primary School – Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties
- Heol y Celyn Primary School – Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties
- Penrhys Primary School – Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties (x1 class)
- Penywaun Primary School – Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties
- Pontygwaith Primary School – Foundation LSC Phase for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties
- Caradog Primary School – Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties

1. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes                      No                      Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

---



---



---

**Proposal 2: The relocation of the following LSC from September 2019:**

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Caradog Primary School to Cwmbach Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2.
- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties from Penrhys Primary School to Maerdy Community Primary School, creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 2 LSC for pupils with Communication Disorders based at Hafod Primary School to Porth Community School (3-16 provision) creating a cross phase provision from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

2. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes                      No                      Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

---



---



---

**Proposal 3: The re-designations of the following LSC's from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019:**

- Foundation Phase LSC for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at Darran Park Primary and Foundation Phase Observation and Assessment Class at Llantrisant

Primary to become Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSCs for pupils under compulsory school age with significant presenting needs.

3. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

---

---

---

**Proposal 4: The creation of New LSC provision with effect from the 1st of September 2019:**

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ysgol Nant Gwyn
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties at a Comprehensive School to be confirmed following discussions with Headteachers

4. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

---

---

---

5. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

---

---

---

6. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

---

7. Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

---

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than **5pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018**.

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice) and the Council's **data protection** pages here: [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**24<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2019**

#### **KEY STAGE 4 AND KEY STAGE 5 EXAMINATION RESULTS AND PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION FOR 2018**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION  
SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER, COUNCILLOR J ROSSER.**

**Author: Gaynor Davies (01443 744009)**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with the final confirmation of Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 examination results for 2017-18 and the Welsh Government Primary and Secondary School Categorisation for 2018-19.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the report.
- 2.2 Note the action taken to date and the future planned intervention of the Director of Education and Inclusion Services in partnership with Central Services and Central South Consortium to support schools currently categorised as amber and red.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To ensure that Cabinet Members are fully aware of the educational performance of our pupils and schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 outcomes are externally verified through GCSE and GCE Advanced Level examinations which are undertaken at the end of the respective Key Stages.
- 4.2 The local authority analyses examination outcomes for each school

and compares school's performance against other secondary schools in the County Borough. Comparisons are also made across the region, so that Rhondda Cynon Taf's performance can be measured against the other local authorities within Central South Consortium. National benchmarking datasets provide an indication of comparative performance at an all Wales level.

- 4.3 When reviewing the comparative data it is important to contextualise the information and to take into account the socio-economic factors across the 22 Welsh local authorities. Whilst poverty and deprivation are not excuses for educational underperformance, they are factors that influence educational outcomes. In comparing Rhondda Cynon Taf with other local authorities, in terms of eligibility for free school meals, Rhondda Cynon Taf has the third highest level behind Blaenau Gwent and Neath Port Talbot. Therefore, if the indicators are compared based on free school meals measures, you would "expect" Rhondda Cynon Taf to be 20<sup>th</sup> in the comparative indicators. Therefore, our performance should be judged on the value added over and above what is expected.

## **5. KEY STAGE 4**

- 5.1 Substantial changes were introduced to the Key Stage 4 curriculum in 2017 and how individual pupil and school performance is assessed in Wales, Northern Ireland and England. In the past, the three countries have been aligned and the education standards had been set and maintained by one qualification regulator. There are now three separate regulators for the GCSE qualification across the three countries.
- 5.2 As a result, the GCSE qualifications are developed to meet the different requirements of each regulator, which are awarded independently of each other. This means that the grades awarded within a subject will no longer be benchmarked across each country. Clearly, this could create problems in the future in terms of comparisons between qualifications for employers and further and higher education institutions. The three regulators are committed to working together, as they keep their respective approaches to maintaining standards, under review.
- 5.3 In 2017 the following changes were introduced:
- The introduction of new GCSE's for English language, Welsh (first) language, GCSE mathematics and a new examination GCSE mathematics – numeracy;
  - The new GCSEs are now linear with the assessment being undertaken through examination at the end of the course.

Previous GCSEs were available in a modular option, which included a controlled assessment unit for the language qualifications and examinations which could be taken in stages over a two year period;

- Significant changes to the key performance measures in 2017 are detailed as follows:
  - A maximum of two vocational qualifications will count towards the Level 1, Level 2 and Level 2 inclusive measure. In 2016, five vocational qualifications could have counted for the Level 1 and Level 2 thresholds and three for the Level 2 inclusive;
  - Only the new GCSE's for English language, Welsh (first) language, and one of GCSE mathematics or GCSE mathematics – numeracy counts towards the literacy and maths elements of the Level 2 inclusive performance measure. English literature no longer counts towards the literacy and maths elements;
  - The capped points score performance measure is the “best” nine qualifications, rather than the previous eight, which must include English language or Welsh (first) language, GCSE mathematics, GCSE mathematics – numeracy, two science qualifications (two science GCSE's from 2018), and no more than four vocational qualifications.

5.4 The new examinations were first undertaken by Welsh pupils in 2017, and Key Stage 4 outcomes last year were variable, with some schools displaying greater resilience in adapting to the changes imposed. In light of the new examinations and the fact that they assess different skill sets and knowledge bases than the previous examinations, the results achieved prior to 2017 cannot be meaningfully compared to 2017 and 2018 outcomes. Nevertheless, judgements can still be made about the progress made since 2017. *However, it should be noted that further changes to performance measures are planned for 2018/19.*

5.5 Schools will need to consider further analysis for summer 2019 reporting, the details of which are still to be agreed by Welsh Government, as this will include analysis of:

- the cohort split into thirds;
- the performance of schools in a similar socio-economic setting;
- participation, entry and grades received for English, mathematics and science.

Welsh Government are due to issue further detail and guidance on these requirements.

5.6 The table below sets out the Key Stage 4 results for 2018. Central South Consortium's data is also shown for comparative purposes. The 2016 dataset is also included for reference purposes only.

<b>KS4</b>	<b>2016 Legacy GCSE's %</b>	<b>2017 New GCSE's Actual %</b>	<b>2018 GCSE's %</b>
<b>Level 1 threshold (5 A*-G at GCSE or equivalent)</b>			
<b>RCT</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>94.7</b>	<b>94.7</b>
CSC	95.4	94.3	94.5
Wales	95.3	94.4	93.7
<b>Level 2 threshold (5 A*-C at GCSE or equivalent – minimum of three GCSEs)</b>			
<b>RCT</b>	<b>90.3</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>64.2</b>
CSC	87.1	67.6	69.2
Wales	84.0	67.0	67.0
<b>Level 2 threshold (5 A*-C at GCSE or equivalent) including English/Welsh and mathematics</b>			
<b>RCT</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>53.1</b>
CSC	60.9	54.5	57.6
Wales	60.3	54.6	55.1
<b>A* - C in English</b>			
<b>RCT</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>56.4</b>	<b>60.0</b>
CSC	71.1	62.5	65.0
Wales	69.3	63.7	62.6
<b>A* - C in Welsh</b>			
<b>RCT</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>74.7</b>	<b>70.9</b>
CSC	77.5	79.1	79.2
Wales	75.1	74.2	74.3
<b>A* - C in Mathematics (best of the 2 GCSEs)</b>			
<b>RCT</b>	<b>61.6</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>61.5</b>
CSC	66.5	62.4	65.3
Wales	66.9	62.5	63.6
<b>A* - C or equivalent in science</b>			
<b>RCT</b>	<b>85.7</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>58.5</b>
CSC	85.9	80.3	63.0
Wales	82.4	75.6	63.0

The table illustrates that Level 1 outcomes remained relatively stable during 2017/18 in comparison to 2016/17. Improved outcomes were

evident on Level 2 and Level 2+ measures during 2017/18. The Level 2+

outcomes improved by 3.3% which is greater than the progress made both regionally and nationally. The Level 1 outcomes were above the regional average for Central South Consortium (CSC) and the national average, although Level 2 and Level 2+ outcomes were below both the regional and national averages. The percentage of learners achieving A\*-C in Welsh and science dipped this academic year, particularly in science. This can be explained by the recent changes in performance measures and the reduced reliance on BTEC science qualifications. A\*-C outcomes in English and mathematics (best of the 2 GCSEs) improved by 3.6%age points and 2.2%age points this academic year.

In comparison with the all Wales average for Level 2+, the gap with Rhondda Cynon Taf's is at a historic low (2%age points). Rhondda Cynon Taf currently ranks 10<sup>th</sup> out of 22 local authorities for Level 2+ suggesting that we are performing above expected outcomes given our fsm ranking in Wales.

- 5.7 Variations across schools and key performance measures were evident this academic year but in the main the vast majority of schools made encouraging progress on Key Stage 4 outcomes.
- 5.8 During the autumn term senior local authority officers have been proactively working with head teachers and school improvement officers in Central South Consortium to analyse the outcome data and to identify individual school strengths and areas for area for improvement. Analysis has also included performance on a school by school basis, and within each school on a subject by subject basis. An analysis of outcomes for vulnerable groups has also been undertaken to ensure that schools are targeting their resources and interventions appropriately. Data suggest that schools need to ensure that the right curriculum is made available to all Key Stage 4 pupils that best suits their needs and that the teaching provided is of the highest standard possible. Focus also needs to be placed on ensuring that learners are ready to learn, attend school regularly and access the right support to enable them to overcome any barriers to learning that are experienced.

## **6. PROGRESS AT KEY STAGE 5**

- 6.1 Over the last four years, there have been substantial changes in the post 16 environment with the removal of some courses, the introduction of new syllabi, 6<sup>th</sup> form reorganisation in parts of the Borough and restriction in the choice of examination boards. This makes the comparison of outcome data over time difficult. Rhondda Cynon Taf's performance on the National Level 3 threshold indicator suggests that the outcomes are just below the regional and national average by 1.7%

and 1.4% respectively for 2017/18. Nevertheless, 96.2% of learners achieved the Level 3 threshold. A gap of 2.0% exists between boys and girls on this measure, with girls outperforming boys.

		<b>All</b> <b>Number of</b> <b>pupils aged</b> <b>17 who</b> <b>entered a</b> <b>volume</b> <b>equivalent</b> <b>to 2 A</b> <b>levels</b>	<b>All</b> <b>Entered a</b> <b>volume</b> <b>equivalent</b> <b>to 2 A</b> <b>levels who</b> <b>achieved</b> <b>the level 3</b> <b>threshold</b> <b>%</b>	<b>Boys</b> <b>Entered a</b> <b>volume</b> <b>equivalent</b> <b>to 2 A</b> <b>levels who</b> <b>achieved</b> <b>the level 3</b> <b>threshold</b> <b>%</b>	<b>Girls</b> <b><i>Entered a</i></b> <b><i>volume</i></b> <b><i>equivalent</i></b> <b><i>to 2 A</i></b> <b><i>levels who</i></b> <b><i>achieved</i></b> <b><i>the level 3</i></b> <b><i>threshold</i></b> <b><i>%</i></b>
<b>2017/18</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>96.2</b>	<b>95.0</b>	<b>97.0</b>
	<b>Central South</b>	3327	97.9	97.2	98.5
	<b>Wales</b>	9452	97.6	96.7	98.3
<b>2016/17</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>1004</b>	<b>96.3</b>	<b>95.7</b>	<b>96.7</b>
	<b>Central South</b>	3589	97.4	96.7	98.0
	<b>Wales</b>	10152	97.1	96.2	97.9
<b>2015/16</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>1079</b>	<b>97.0</b>	<b>95.3</b>	<b>98.3</b>
	<b>Central South</b>	3751	97.7	96.9	98.3
	<b>Wales</b>	10804	98.0	97.1	98.6

- 6.2 In line with national averages, girls continue to outperform boys on the wider points score measure. There has been a significant increase in the average points score this year with an increase of 46.2 achieved for pupils aged 17.

Year		Number of pupils aged 17	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
<b>2017/18</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>723.8</b>	<b>691.4</b>	<b>746.1</b>
	<b>Central South</b>	3757	754.9	720.5	783.5
	<b>Wales</b>	10613	740.1	691.8	780.9
<b>2016/17</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>1175</b>	<b>677.6</b>	<b>615.9</b>	<b>723.5</b>
	<b>Central South</b>	4096	736.1	694.1	774.0
	<b>Wales</b>	11434	730.6	681.2	773.2
<b>2015/16</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>1278</b>	<b>765.7</b>	<b>705.8</b>	<b>812.7</b>
	<b>Central South</b>	4286	830.2	780.6	874.0
	<b>Wales</b>	12066	823.2	768.0	869.9

6.3 In 2017, Welsh Government published data relating to the number of learners achieving 3 A\*-A grades and 3 A\*-C grades. Data suggests that the percentage of learners who achieved 3A\*-A and 3A\*-C increased by 4.7%age points and 9.2%age points in 2017/18. Local trend data shows positive improvements on all 6 of the new suite of indicators which will replace the Level 3 threshold. In line with national averages, girls outperformed boys on both A\*-A and A\*-C measures. Rhondda Cynon Taf currently ranks 14<sup>th</sup> out of 20 local authorities for the percentage of pupils entering a volume equivalent of 2 A Levels and who achieved 3 A\*-C grades. It should be noted that Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil do not have any school based 6<sup>th</sup> form provision.

Year		All		Boys		Girls	
		Percentage of Pupils entering a volume equivalent of 2 A levels who achieved 3 A*-A grades	Percentage of Pupils entering a volume equivalent of 2 A levels who achieved 3 A*-C grades	Percentage of Pupils entering a volume equivalent of 2 A levels who achieved 3 A*-A grades	Percentage of Pupils entering a volume equivalent of 2 A levels who achieved 3 A*-C grades	Percentage of Pupils entering a volume equivalent of 2 A levels who achieved 3 A*-A grades	Percentage of Pupils entering a volume equivalent of 2 A levels who achieved 3 A*-C grades
2017/18	RCT	10.2	54.3	8.5	43.8	11.5	61.9
	Central South	15.0	61.9	15.3	55.4	14.8	67.1
	Wales	13.4	58.1	13.0	50.1	13.8	64.2
2016/17	RCT	5.5	45.1	6.4	33.5	4.8	53.5
	Central South	11.8	56.6	12.6	49.7	11.0	62.5
	Wales	10.5	54.7	10.3	47.6	10.6	60.5

## 7. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION

- 7.1 The current school categorisation model has changed significantly since 2016.
- 7.2 **Step One:** consisting of data analysis in relation to standards and performance has been removed.
- 7.3 **Step Two:** This judgment based on the school's ability and capacity to self-improve is now central in coming to a view on a school support category. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation. The judgement on capacity to improve is to do with the school's ability to drive its own improvement for the future and has a strong focus on leadership, learning and teaching.
- 7.4 Following consideration of the self-evaluation report and relevant evidence relating to school leadership, the performance of all learners and groups of learners and the quality of teaching and learning within the school, the governing body, together with the challenge advisor, will agree the judgement for the school's capacity to improve.
- 7.5 **Step Three:** this judgement will lead to a colour categorisation of the school which will trigger a bespoke programme of support, challenge and intervention.



## 7.6 The categories of support are:

- Green - these are our best schools who:
  - know themselves well and identify and implement their own priorities for improvement;
  - are rewarded by greater autonomy with limited, if any, interaction with challenge advisors; and
  - have the capacity to lead others effectively (school to school support).
  
- Yellow – these are our good schools who:
  - will know and understand most of the areas in need of improvement; have many aspects of the schools performance which are self-improving; and
  - will receive limited challenge and support meetings deployed according to need.
  
- Amber – these are our schools in need of improvement who:
  - do not know and understand all the areas in need of improvement;
  - have many aspects of the schools performance which are not improving quickly enough; and
  - will receive time limited, focused challenge and intervention to support improvement; and
  - be subject to termly progress meetings with senior challenge advisor.
  
- Red – these are our schools in need of greatest improvement who:
  - will receive critical intervention;
  - receive an automatic warning letter from the local authority and subsequent use of statutory powers where necessary;
  - trigger intensive and effective collaboration between local authority and consortium;
  - will receive time limited, focused challenge and intervention to support improvement; and
  - be subject to half-termly progress meetings with the senior challenge advisor.

## 7.7 A summary of Rhondda Cynon Taf's provisional categorisation, subject to National Moderation, is shown below:

Category	Primary Schools						Secondary Schools					
	No of Schools			%			No of Schools			%		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
<b>Green</b>	23	38	36	22.3	36.9	38.7	5	4	5	29.4	23.5	29.4
<b>Yellow</b>	66	59	48	64.1	57.3	51.6	7	10	7	41.2	59.0	41.2
<b>Amber</b>	13	5	6	12.6	4.9	6.5	5	1	3	29.4	5.9	17.6
<b>Red</b>	1	1	3	1.0	1.0	3.2	0	2	2	0	11.8	11.8

There has been an increase in the percentage of schools categorised as green at both primary and secondary level. A reduction in the percentage of good primary and secondary schools accessing yellow support has been evident during 2017/18 and a growth in the number of schools requiring improvement and amber/red support is evident at primary level. There has been a significant increase of 11.75% in the percentage of secondary schools requiring amber support but the proportion of secondary schools categorised as requiring the greatest improvement and red support has remained stable.

The Central South Consortium's Framework for Challenge and Support sets out the response from the School Improvement Service to schools in each of the four categories, with the greatest support and challenge targeted at the amber and red schools.

- 7.8 For the amber and red schools, the diagnosis of need for improvement undertaken by the challenge advisor with the school will drive the work within the school. The challenge advisor will provide the core allocation of contact according to the school's category and will broker the required additional support through the commissioning function of the school improvement service working closely with the strategic advisors as necessary.
- 7.9 The nature and amount of support will be determined by the identified need and may be derived from a number of sources, which could include one or a combination of:
- Support from other schools in the region;
  - Support from other school improvement organisations and/or individuals from across the UK;
  - Specific leadership and/or teaching development.
- 7.10 For schools requiring amber or red support the challenge advisor will need to keep the school's progress and the appropriateness and impact of the support under review so as to make changes where required in good time. The focus will be on the impact of the work to secure improvement rather than the number of days delivered.
- 7.11 To summarise, there has been a growth in the number of schools requiring the least amount of support (green) and a deterioration in

the number of school categorised as good schools requiring yellow support. An increase in the overall number of amber and red schools requiring support for improvement is evident. Over the next few years, the Council and the schools will work together to strive to ensure that increasing number of schools are good schools that do not require significant support to improve.

- 7.12 Welsh Government are undertaking a fundamental review of the accountability system in Wales and a new assessment and evaluation framework in planned. In future, it is anticipated that robust and continuous self-evaluation, along with professional dialogue, will be a key tool to support improvement. Data driven judgements that places schools into a standards group as part of the categorisation has been removed and a new assessment, evaluation and improvement framework is under development. Welsh Government have commissioned the OECD and Estyn to work with the teaching profession to develop a national self-evaluation framework and toolkit, which will operate in conjunction with a peer review and endorsement framework.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVER SITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 This is an information report. No Equality Impact Assessment screening form is required.

## **9. CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 This is an information report, no consultation is required.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no financial implications.

## **11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 11.1 None at present.

## **12. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 12.1 Educational performance has a clear link to the Council's priority of Building a Strong Economy. Improved educational performance will have a positive impact on this priority.

## **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1 Level 1 outcomes were above the regional and national averages during 2017/18. There has been evidence of progress on Level 2 and

Level 2+ Key Stage 4 outcome measures which is very encouraging. A\*-C outcomes in Key Stage 4 in English and maths show improvement this academic year. Moving forward, Science outcomes would benefit from further improvement.

Given, that this is the second year of the new Key Stage 4 curriculum and performance measures, it is possible to make some judgements on the performance of each school. Data suggests that most schools have made progress on Key Stage 4 performance measures. Schools in the main have improved performance and all schools will continue to work with the local authority and the Consortium to understand their respective performance and take the necessary steps to improve on future Key Stage 4 results and build on the progress made. The gap between Rhondda Cynon Taf and the all Wales Level 2 + data is at a historic low (2%age points) and the national ranking is encouraging at 10<sup>th</sup> place.

- 13.2 Key Stage 4 has seen significant changes since 2017 in terms of the curriculum and the way in which school performance is assessed. Further changes are planned in future and interim aspirational performance measures for secondary schools are planned which shifts the focus away from 'average' outcomes. These new measures, based on points scores, will remove the emphasis on the Level 2 inclusive measures for Key Stage 4 and the narrow focus on borderline C/D grade pupils that the current threshold measures has cultivated.
- 13.3 An updated version of the current 'Capped 9' points score will be established which will include three specified components at its core, namely literacy, numeracy and science outcomes. It is proposed that the remaining 6 components will comprise pupils' best results for GCSE, or equivalent qualifications approved or designated for delivery in Wales, and as such will be open to local choice. The remaining 6 components of the Capped 9 will in future reflect the school's context and the breadth of curriculum offered and will hopefully provide the necessary assurances that all pupils are able to follow a curriculum that meets their needs. Moving forward schools will still be required to drill down and self-evaluate outcomes for learners eligible and not eligible for free school meals, and girls and boys. It is anticipated that this approach will allow a far more robust analysis of school and learner progress than is currently in operation.
- 13.4 Key Stage 5 outcomes have remained relatively stable during 2017/18 with 96.2% achieving Level 3 threshold. In line with the national averages, girls continue to outperform boys on the wider point score measure but significant improvements in the wider point score was evident for all Rhonda Cynon Taf learners, including both boys and girls. Girls' performance on this measure significantly exceeded that of the boys in Key Stage 5. The percentage of learners achieving 3 A\*-A

and 3 A\*-C improved significantly during this academic year. It is hoped that through the rationalising of 6<sup>th</sup> form provision in the Rhondda Valley and access to greater choice for learners within 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environments outcomes will continue to improve during 2018/19.

**Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee-***

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

***Background Papers-***

None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972  
AS AMENDED BY  
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985  
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CABINET  
24<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2019**

**KEY STAGE 4 AND KEY STAGE 5 EXAMINATION RESULTS AND  
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION FOR 2018**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES  
IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR  
J ROSSER.**

**Background papers – None.**

**Officer to contact: Gaynor Davies – 01443 744009**

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019**

#### **NATIONAL ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018 AND THE VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

#### **REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR LEYSHON**

**Authors:** Ann Batley, Service Director for Children's Services

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with (1) an update on the progress of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative by considering the information provided in the Annual Report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (Appendix 1 and Appendix A) and (2) the National Adoption Services Wales Annual Report 2017/2018 (Appendix 2).

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the contents of both the Annual Reports.
- 2.2 Receive a further report at future meetings.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The reports attached at Appendix 1 (A) and Appendix 2 are the Annual Reports that as part of Regulation 22 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (Wales) Regulations 2007 and Section 15(c) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Regulations/Wales) Directions 2015, are required to be presented to Cabinet.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The National Adoption Services for Wales (NAS) was launched in November 2014 bringing all Local Authorities in Wales together into a unique collaboration for the delivery of adoption services. The National Service establishes governance arrangements providing national

direction and coordination. Its broad aim is to improve and make consistent the arrangements for timely placements of children, training and assessment of adopters, adoption supports and collaborative working. The National Adoption Services Wales Annual Report 2017/2018 gives the progress and improvements made in meeting the needs of children, young people and adopters through out Wales.

4.2 Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) is the largest of the five regional collaborative which form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS). It provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The service is hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

4.3 This is VVC's third annual report that covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. The collaborative is required to review the service it provides by regulation and as part of the reporting requirements set out in the legal agreement underpinning the operation of the collaborative. The annual report seeks to combine the various reporting requirements in one report. This report was also presented to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 These reports are for information and, therefore, no Equality and Diversity screening is required.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

6.1 Consultation was undertaken by the National Adoption Service Wales and the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) in the preparation of the Annual Reports with children, young people, families, a variety of partner agencies and staff.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

7.1 There are no adverse financial implications associated with this report.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

8.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) requires very significant changes to the way social services are planned, designed, commissioned and delivered. The primary duties of this Act that impact on the future commissioning arrangements for children looked after include:

- promoting the upbringing of children within their family whenever it is safe to do so;



- consideration of the most appropriate placement where it has not been possible to place a looked after child either with a parent or connected person which will include: foster care; adoption; residential provision; alternative arrangements (for example, supporting young people aged 16 or over to live independently in rented accommodation or in supported lodgings).

## **9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 9.1. The National Adoption Service and Regional VVC Service makes a positive contribution towards the Council's Corporate Plan Vision of '*a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all*'; as it will deliver against the specific priorities of '*People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone and Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work*'.
- 9.2 It will also help the Council to meet three of the seven wellbeing goals that The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' puts in place as follows:
1. A more equal Wales
  2. A healthier Wales
  3. A Wales of cohesive communities.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Both these reports provide Cabinet Members with the National and Regional overview of adoption within Wales and the Region.
- 10.2 Cabinet Members will note that the regional performance has improved, specifically the increase in the number of children placed for adoption and the reduced time taken to place a child for adoption.
- 10.3 There are still a number of areas that require improvement and these are being addressed in the VVC Regional Improvement Plan.

### **Other Information:-**

#### ***Relevant Scrutiny Committee***

Community and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019**

**NATIONAL ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018 AND  
THE VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF REGIONAL  
ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER, COUNCILLOR LEYSHON**

**Background papers**

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

**OFFICER TO CONTACT: Ann Batley, Service Director for Children's  
Services. Tel No 01443 744044**

**VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE (VVC)  
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 APRIL 2017 TO 31 MARCH 2018**

**1. BACKGROUND**

**1.1** Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) is the largest of the five regional collaboratives which form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS). It provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council. The service is hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

**1.2** This is VVC's third annual report and covers the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. The Collaborative is required to review the service it provides by regulation and as part of the reporting requirements set out in the legal agreement underpinning the operation of the Collaborative. This report seeks to combine the various reporting requirements in one report.

**Appendix A** to the report sets out key performance data by quarter and local authority.

**2. SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

**2.1** There has been no change to the managerial structure of the service during the period and the service continues to be managed by a Regional Adoption Manager and three service specific managers for Family Finding, Adoption Support, and Recruitment and Assessment. The Family Finding Manager went on maternity leave in January 2018 but the post has been covered by an interim acting up arrangement within the service. The Adoption Support Manager's post has been made a permanent full time position as a result of the Best Value Review.

**2.2** **There** have been some changes to the staff team during the year due to a part time Business Support Officer leaving the service to obtain a full time position, two part time Social Workers retiring, one Social Worker who was employed for 30 hours moving out of the area and two Social Workers going on maternity leave. The loss of these part time posts has enabled some reconfiguration of these posts to full time positions. The service has continued to receive a high number of applicants for the vacancies which have arisen and also has had success in filling temporary positions. Some short term agency cover has also been put in place to cover gaps.

**2.3** As outlined in the last report and due to the increased demands being placed upon the Collaborative, the Directors of the partner authorities commissioned a Best Value Review of the service in December 2016. The review was undertaken by an Officer from the Vale of Glamorgan Business Improvement Team and Finance

Officer from Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. The analysis for the review was undertaken between January and September 2017. A draft report was presented to members of the Management Board during the autumn of 2017, prior to the report being agreed by the Directors and Joint Committee in December 2017.

**2.4** The review was comprehensive and sought engagement from a range of staff both within VVC and also from our local authority partners. Consultation also took place with key stakeholders, members of the Management Board and representatives from the NAS central team. The review considered a range of aspects from the current service delivery model, the level of demand being placed upon the service, staffing arrangements, the governance of the region and funding.

**2.5** The principal recommendations of the review were as follows:

a) Finalise completion of the digital Adoption Panel process to streamline processes and improve efficiency.

b) Establish an Operational Group of VVC and local authority managers to progress service improvement and development work within the region.

c) Increase regional staff resources within Adoption Support by securing the full time permanent appointment of the Adoption Support Manager and also the additional post covering Letterbox and Access to Birth Records.

d) In order to meet the emerging need to recruit more adopters, the review also recommended the appointment of a Marketing and Recruitment Co-ordinator on a two year fixed term basis and two Social Workers in Recruitment and Assessment, one to be appointed initially and a further one should adopter applications increase.

e) Formal review of the Legal Agreement to be undertaken to include twice yearly meetings of the Directors and the Management Board, changes to the frequency of Management Board meetings to quarterly and establishment of an Operational Group as part of the overall governance of the region.

d) Update and consider revision of the existing funding formula for the service and keep it under review.

**2.6** An Action Plan has been developed and agreed to take forward the actions arising from the review.

**2.7** VVC has continued to operate from Ty Pennant, Pontypridd during this time but due to the licence to occupy the premises expiring in September 2018, a trawl of alternative accommodation options was undertaken in the latter part of 2017 which included partner authorities and commercial options. The available commercial options were financially prohibitive and the partner authorities provided a nil return with the exception of the Vale of Glamorgan. It was therefore agreed that the service would relocate to the Dock Office in Barry during August 2018 prior to the cessation of the licence and following completion of some remedial work to the new premises. It was felt that this would also allow for consultation re any HR issues and for any

other matters affecting staff to be considered. The service moved to their new base on 10 September 2018.

**2.8** The budget for the Collaborative is managed by the Vale of Glamorgan and is monitored closely by the Management Board and Joint Committee. The end of year position reported a slight overspend in the budget for 2017-18 created by some additional and unexpected costs for cleaning services at Ty Pennant which were received at year end. The Collaborative receives an annual internal audit undertaken by Bridgend and Vale Audit Shared Service. The audit undertaken for 2017-18 found 'substantial assurance' in respect of the management of risks within the service. The Best Value recommendation to review the funding formula has been taken forward by the Finance Technical Group comprised of Finance Officers from the four authorities. It was agreed that funding arrangements would remain unchanged for 2017-18 but further work would be undertaken in 2018-19 to consider options for future funding of the Collaborative.

**2.9.** The Management Board has continued to meet bi-monthly during this period. Board meetings have continued to be well represented and supported by Heads of Service from the partner authorities and wider membership. The representative from the Voluntary Adoption Agency, St David's has changed to their Director of Operations and the Chair of the Management Board transferred to the Director of Social Services for RCT in July 2017.

**2.10** The Management Board has played a key role in monitoring the progress of the Best Value Review to address improvements in service delivery. It has also continued to regularly monitor the overall performance of the region highlighting areas for improvement and potential solutions. To support the Management Board in monitoring the key elements of the performance framework, it has agreed the key performance data it wishes to receive on a regular basis which is attached at Appendix A.

**2.11** The performance of the regional service has continued to be monitored via the NAS Performance Framework. The range of measures has increased each year which has required more comprehensive recording mechanisms to be put in place to capture this data. VVC has fully complied with all reporting requirements.

**2.12** The Director of Operations for NAS attended the VVC Management Board in May 2018 to present the NAS End of Year Report for 2017-18 in respect of VVC's performance. Some of the headlines from this report are covered later.

**2.13** The Joint Committee met in June and December 2017. The Joint Committee is comprised of elected Members from each of the authorities although the individual Members changed in May 2017 following the local elections. The Joint Committee approved the annual accounts for the Collaborative, the annual budget and plan and the Best Value Review.

### 3. SERVICE FUNCTIONS

**3.1** VVC's Annual Work Plan has focused actions around the ongoing priorities set by NAS to improve adoption support and to place children and recruit adopters more effectively. Progress in meeting these priorities and developments to enhance service delivery are outlined under each of the service areas.

### 4. FAMILY FINDING

**4.1** As previously indicated VVC is the largest of the regional collaboratives with the largest children looked after population. This context was acknowledged in the NAS End of Year Report for 2017-18 which states 'one of the implications of the size of VVC is that it represents a correspondingly large proportion of the overall demand across the spectrum of adoption services that local government and partners are required to provide'. In terms of family finding activity this represents a large area of work for the region and one that has increased since VVC's inception. The NAS report indicates that regionally VVC worked with about 15% of the children looked after within the region during this period.

**4.2** The number of children referred for adoption totalled **244** which has fallen slightly on the previous year, although this represents the highest in Wales. **86** children were placed for adoption during the year, a 6% increase on the previous year. A new measure introduced in 2017-18 requires regions to report on the location of placements. During the reporting period, **51** children out of the 86 were placed within the region. **23%** of the placements made were for children in sibling groups which represents an increasing trend.

**4.3** At the end of the year there were **138** children who had a 'should be placed' for adoption decision but had not been placed for adoption which is significant increase on previous returns. **117** of these children were subject of a Placement Order. This figure has been used to project the number of adoptive placements required by the region to meet its' needs. However out of this total, 16 children were on hold pending a change of Care Plan, 34 children had active links, 10 of which were proceeding to matching, and the region was at year end actively recruiting for 67 children.

**4.4** The region has recorded **102** Placement Orders being made during the year which also represents a slight decrease although the number of Adoption Orders has increased to **71**.

**4.5** The measure in relation to the timeliness of the process from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption indicates that on average children were placed within **13.6 months** which the NAS report indicates is 'close to the benchmark of 13

months or less and one of the better averages amongst the NAS regions'. The NAS report also highlights that the VVC average of **7.7 months** from Placement Order 'is a significant improvement from last year; it is better than the national average although the benchmark is 6 months or less'. Regrettably of all the placements made during the year, **60** children had waited longer than six months to be placed which is higher than the previous year but is indicative of the challenges faced in placing children with complex and additional needs.

**4.6** The level of placement breakdown remains relatively low with **3** placement disruptions during the year, one of these was a sibling group where one of the children had complex emotional needs and the other was a little boy with complex needs who had also experienced a previous breakdown.

**4.7** The number of birth parents referred to the service for counselling fell during the year to **297** in line with the national picture and slight reduction in children being referred. Overall take up in this area continues to pose significant challenges for the service as only **112** parents took up the service, although this represents one of the higher proportions across Wales.

**4.8** The provision of Life Journey Material for children at their second adoption review remains an area of national and regional focus. Further improvement has been noted during the period with **68%** of children placed having life journey work materials in place by the second review. NAS has provided a Welsh Government grant to regions to improve performance in this area. VVC has purchased various resources of direct work materials which have been distributed to childcare teams in the region to assist and improve practice. AFA Cymru has been commissioned by NAS to develop a toolkit and to work with regions to develop improvement plans. AFA Cymru facilitated a day for VVC staff and local authority practitioners in November 2017 and more development days are planned.

**4.9** The region utilises several different methods to assist Family Finding. If there are no internal links within the Collaborative external funding agreement is sought. The Welsh Adoption Register generates suggested links based on children's referrals and adopters approved by regional collaboratives and Welsh Voluntary Adoption Agencies. Last year VVC purchased a licence for Link Maker, a national database of children waiting. This has proved to be the most successful avenue for external links although sometimes this has been supplemented by an external mailshot which is sent securely to adoption agencies within the UK. The use of Link Maker has also reduced the need to advertise nationally in family finding publications for children waiting.

**4.10** VVC accessed the Welsh Adoption Register Exchange Day in North Wales September 2017 where 29 children were profiled. Unfortunately there were fewer adopters in attendance and many children did not have any potential links from the event. A lot of interest was generated for one of the children but unfortunately none

of these links were suitable. One link is still being explored however it has taken some time as therapeutic involvement was required for the transition.

**4.11** The service has also used Activity Days organised through Coram BAAF to promote children that were harder to place. Three were accessed across the UK, one child attended in May 2017, another attended in June 2017 and a third child attended in September 2017. Unfortunately no appropriate links progressed from these days. The first Welsh Adoption Activity Day took place in March 2018. This was extremely successful and resulted in links progressing to a match for four children, a toddler with additional needs, an older child and a sibling group of two.

**4.12** As members of Adoption UK VVC is able to access 'Children Who Wait', a magazine which profiles children seeking adoptive families. A sibling group of two were profiled in September 2017 and two single children were profiled in March – May 2018 for three sequential editions. The sibling group were not linked using this method however we are exploring links for the two single children. As part of the membership VVC is able to access 10 free advertising spaces from April 2018 which will hopefully be utilised productively.

**4.13** An application to join 'New Families Social' Adoption Group from April 2018 has been made which will hopefully offer another avenue of profiling children to approved same sex adopters across the UK.

## **5. RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF ADOPTERS**

**5.1** The Performance Management Framework records key activity around enquiries, response times to enquiries, applications and timeliness in respect of approval of adopters. The returns in respect of adopter activity have been mixed, with improvements in some areas and not in other areas.

**5.2.** The region received **242** enquiries from prospective adopters in total for the year 2017/18 which represents an impressive 61% increase on the previous year and is the highest it has been for three years. This is encouraging and provides a sound basis for planning recruitment activity going forward. It remains however difficult to accurately identify the geographical location for all the enquiries received, although the local authority area is now a standard question on the enquiry form linked to the VVC website. Whilst this question has been added, VVC continues to receive a significant number of electronic enquiries where the local authority area is not completed and this information is not specified on the enquiries that come via the NAS website. Of the 242 enquiries received, VVC was only able to identify the local authority area for 152.

**5.3** VVC's response rate to enquiries within five working days has returned to 100% following a slight drop in performance during the previous year. It is anticipated that the employment of a Marketing Officer will address any further deficits in this area and enhance our initial response to ensure that enquiries are followed up promptly.



**5.4** The region approved **46** adopter households in the year 2017/18 compared with **47** in the previous year. The region was on target to approve over 50 households but there were **5** assessments that did not progress to Panel. This is a high number but the reasons given assist in understanding the complexities which can occur in assessing adopters. In two of the assessments, the couple's birth children were not supporting adoption, in one of the assessments the couple had come to a realisation that adoption was not right for their family situation and in another a realisation that they had come too late to adoption. In the fifth assessment that did not proceed a complex family issue had emerged which the couple found too intrusive to continue. There were two further assessments that were due to be completed in the final quarter of the year but were put on hold. The first couple suffered the loss of a family member and wished to take some time to grieve. The second couple had a complex family issue which arose during the assessment which needed further investigation.

**5.5** In relation to VVC's overall performance in relation to the timeliness of assessments the picture is mixed. The timescales from initially enquiry to approval has increased from **12.2 months** to **13.5 months** but the timescale from application to approval has improved with an average of **7.1 months** overall. These figures clearly highlight that the greatest gap is between initial enquiry and application, arguably something that has been out of the control of the Collaborative as this is very much related to individual choice. The region continues to be able to account for the delays in assessment and has continued to supply an explanatory narrative to NAS to accompany the return in respect of these measures.

**5.6** As mentioned in the previous report, VVC revamped the initial information provided to adopters, believing that those interested in adoption should be provided with more information on the needs of children at a far earlier stage in the process in order for them to make a more informed decision around whether adoption is the right choice for them. This continues to be the case, and those attending the information evenings have frequently provided very positive feedback to VVC on how much better informed they have felt. It is clear that the trend noted previously with enquirers taking a longer time to come forward for an initial visit has continued. The recruitment of families for siblings and children with additional needs continues to remain a challenge.

**5.7** The shortfall in adopter recruitment and the number of children waiting at year end has become an emerging and very pressing need. VVC was required, along with other regions to submit a Recruitment Plan and target for approvals at year end. For the reasons indicated above VVC fell short of this target but the need to increase adopter resource was considered closely by the Best Value Review and the additional resources recommended in recruitment & Assessment was in response to as the emerging need.

**5.8** The decision to employ a Marketing and Recruitment Co-ordinator is seen as crucial in being able to track and harness the enquiries to increase the number of enquiries which can be converted into applications. Due to the number of children waiting and the number of Placement Orders projected to be made in the coming year, NAS project that the number of adoptive placements required will be 145. This is likely to pose significant challenges upon the service. The Marketing and Recruitment Officer has recently been appointed.

**5.9** As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 there were 26 assessments being completed by the region with a further 11 assessments generated from the adopter training in March 2018 which were all allocated within the first quarter of 2018/19.

**5.10** Five of the adopter assessments undertaken during the year were from foster carers wishing to adopt the child in placement. Of the five that were completed in 2017/18, four of them had the child placed with them for more than one year at the point of their application.

**5.11** During the past year the majority of the assessments completed have been allocated within the Recruitment and Assessment function. Agreement to extend hours for a couple of part time staff in the Family Finding Team was sought to complete assessments that could not be allocated and by utilising staff slippage monies. Assessment plans and mid-point reviews have continued to be used to improve practice and timeliness.

**5.12.** VVC continues to receive high numbers of non-agency adoption referrals, the majority of which are from step parents wishing to adopt their step child. It is planned that this area of work will be collated by NAS in the coming year. Again this is an area which poses significant challenges for the service. The need to prioritise the recruitment of adopters for children waiting to be adopted has resulted in a waiting list for allocation. On occasion, applicants have submitted their application to adopt directly into Court which resulted in an urgent assessment being required.

**5.13.** During the year, there has also been a slight increase in inter-country related enquiries, which have posed some issues for the team due to their complexity. Quite a few of the enquiries received are from couples wishing to adopt a child who is known to them, who resides in a different country. This area has also identified a knowledge gap in the service which we hope to address via training.

**5.14** Towards the end of the reporting period, NAS was able to secure some additional funding to assist with recruitment. VVC utilised their grant to provide leaflets to assist with marketing the service and along with two other regions to employ a marketing company, COWSHED to develop a regional Marketing Plan. Further funding has been provided by NAS to provide mentoring by the company to the regions. This plan will therefore be further developed by the Marketing Co-ordinator in conjunction with COWSHED.

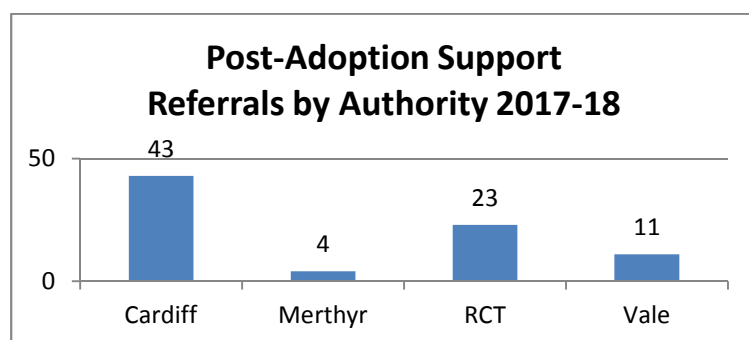
**5.15** VVC has recognised that further training is beneficial for adopters to help prepare them for the matching process following approval as adopters. A couple of staff within Recruitment and Assessment have therefore devised a fourth day course for adopters which now runs every two months. The course provides guidance to help prospective adopters prepare for a visit from a childcare Social Worker to discuss a proposed match providing an overview of the process required to match a child and explain the legal process of adoption. Information about how introductions are planned is also provided. The second part of the course encourages adopters to think about the grief and loss a child will experience following a placement move.

Activities are undertaken to help adopters think about their support network and highlight the importance of seeking help if they experience difficulties post placement. Techniques to promote positive parenting are discussed and materials shared to help adopters think about ways they can introduce themselves to children prior to placement.

**5.16** Three training sessions were held between November 2017 and March 2018 and a total of 37 people attended the course during this period. A lot of positive feedback was received from participants including comments such as adopters felt 'better prepared' and found the course 'informative and enjoyable'. A Welcome Booklet for new adopters has also been developed which provides information and guidance pre-matching on a range of issues.

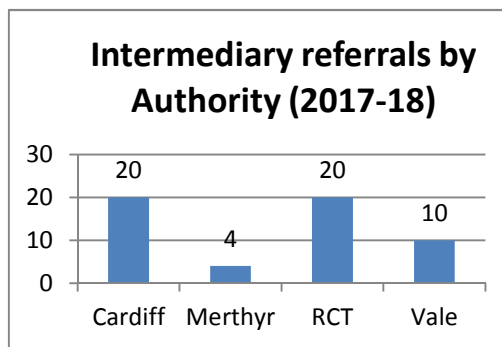
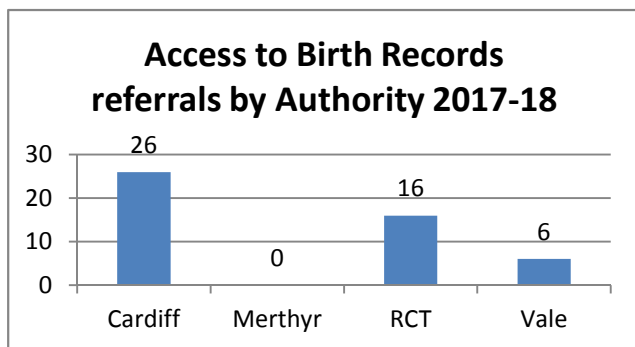
## 6. ADOPTION SUPPORT

**6.1** Demand for adoption support services has remained steady through 2017-18. With **81** requests for adoption support received VVC is showing a consistent referral rate with the previous year's figure (83). This averages around 20 referrals per quarter requiring allocation for assessment. This trend has also continued in Quarter 1 of 2018-19 when 25 referrals were received.



Although referral rates overall remain similar, Cardiff's proportion of referrals rose by 54% from 2016-17 whilst RCT and the Vale of Glamorgan saw a drop of around 35%. Merthyr's referral rate dropped by over 50% however this represents a drop from 9 referrals in 2016-17 to just 4 in 2017-18. Q1 figures for 2018-2019 show referrals for Cardiff, RCT and the Vale of Glamorgan on a par with each other; in fact the Vale of Glamorgan has had 8 referrals in Q1 this year when there were only 11 in the whole of 2017-18.

**6.2** In relation to Access to Birth Records cases, VVC has observed a drop of around 28% in referrals with **48** in 2017-18, however in contrast intermediary referrals have increased by 59% to **54** (from 34 last year). Comparing the referral rates when VVC became operational in 2015-16 to the year-end figures for 2017-18, intermediary referrals have increased by 184%. This is largely due to the increase in VVC's capacity to allocate Access to Birth Records cases resulting in an increase in these adopted adults seeking a follow-on intermediary service. VVC remains one of few regions in Wales that has been able to continue to provide this service albeit with a lengthy waiting list.



There has been no marked difference in the referral rates by local authority from the previous year in relation to Access to Birth Records. There is a notable increase in intermediary referrals for RCT from 7 to 20 in 2017-18 (185% increase).

**6.3** As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 there were **812** open letterbox cases, an increase of 6% from 767 on 31 March 2017. This reflects the ongoing gradual increase observed in letterbox contact as new referrals exceed the number of existing arrangements closing when a child reaches 18.

**6.4** The permanent staffing to enhance the Adoption Support Team 2016 as a result of the pilot exercise in 2016 and the outcome of the Best Value Review has been of significant benefit in reducing pressures within the team and gaps in service delivery. The Letterbox Co-ordinator role in particular has improved the quality of support being provided to adoptive families and birth parents.

**6.5** Other monies secured as part of the 2016 pilot were used to access specialist training, the majority of this being used in 2016-17 although additional training has been accessed for some staff in the Adoption Support Team to complete DDP Level 1 training during the year. Staff within the Adoption Support Team are experienced and committed to service improvement. The team has facilitated adoption support groups for adoptive parents with topics including Sensory Processing Difficulties, Social Media and Contact in the last year. In addition, a monthly toddler groups has been maintained which provides opportunities for early intervention as well as bi-annual fun days which have high attendances.

**6.6.** Family fun days were held in July and November 2017 which were both well attended and numbers of those attending remain consistently high at around 90-100 children. VVC issued a newsletter in the spring of 2018 which was produced by the Adoption Support Manager. The region also contributed to the Adopter Voice project with Adoption UK which included attendance at one of VVC's support groups to consult with adopters. A report of this consultation has been presented to VVC Management Board.

**6.7** The Regional Adoption Manager and Adoption Support Manager have continued to be involved in the IPC project commissioned by NAS to develop a National Framework for Adoption Support, the National Adoption Support sub group meetings to take forward the Framework as well as the focused project on Life Journey Work through 2017-18. The Adoption Support Manager has been involved in securing resources to utilise the grant monies referred to earlier in the report to

support improvements in Life Journey work. Further funding is anticipated for 2018-19 and plans for how to make the best use of these resources are being considered.

**6.8** The Adoption Support Team has continued to develop an understanding of the demand for targeted and therapeutic services with families needing support across the region and the cost of these to the local authorities. At present the adoption support budget is not held centrally in the region and is retained by the individual local authorities. This continues to pose some challenge in terms of equity of service and timeliness of decision making, but generally local authority partners concur with the assessment undertaken by VVC and packages of support are being put in place as needed. The Adoption Support Manager is currently developing an adoption support improvement plan which places a greater focus on social work input and intervention with families prior to progression to therapeutic support services with a view to avoiding the need for such interventions.

**6.9** The Regional Adoption Manager and Adoption Support Manager have in conjunction with colleagues from Western Bay met with the CAMHS Clinical Lead with a view to developing a consultancy service for Social Workers and a clear referral pathway for adopted children who may require a CAMHS service. A plan to progress these initial discussions is being developed.

## **7. ADOPTION PANEL**

**7.1** The Collaborative has continued to operate a joint regional Panel from two sittings, a north sitting covering cases from RCT and Merthyr Tydfil CBC and a south sitting covering cases from Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Where adopter approvals involve no medical issues, there is provision to transfer the case for consideration to the Panel sitting with availability.

**7.2.** Panel business has remained at a high level during the year with 42 Panel meetings being held, with three scheduled meetings being cancelled due to delays in cases being ready for presentation.

**7.3** As outlined in the previous report and highlighted as an improvement action in the Best Value Review, a significant area of development for the Panel has been to move to digitalising the Panel process and business. This work was completed by the end of March 2018 with the result that Panel business is now conducted via the use of tablets and sending Panel information to Panel members via a secure portal. This has improved security and reduced administrative time and printing costs.

**7.4** Maintenance of the central list of Panel members continues to pose challenges in terms of maintaining a sufficient number of independent members and Social Work members. Some new members have been recruited during the year. An induction session for new members was held in June 2017 and a training day for all Panel members was also held in June 2017 facilitated by an independent trainer.

**7.5** The other priority set in respect of completing the annual reviews of Panel members remains outstanding but a timetable is being developed to meet this requirement.

## **8. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

**8.1** VVC has received the following complaints during the period:

- Complaint from prospective adopters regarding the process of linking and matching a child and lack of transparency on the part of the local authority Social Worker and staff within the Collaborative in respect of a link they were being considered for.
- Complaint from non-agency adopters regarding the initial advice provided by VVC regarding the process and requirements.
- Complaint from a step parent regarding the step parent adoption process, the delay in the Social Worker concluding the report and not responding to queries raised by the applicant.
- Complaint to the Managing Director from an adopted person regarding the service provided in respect of his access to birth records enquiry.
- Complaint from adoptive parents regarding their attendance at Adoption Panel in 2015 following a review of their approval. Complaint received as part of a stage 2 complaint to Cardiff Council concerning the breakdown in introductions to a child.
- Complaint from adoptive parent in respect of the post adoption support received from the allocated Social Worker.
- Complaint from an adoptive parent regarding the delay in securing a post adoption therapeutic support package.
- Complaint from adopters alleging that they had been discriminated against and treated less favourably by VVC staff in terms of their assessment and the subsequent linking process.

**8.2** All the complaints have been resolved at stage 1 of the Vale of Glamorgan Complaint Process.

**8.3** Two of the complaints have highlighted issues in respect of the linking process. VVC has, as outlined earlier in the report, introduced a fourth day of training to address some of the issues raised. Two of the complaints have highlighted issues in respect of the non-agency adoption process. VVC's website now contains information in respect of this process. Two have highlighted concerns in respect of adoption support which were addressed.

**8.4** Regional staff have also received a number of compliments during the year. A record of these is maintained. The compliments include positive feedback from the fun-days, the toddler group, information evening and support provided for letterbox contact and access to birth records enquiries.

## **9. CONCLUSION AND 2018-19 PRIORITIES**

**9.1** During the period for this report, a Best Value Review was undertaken, commissioned by the Directors of the four local authorities. This provided a real opportunity to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the service and to look at potential remedies to address some of the presenting difficulties. The findings of the Review validated the earlier work undertaken by VVC detailing capacity and resourcing issues and options to address the shortfalls in the service.

**9.2** In respect of regional performance, the increased the number of children being placed for adoption during the period, the number being adopted and the reduced time taken to place a child for adoption from Placement Order are positive improvements. Some improvement has also been noted in the provision of Life Journey materials for children placed and in respect of the take up of birth parent counselling. These improvements must however be considered against the increase in the number of children waiting for placements and the number waiting over six months to be placed. This set against the decrease in approvals of adopters and delays in timely recruitment of adopters makes recruitment an ongoing and clear priority for the service.

**9.3** The service has also been proactive in developing some new initiatives during the year to more effectively support adopters and prepare them for placement. There is also evidence that the increased permanent resource in Adoption Support is having a positive effect in improving performance and reducing pressures on the service. The priorities set for the 2017-18 have been met in part but some are ongoing due to the need to continue to remain focused on our core business.

**9.4** The priorities we have set for 2018-19 focus upon completing the actions arising from the Best Value Review which have been endorsed by the Management Board. Particular emphasis for the remainder of the year will focus upon driving up the conversion rate of adopter enquiry to application with the intention of increasing the rate of adopter approvals. Some systems have already been put in place to improve our initial response following the recent appointment of the Marketing and Recruitment Co-ordinator and so it is hoped that these can be developed further once the additional resources in Recruitment and Assessment are in place.

**9.10** The other focus of activity and priority for VVC during this current year has been managing the recent relocation of the service to Barry. In order to achieve as smooth a transition as possible and to minimise service disruption, this has required careful planning and preparation by VVC staff and the development of some new systems of working to meet the needs of the whole region. The permanent location will have benefits longer term but the service is still in a settling in period so it is important that our priorities remain delivering our core business and service improvements.

**Angela Harris**  
**Regional Adoption Manager**  
**September 2018**

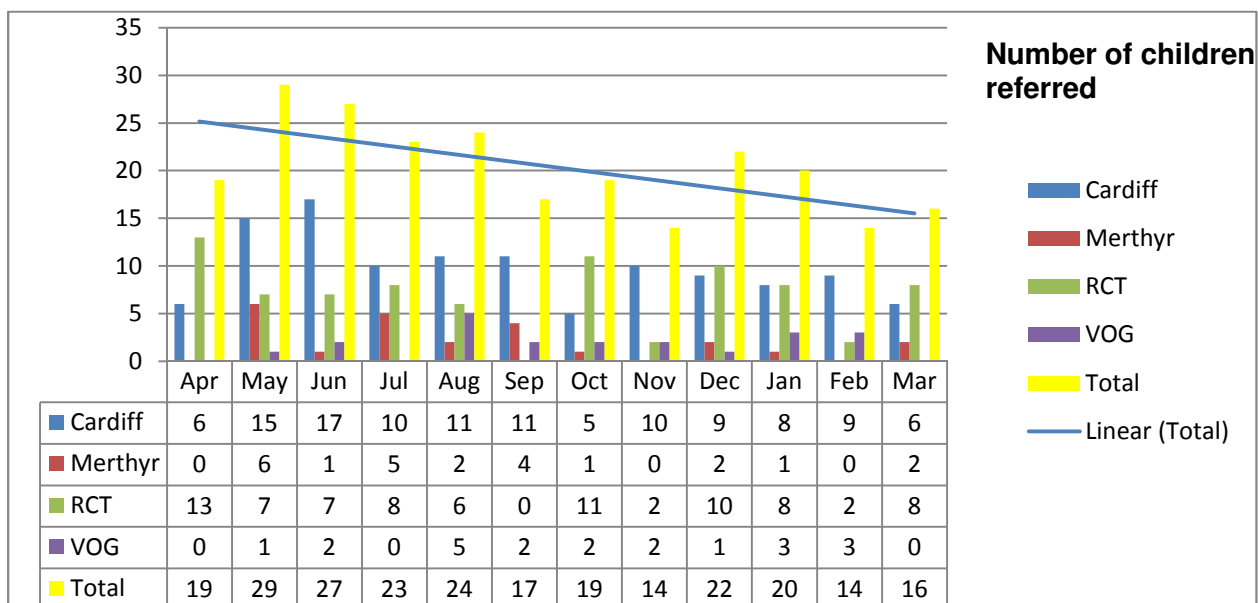


## APPENDIX A VVC Annual Report 2017-18

This report provides an overview of VVC performance against key indicators in respect children and adopters as agreed by Management Board. The information is provided by local authority. Comparative data is presented for 2016-17.

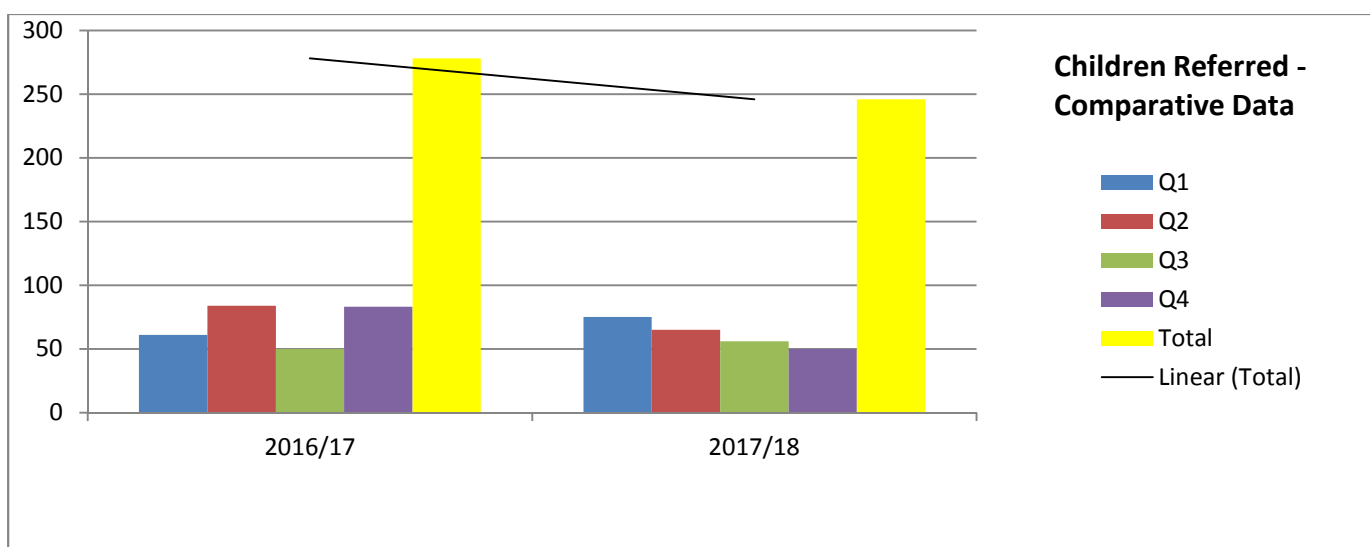
### CHILDREN

Number of Children Referrals made to VVC since April 2017 – of the 244 referrals received for 2017/18 – 57 have been withdrawn (23%)



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>244</b>

The number of children referred for adoption has fallen slightly although this total represents the highest in Wales.



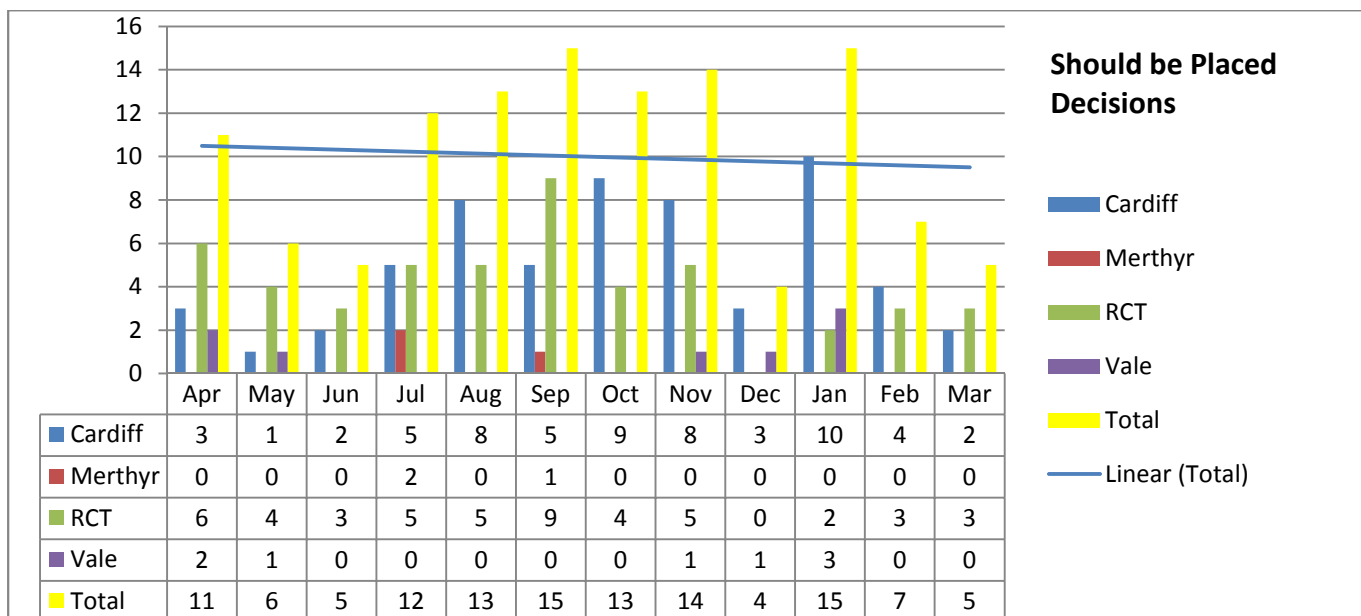
Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	63	84	50	83	280

**APPENDIX A**

**VVC Annual Report 2017-18**

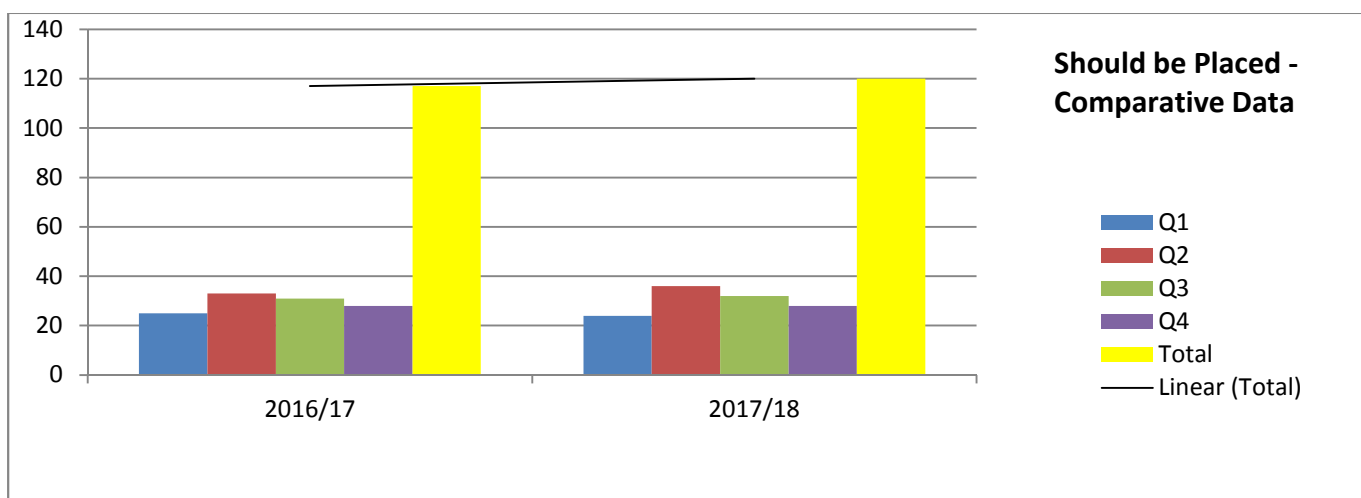
2017/18	75	64	55	50	244
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>524</b>

**Number of Should Be Placed Decisions made since April 2017**



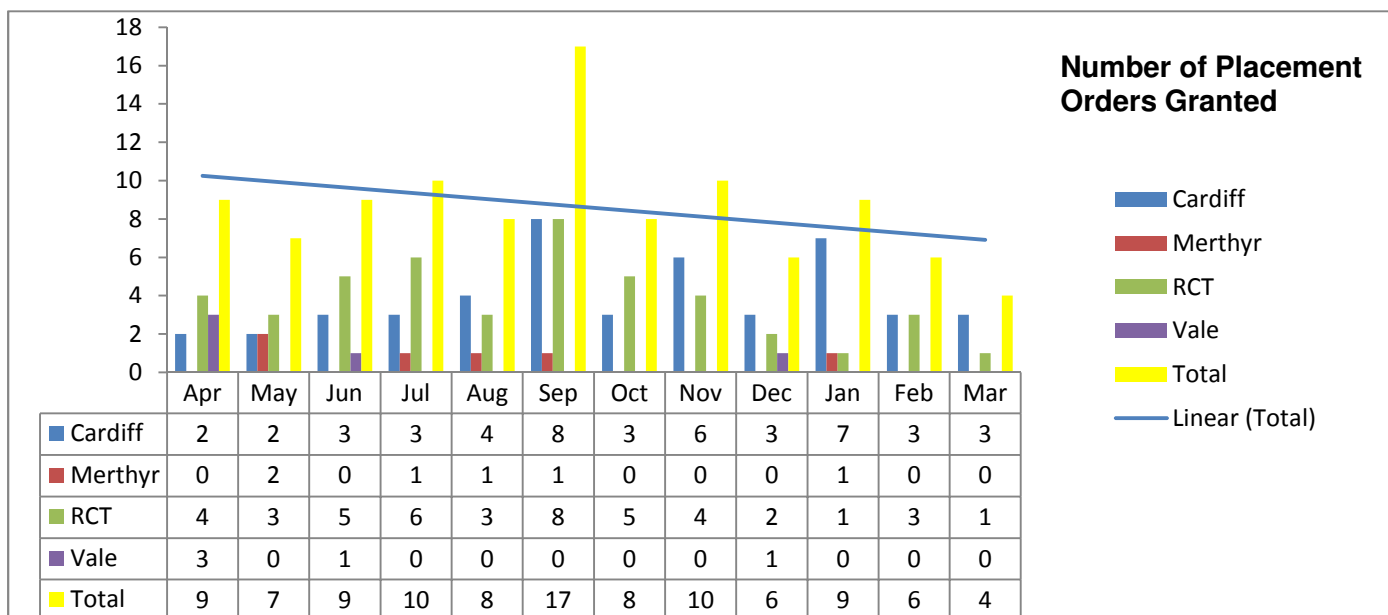
2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	Vale	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>120</b>

The number of children with a Should be Placed for adoption decision has slightly increased during the period.



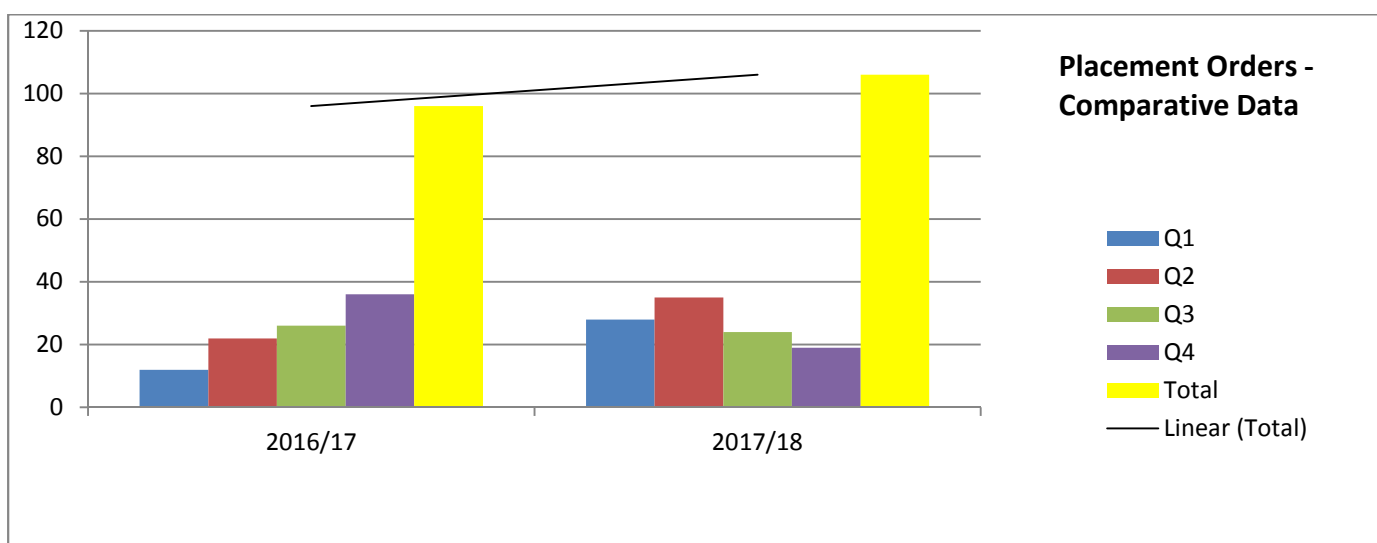
Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	25	33	31	28	117
2017/18	24	36	32	28	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>237</b>

Number of Placement Orders made since April 2017



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	46	6	45	5	<b>102</b>

The region has seen a decrease in the number of children being made subject of a Placement Order during the year but at year end there were 117 children waiting with a Placement Order who were not placed. 16 children were on hold, 24 children were proceeding to matching, 10 had active links being pursued and VVC was actively family finding for 67 children.



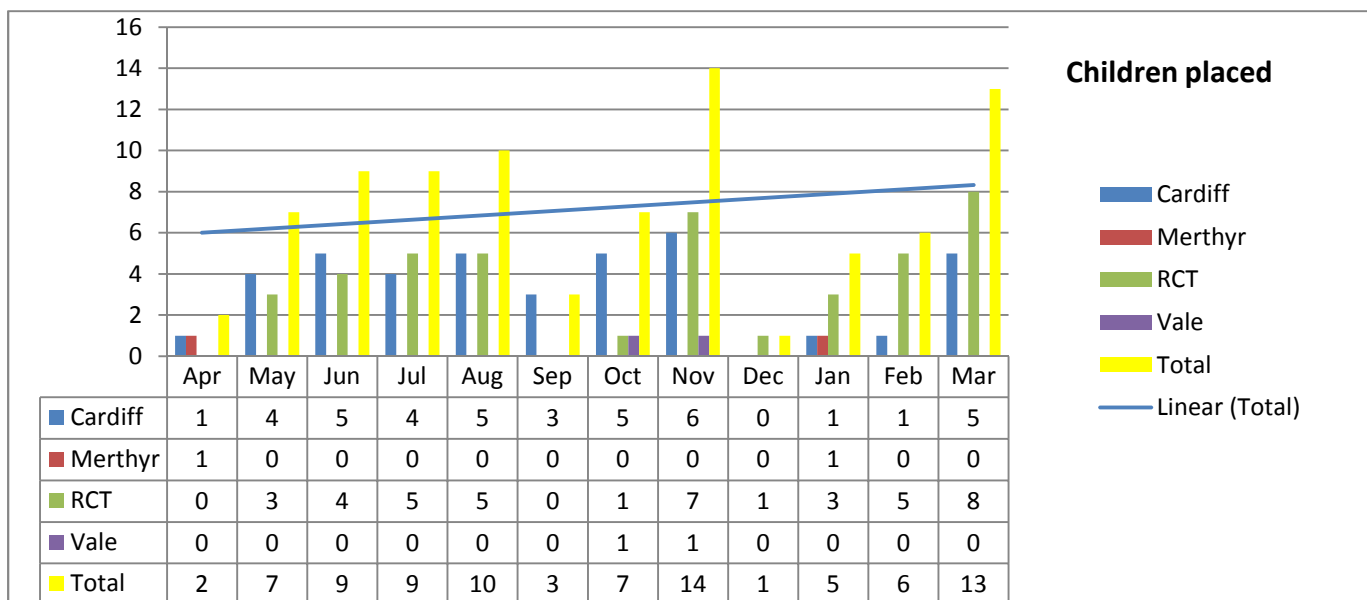
Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	18	33	26	36	113

**APPENDIX A**

**VVC Annual Report 2017-18**

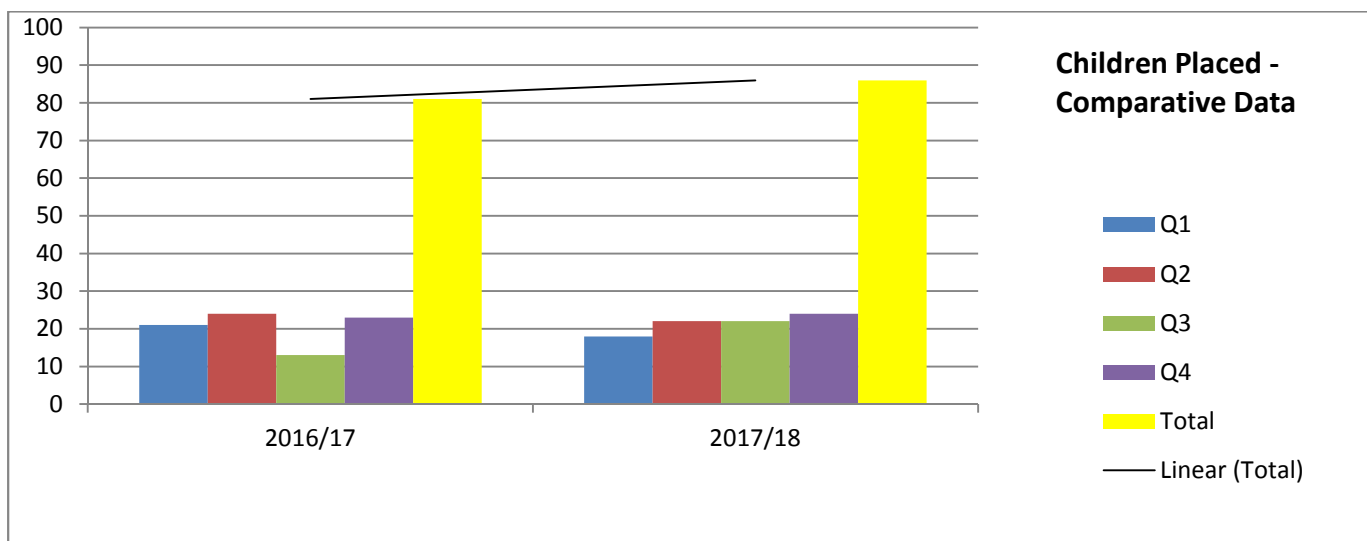
2017/18	25	35	24	18	102
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>216</b>

**Number of children Placed for Adoption since April 2017**



2017/18	<b>Cardiff</b>	<b>Merthyr</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>VOG</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Total</b>	40	2	42	2	<b>86</b>

The number of children placed for adoption during the year has increased on the previous year. This number is the highest in Wales. Concern however remains in respect of the number of children waiting for placement and the length of time they wait.

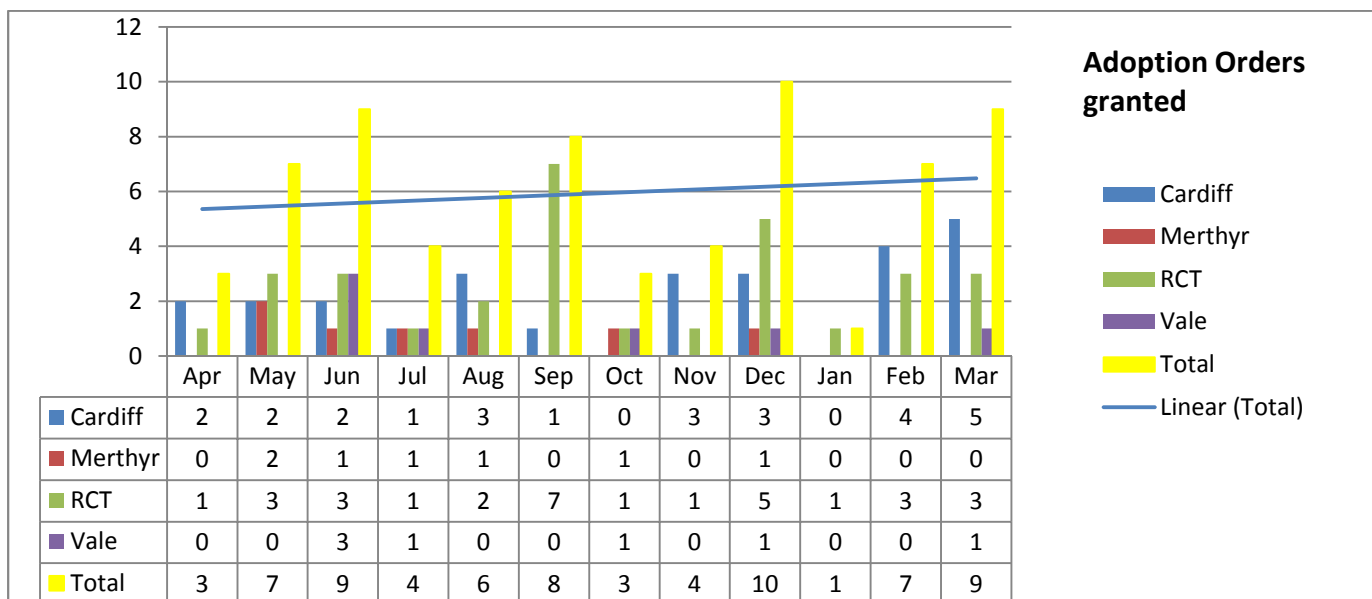


**APPENDIX A**

**VVC Annual Report 2017-18**

Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	21	24	13	23	81
2017/18	18	22	22	24	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>167</b>

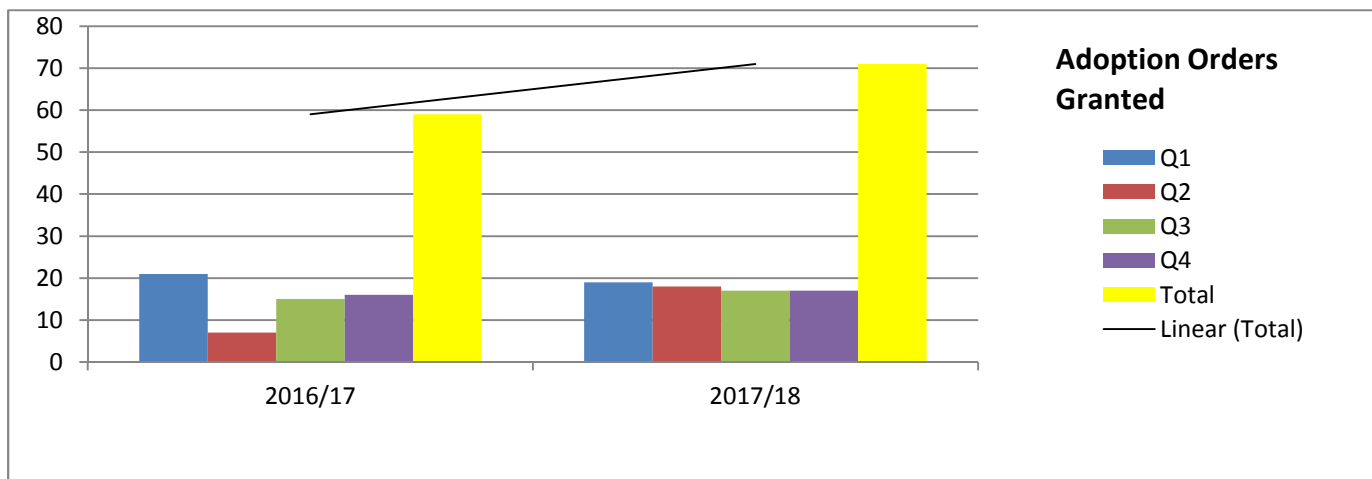
**Number of Adoption Orders Granted since April 2017**



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>71</b>

*Adoption Orders have increased from the previous year.*

**Number of Adoption Orders Granted – Comparative Data**

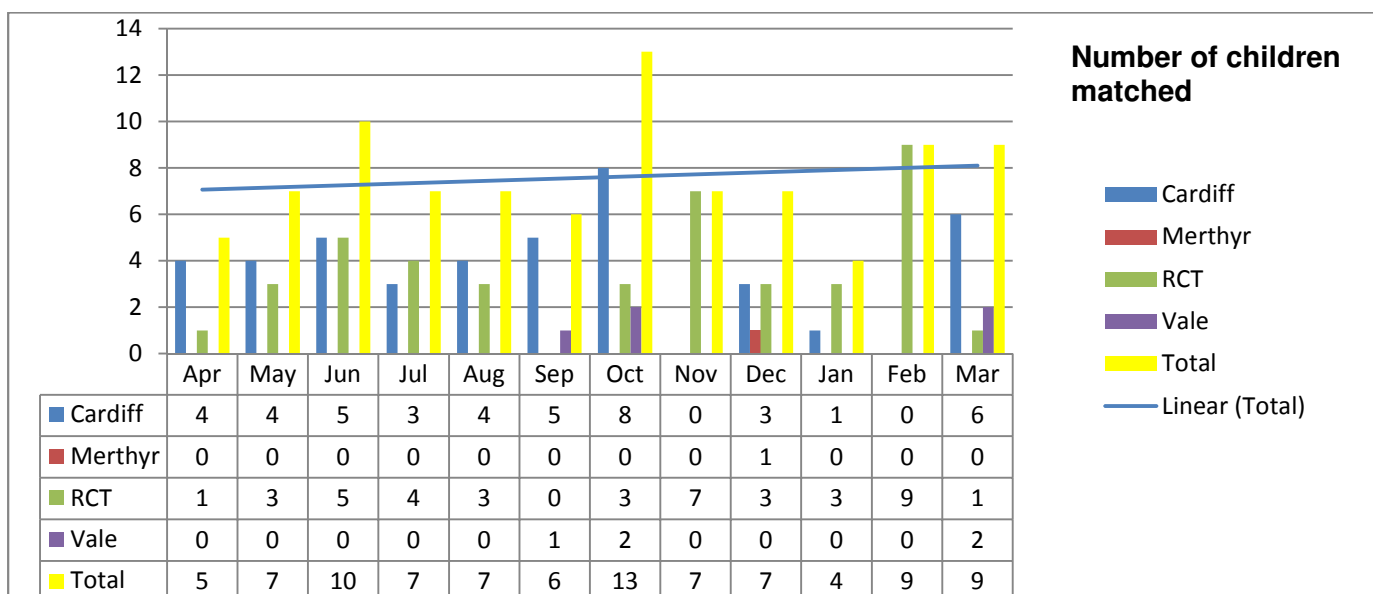


**APPENDIX A**

**VVC Annual Report 2017-18**

Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	21	12	15	17	65
2017/18	19	18	17	17	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>136</b>

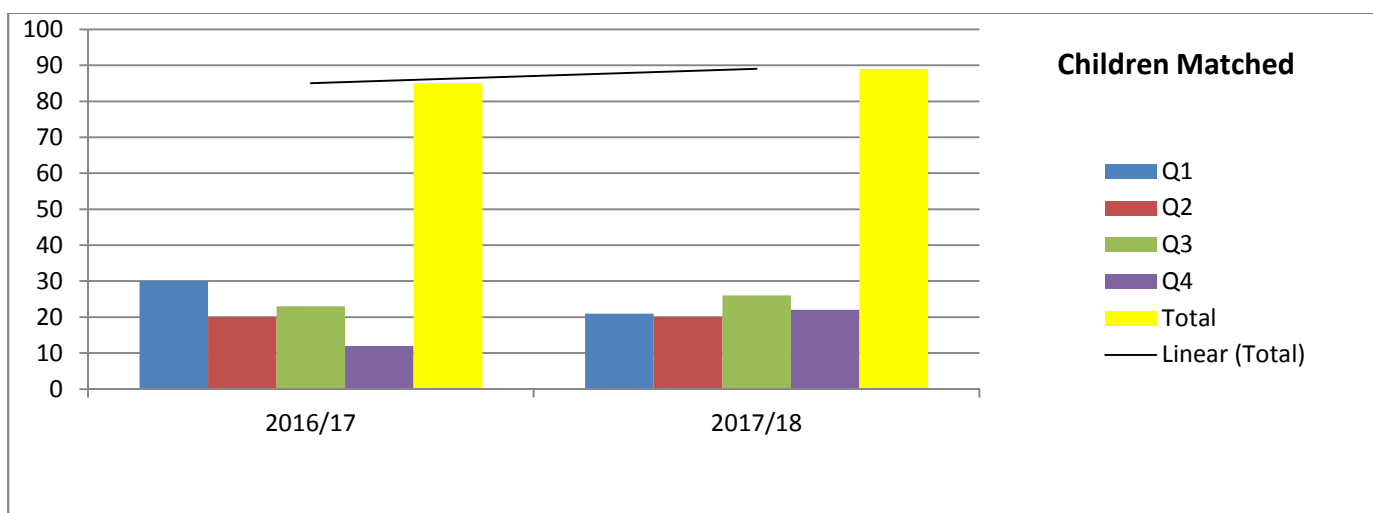
**Number of children Matched (approved by Agency Decision Maker) but not placed since April 2017**



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>91</b>

*This represents the number who were matched at the end of the year whose placement fell in the following quarter.*

**Number of children Matched (approved by Agency Decision Maker) – Comparative Data**

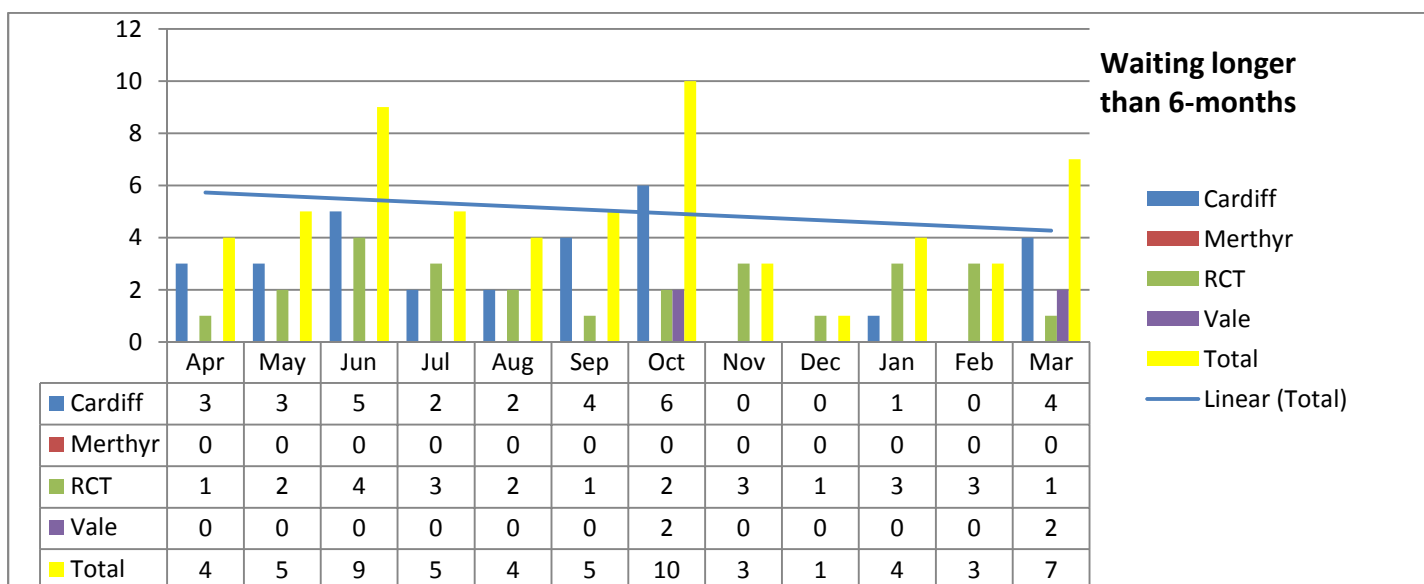


**APPENDIX A**

**VVC Annual Report 2017-18**

Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	30	20	23	12	85
2017/18	22	20	27	22	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>176</b>

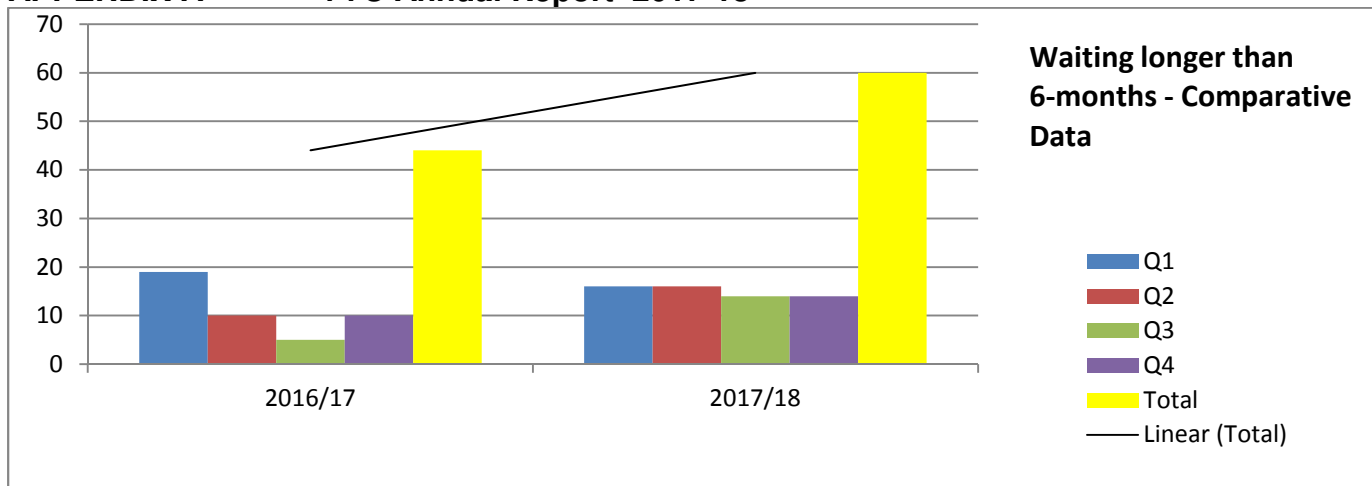
**Number of children Matched in since April 2017 who have waited longer than 6 months (or 3 months for a relinquished child under 6 months of age) to progress from date of Should be Placed for Adoption Decision to date of Agency Decision to approve Match**



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>60</b>

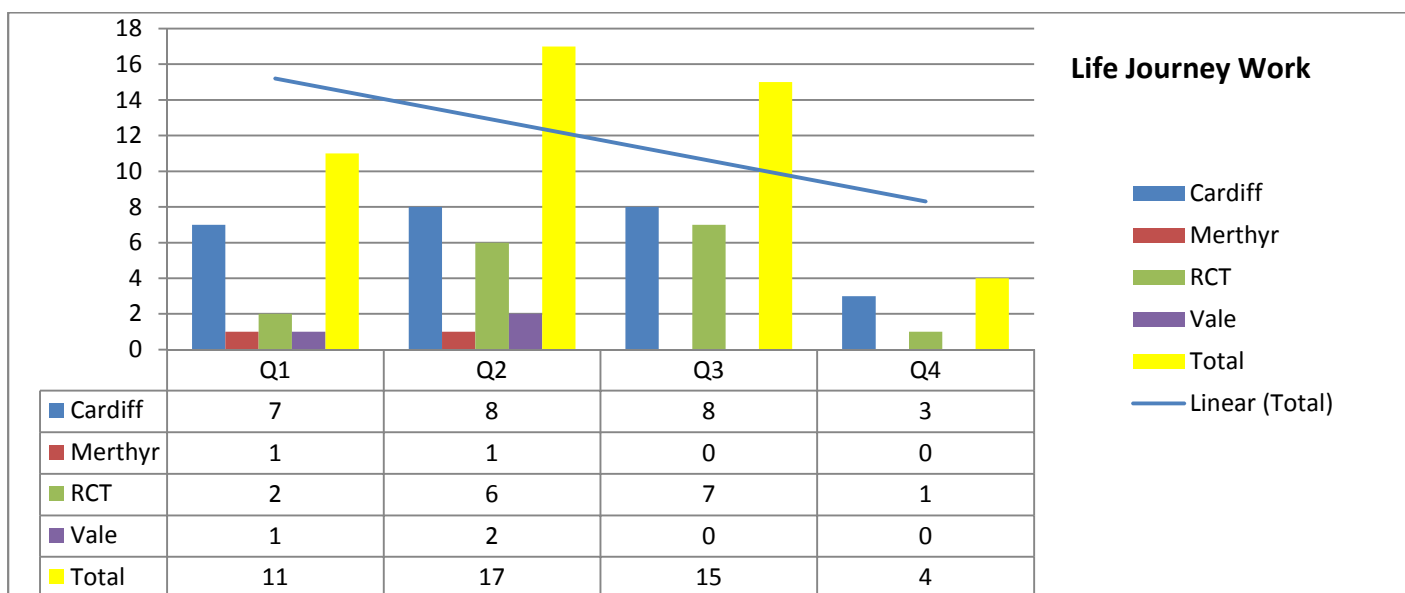
*These graphs demonstrate an increase in the numbers waiting longer than six months for placement.*

**APPENDIX A VVC Annual Report 2017-18**



Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	19	10	5	10	44
2017/18	16	16	14	14	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>104</b>

**Number of children Placed for Adoption since April 2017 for whom Life Journey Material has been provided to adopters by the time of 2nd Adoption Review**



Totals 2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Adoption Review</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Life Journey provided</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>47 (NAS have 49 as both the Vale and Merthyr submitted 1 each which was not</b>



## APPENDIX A VVC Annual Report 2017-18

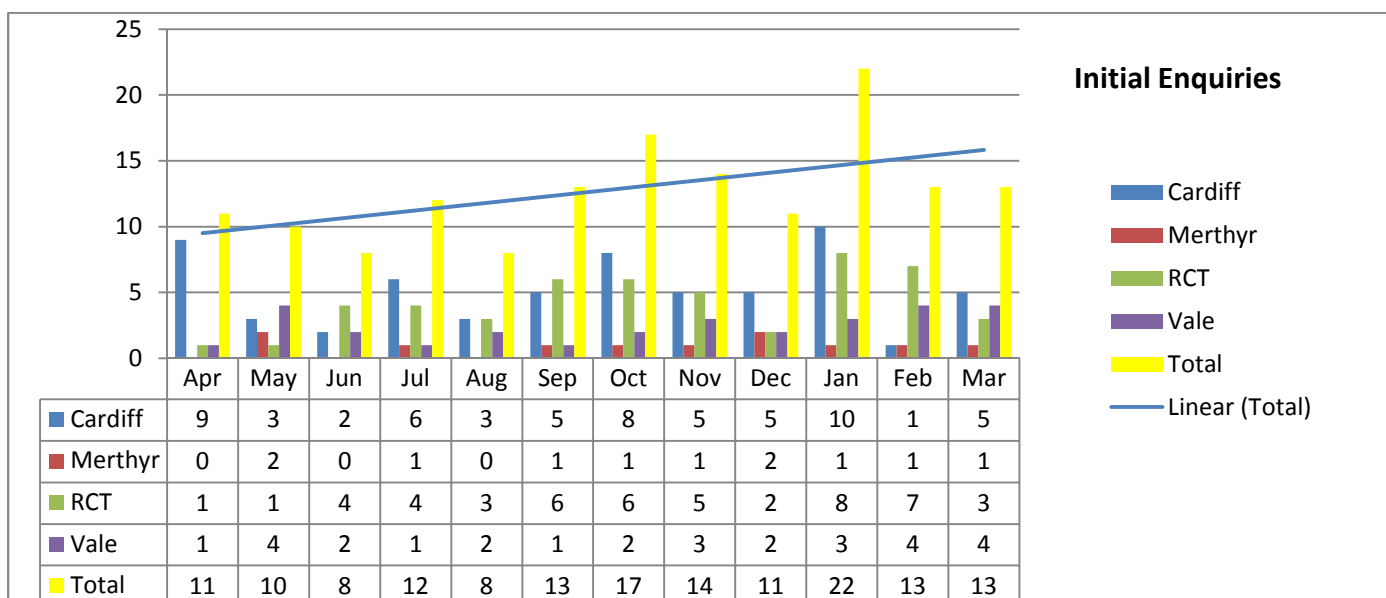
					accurate and this was submitted to NAS)
--	--	--	--	--	---

This chart is representative of VVC's figures broken down by local authority.

Not all the data was available for the NAS report but they calculate our overall performance is 68% which is an improvement on previous years.

### ADOPTERS

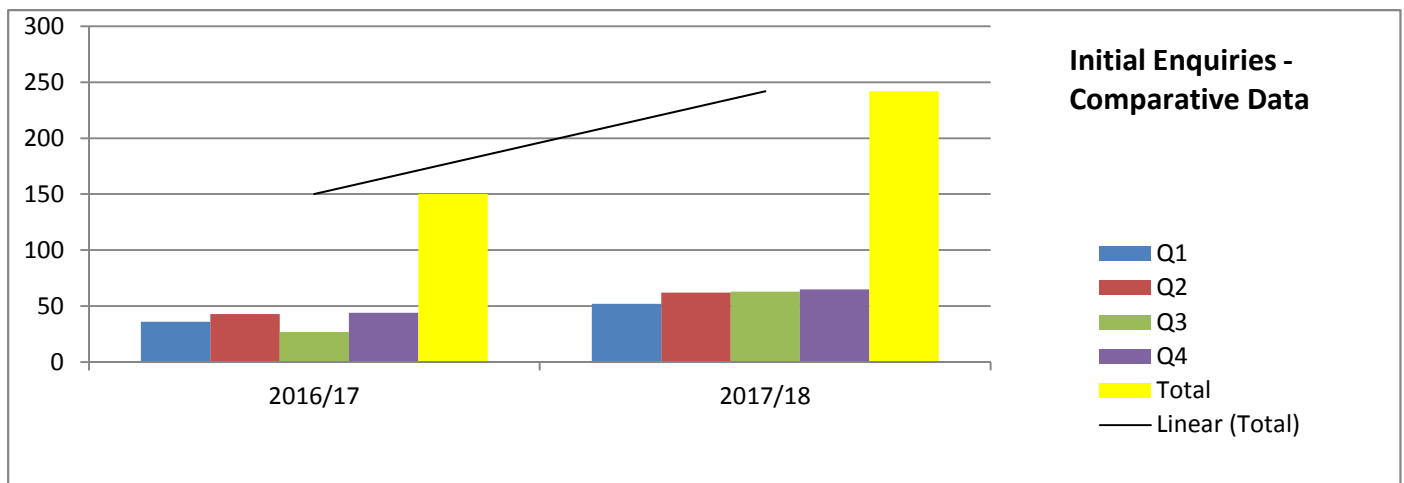
**Number of Initial Enquiries regarding Adoption received since April 2017 - Total number of initial enquiries received = 242 of which 90 (37%) we are not able to allocate to a local authority as they were received by email. This is something we are continuing to address.**



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	62	11	50	29	<b>152 (actual 242)</b>

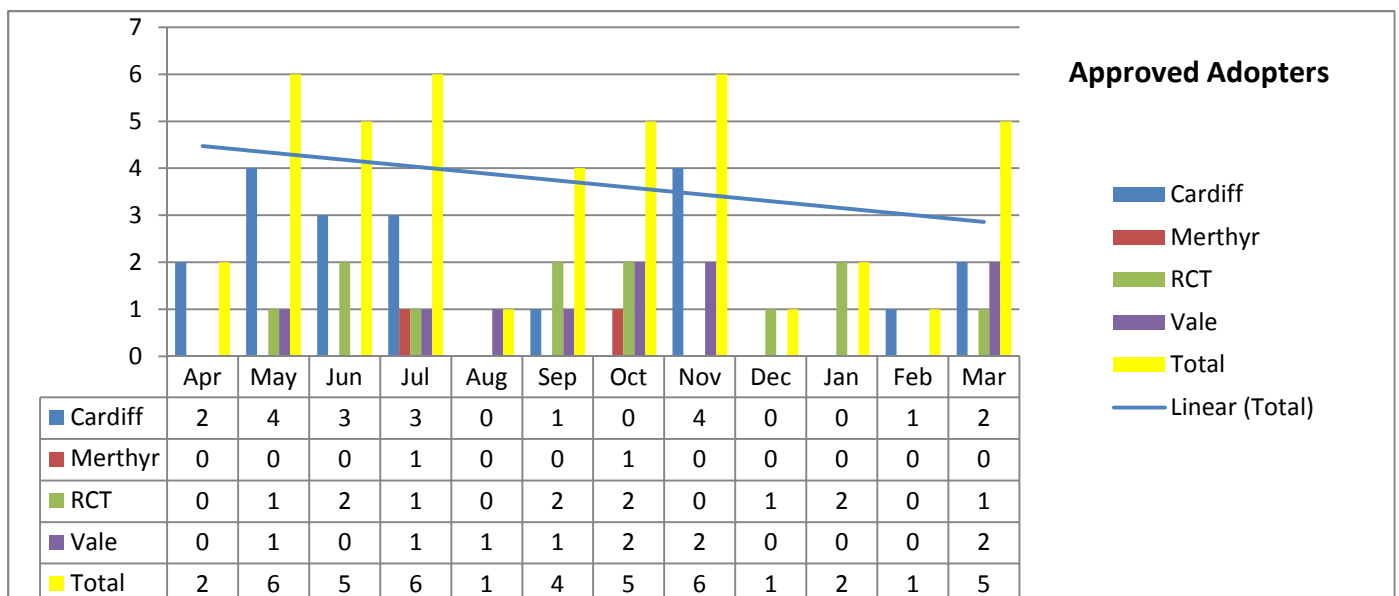
These graphs indicate the breakdown by authority. There are a large number where the geographical area is unknown.

Number of Initial Enquiries regarding Adoption received – Comparative Data



Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	36	43	27	44	150
2017/18	52	62	63	65	242
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>392</b>

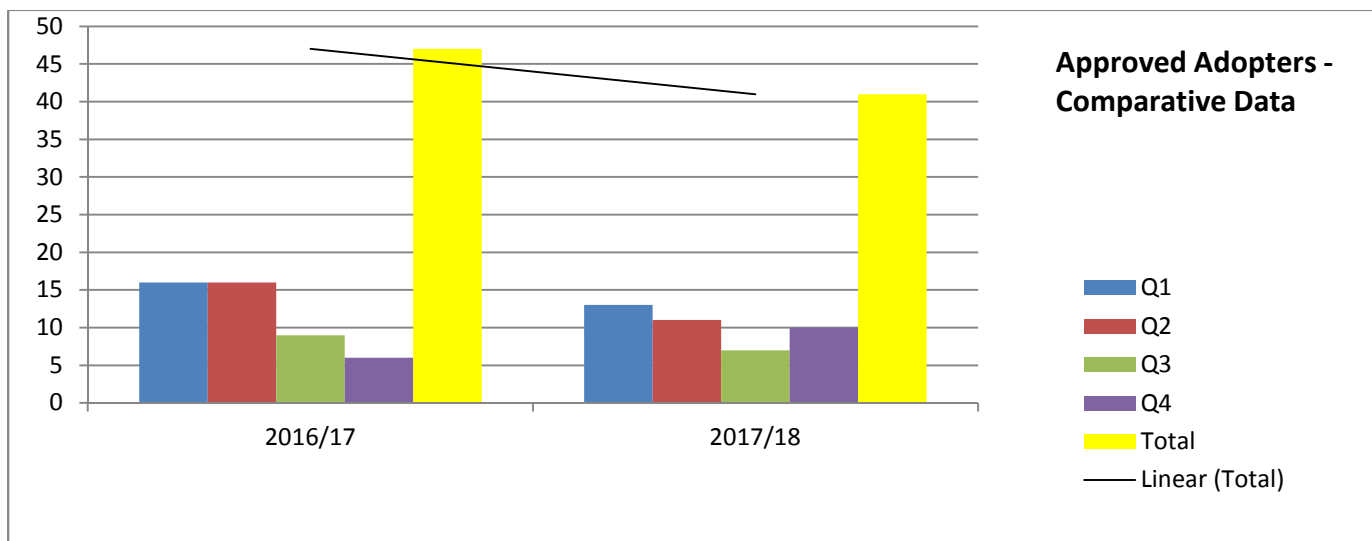
Number of Prospective Adopters receiving Agency Decision to approve as suitable to adopt since April 2017 – Note; there were 10 approvals in Q4, 2 of which were from outside VVC



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	OTHER	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>46</b>

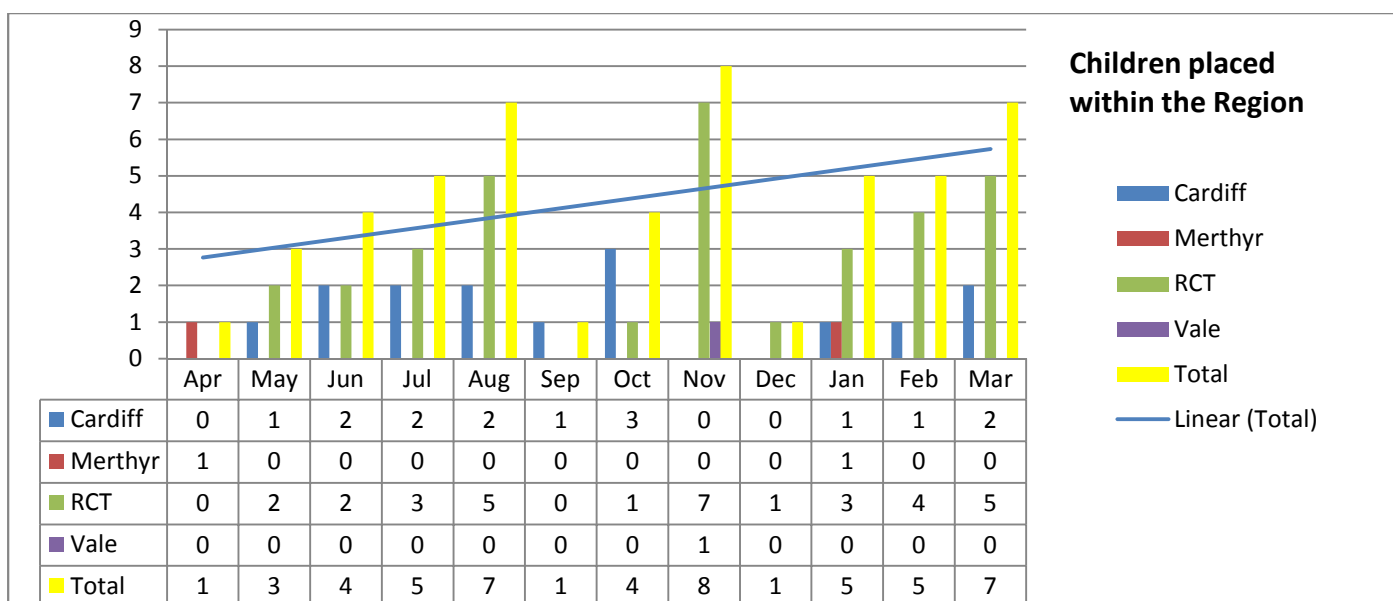
## APPENDIX A VVC Annual Report 2017-18

These figures demonstrate a slight decrease on the previous year. Unfortunately five couples withdrew during assessment and one post approval which has had an impact upon the region meeting its' goal.

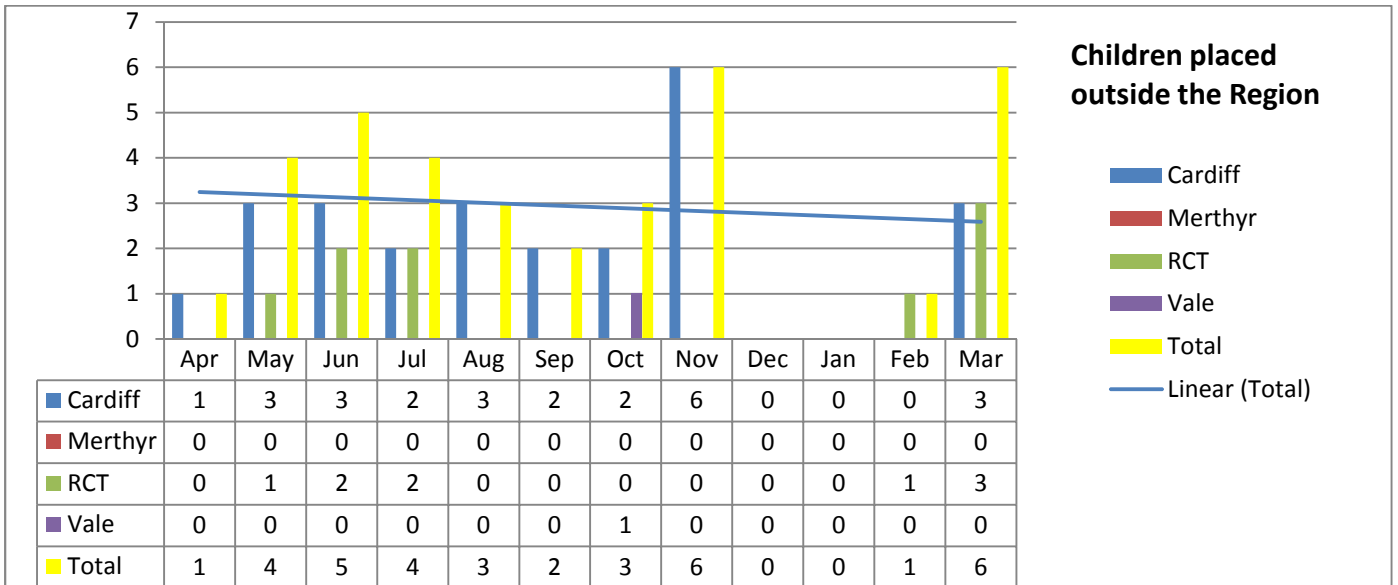


Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2016/17	16	16	9	6	47
2017/18	13	11	12	10	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>93</b>

### CHILDREN PLACED WITHIN REGION AND OUTSIDE REGION



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>51</b>



2017/18	Cardiff	Merthyr	RCT	VOG	Total
<b>Total</b>	25	0	9	1	<b>35</b>



Gwasanaeth  
**Mabwysiadu** | National  
Cenedlaethol | **Adoption**  
Service

**Achieving More Together /  
Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd**

# **Annual Report** **2017-2018**





# FOREWORD

---

We are pleased as the chairpersons of the National Adoption Service Advisory Group and Governance Board respectively to have the opportunity to provide this foreword.



*Phil Hodgson*

**Phil Hodgson**

Chair of the Advisory Group



*Geraint Hopkins*

**Cllr Geraint Hopkins**

Chair of Governance Board

The local government elections of 2017 provided NAS with a new chairperson for the Governance Board as well as new councillors to represent each of the five national adoption service regions. This, alongside the consistency in the Independent Chairperson and membership of the Advisory Group, has created an excellent and renewed partnership in the professional and political stewardship of Wales' National Adoption Service.

It is almost four years since the National Adoption Service was launched in November 2014 and since that time we have seen progress and improvement in meeting the needs of children, young people and adopters. This report shows what has been done to extend that during 2017/18 and reflects the hard work and contribution made by adopters, adopted children and young people, as well as professional staff across Wales.

We can see performance improving in many areas as well as important initiatives such as the new Life Journey Work Framework, the NAS Adoption Champions and the Adopting Together scheme which show much promise for the future continuation of this.

We were pleased during this year to be invited to write an article for 'Adoption & Fostering' the quarterly journal now published by the Coram Baaf Adoption and Fostering Academy. We extend our thanks to Dr Alyson Rees of Cardiff University for her support and challenge in co-writing that with Phil. This provided an important 'pause and reflect' opportunity to take stock of where we were. This was complemented in February of this year by an Advisory Group workshop where we began to think about where we want to be and in particular how we move to developing a contemporary and forward thinking adoption services for Wales.

This is not without its challenges, some of which are also outlined in the report, but we realise that in part our role is to challenge ourselves and those that deliver and resource adoption services in Wales, as well as the policy makers of government.

Adoption has lifelong implications for all those it touches; recognising this provides a new 'mindset' for services and different challenges in terms of how we attract prospective adopters, place children and provide adoption support in the future. It also provides challenges to the legal and policy context, resourcing and practice.

However, this is informing the work we have been doing and the plans for the future in terms of the need for dynamic and flexible recruitment and adoption support services. The need to change how we do this in Wales remains significant and will continue to be the focus of attention during the next twelve months.

# INTRODUCTION

The National Adoption Service for Wales is a collaboration for the provision of adoption services across Wales.

Since November 2014, it has brought together all local authority adoption services into five regional collaboratives, with co-ordination and leadership provided by a small central team and Director of Operations. Voluntary adoption agencies operating in Wales are important partners in the collaborative, as are other agencies such as health and education.

## CENTRAL TEAM



### National Adoption Service – Central Team

c/o City of Cardiff Council,  
Room 409 County Hall, Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff, CF10 4UW  
029 2087 3927  
contact@adoptcymru.com  
www.adoptcymru.com

## THE NORTH

Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy,  
Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham



### North Wales Adoption Service

3rd Floor, Lambpit Street,  
Wrexham, LL11 1AR  
01978 295311  
adoption@wrexham.gov.uk  
www.northwalesadoption.gov.uk

## MID & WEST WALES

Ceredigion, Powys, Carmarthenshire,  
Pembrokeshire



### Mid & West Wales Adoption

Building 1, St David's Park, Johnstown,  
Carmarthenshire, SA31 3HB  
01267 246970  
adoptionenquires@carmarthenshire.gov.uk  
www.adoptionmwwales.org.uk  
  
Neuadd Brycheiniog, Cambrian Way,  
Brecon, Powys, LD3 7HR  
01597 827666  
adoptionenquiries@carmarthenshire.gov.uk  
www.adoptionmwwales.org.uk

## WESTERN BAY

Swansea, Neath Port Talbot,  
Bridgend



### Western Bay Adoption Service

Port Talbot Civic Centre,  
Port Talbot CF131PJ  
0300 365 2222  
enquires@westernbayadoption.org  
www.westernbayadoption.org

## VALE, VALLEYS & CARDIFF

Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf,  
Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan



### Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Adoption

Level 7, Ty Pennant, Catherine Street,  
Pontypridd, CF37 2TB  
0800 0234 064  
adoption@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk  
www.adopt4vvc.org

## SOUTH EAST WALES

Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent,  
Torfaen, Caerphilly, Newport



### South East Wales Adoption Service

North Wing, 2nd Floor Block B,  
Mamhilad House, Mamhilad Parke Estate,  
Pontypool, Torfaen, NP40HZ  
01495 355766  
adoption@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk  
www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/3122.asp



**ALL WALES VOLUNTARY  
ADOPTION AGENCIES SERVICES**

**adoptionuk**

or gyfer pob teulu sy'n mabwysiadu  
for every adoptive family

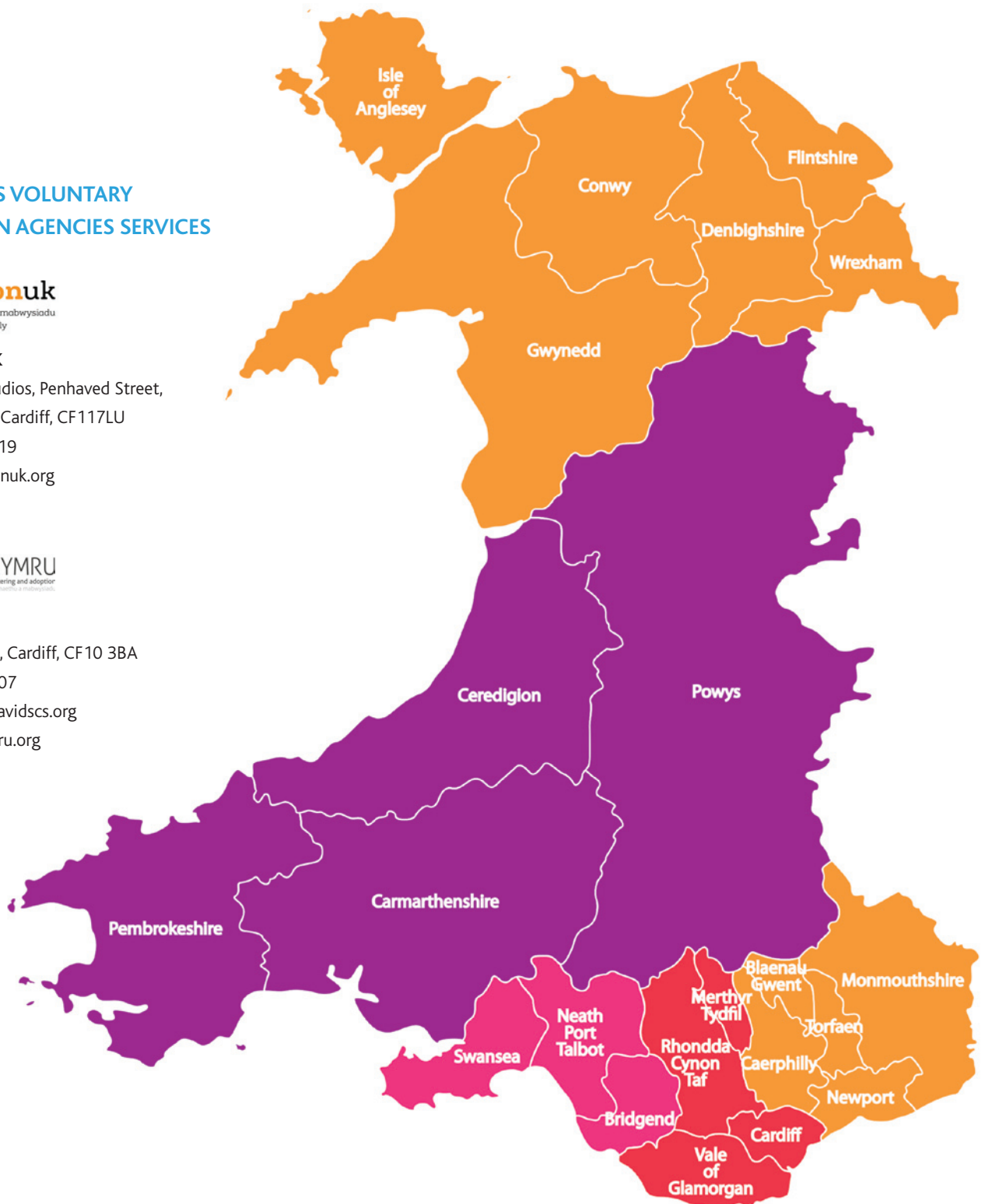
**Adoption UK**

Penhaved Studios, Penhaved Street,  
Grangetown, Cardiff, CF117LU  
029 2023 0319  
www.adoptionuk.org



**AFA Cymru**

28 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BA  
029 2066 7007  
Info-afa@stdavidscs.org  
www.afacymru.org



**After Adoption**

Penhaved Studios, Penhaved Street,  
Grangetown, Cardiff, CF117LU  
029 2066 6597  
information@afteradoption.org.uk  
www.afteradoption.org.uk



**Barnardo's Cymru**

Trident Court, East Moors Road,  
Cardiff, CF245TD  
0800 0546 788  
cymruadoptionandfosteringservice@  
barnardos.org.uk  
www.barnardos.org.uk/adoption



**St David's Children Society**

28 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BA  
029 2066 7007  
info@stdavidscs.org  
www.adoptionwales.org



For looked after children in Wales who cannot remain with their birth family, and for whom an adoptive home is the agreed plan, adoption services play an important role in securing a permanent family.

During the 2017/18 business year:

- more than 300 children were placed in their new adoptive home;
- approximately 300 children had their adoption orders granted<sup>1</sup>;
- a further 350 children, with the legal authority to be placed, were waiting to be matched or placed with their new family at the end of the year.

The service worked with about 16% of the children who were looked after in Wales last year, a similar figure to the year before. According to Welsh Government data, on average over the last eight years, 13% of all the children who ceased to be looked after were adopted.

The adoption agencies that make up the National Adoption Service for Wales provide a range of services to support these children and their families, as well as others affected by adoption. In addition to working with the children above, adoption services across Wales also:

- supported more than 500 children with adoption support services;
- facilitated more than 3,370 active letterbox contact arrangements;
- provided a service to more than 320 birth parents;
- received more than 200 requests for access to birth records and more than 150 for help in making contact with birth family;
- received more than 60 requests for support from birth siblings and other relatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> This data is collected by the Welsh Government and will be published later in 2018

## ADOPTION SUPPORT

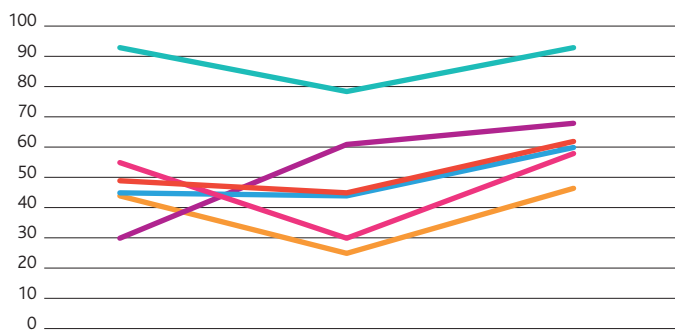
Since NAS was formed, we have made improvements to the adoption support services we provide, and we are currently implementing our Framework for Adoption Support.

This framework recognises that all adopted children and their parents may want or need support at some stage, and that this needs to be easily accessible and available within 'adoption informed' services. It also recognises that we should better equip adoptive families in the early days, as well as ensuring families get effective information, advice or support whenever they need it. These changes are part of recognising that adoption has 'lifelong implications' for children, their adoptive parents, and others affected by adoption – particularly birth parents and adopted people.

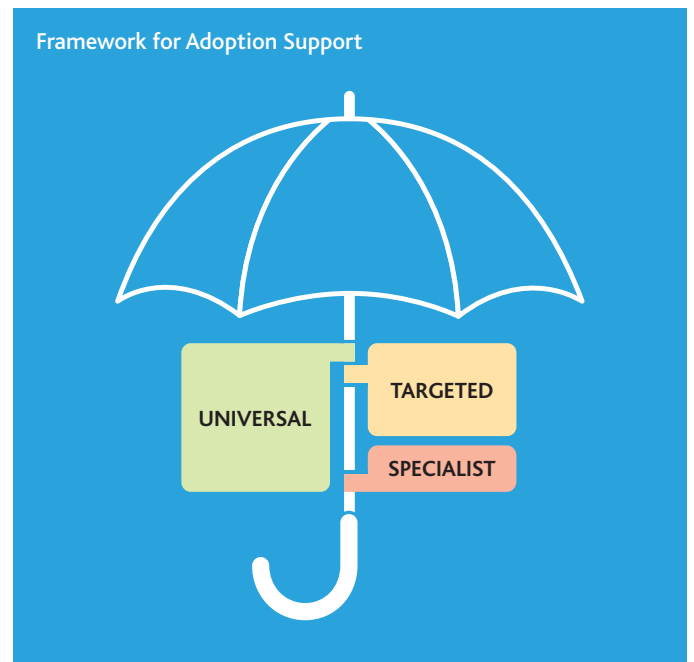
Out of the many positive changes being made, we are particularly pleased with the impact of our life journey work for children and families. 62% of children now have this in place by their second adoption review.

All of the regions have shown further improvement this year, with Mid and West Wales consistently performing well.

Percentage of children at second adoption review with Life Journey materials in place



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Mid & West Wales	92%	79%	92%
North Wales	44%	25%	46%
South East Wales	45%	43%	60%
Vale, Valleys & Cardiff	30%	61%	68%
Western Bay	55%	30%	58%
WALES	49%	45%	62%



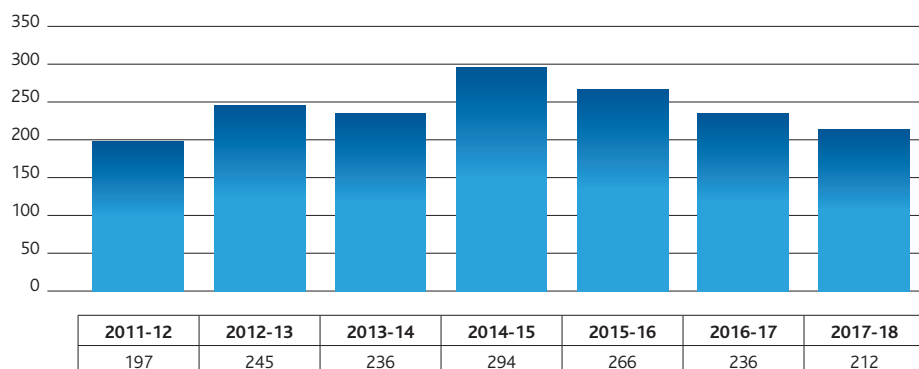
Once again this year nearly all the children placed had their need for adoption support services assessed, and 36% had ongoing services at the point of placement, a higher proportion than last year (25%).

There has been an increase in post adoption support being sought and provided. At 167, 32% more new requests for post adoption support were assessed during 2017/18, with a further 81 in progress at the end of the year. The vast majority of these assessments, more than 124 or 74%, resulted in a non-financial support service being provided mainly for therapeutic or practical support.

We have asked the Welsh Government to revise the legal framework for adoption support services. This would make adoption support plans become part of the child's Looked After Children plan, remaining active and reviewed under the new Social Services and Well-being Legislation until support is no longer needed. Families would still be able to come back for further support should they need it later on.

We believe this will help us improve the accessibility of services, alongside making changes that improve how adoptive families are supported from the start. Initiatives such as the new Life Journey Materials Framework, and the flexible post approval training package for adopters, should provide this. We also plan to consider how contact is supported in 2018/19.

### Measure 34: Number of prospective adopters approved



## PLACING CHILDREN

Section 2 of the report outlines the work we are doing to improve recruitment, meaning we can place all children in a timely way. We have been improving marketing and recruitment because we now understand our business needs in much more detail.

In 2017/18, 212 adopters were approved, fewer than in previous years, but 12% more new assessments (277) were commenced. The level of adopters approved has returned to pre-NAS levels; this may be the 'norm' for Wales, but this needs to change because recruitment activity at this level will not meet our needs.

Despite this, there are some positive things to report in terms of placing children:

- the children we place are, on average, being placed more quickly;
- 56% of children placed joined their new family within the Welsh Government guideline of 13 months from the time they became 'looked after' and 49% within the 6 months guideline from the time of the placement order;
- nearly one third of the placements we made were for children in sibling groups – similar to last year;
- the level of matches that do not proceed or breakdown before the adoption order remains very low at 1%;
- enquiries from adopters have increased by 20% this year; and
- the average time for an adopter to be approved has reduced again – on average 6 months from formal application to approval, 9.5 months from the adopters first enquiry.

We recognise that we need increase the level of assessments commenced and completed to reach a new level of adopter sufficiency, meaning we can reduce the number of children waiting and the time they wait. We believe in the short term that Wales needs to almost double the number of adopters it recruits.

## UNDERPINNING WORK

There are many other activities that the National Adoption Service is engaged in. In section 3, we report on the work we are doing to engage with adopters, adopted children and young people, and our co-produced development work with them. It also outlines the significant amount of work we are doing in legal and policy arrangements, which ensure that the context for adoption services works well for the people receiving services.

The rest of the report outlines how we did in meeting our priorities for 2017/18.

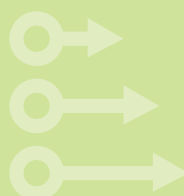


## The National Adoption Service vision for 2017/18 was to:

- Increase the range of adoptive homes available to meet the needs of children for whom adoption is the agreed plan
- Reduce the time all children wait for an adoptive placement, including children with additional needs, and ensure sibling groups are placed together
- Ensure prospective and approved adopters receive good quality, timely assessment and support
- Implement our Framework for Adoption Support to provide everyone affected by adoption with improved access to advice, information and certain services, as well as more targeted and specialist support for those who need ongoing support following assessment
- Achieve improvements in the performance of adoption services across Wales

## Key Improvement Priorities for 2017/18 were:

- Continuing to improve adoption support
- Placing children effectively
- Underpinning work – which included informing the legal and policy context, consulting with and using co-production to engage our service users, improving professional understanding and skills in permanence and adoption related work, and ensuring our Governance arrangements work well





PRIORITY

## Continuing to improve adoption support

### Progressing the Adoption Support Framework and Business Case

The National Adoption Services Framework for Adoption Support outlines our ambitions for the support and services that adopted children, adoptive parents and others affected by adoption can expect over time. It is the adoption support improvement plan for Wales, based on our engagement with the people who use services. Over time, we want these services to be easily accessible and widely available everywhere, meeting needs in a timely way.



#### Where are we at March 2018?

- The Framework has been developed and agreed by all partners and stakeholders.
- Most regions have developed their local arrangements to provide adoption support, including providing new or additional services and developing their staff to deliver specific therapeutic adoption support interventions.
- An Adoption Support Development Manager post has been created – funded by £50k Welsh Government (WG) investment which is secured to 31st March 2019.
- Engagement with adopters is ongoing via an embryonic 'Adopter Voice' scheme for Wales, and with children and young people via expansion of 'Talk Adoption'.
- Welsh Government/National Assembly agreed implementation of Section 8 and 9 of the English Children and Social Work Act in Wales.
- Adoption UK (AUK) launched 'The First 1000 Days' project in October 2017. Its aim is to provide a package of support to adoptive families during the first three years, starting when the child is placed. It offers free access to a helpline; local peer support, training workshops and courses; factsheets and resources on a wide range of adoption related issues. In the first 6 months, 53 families have formally registered to the project and a further 25 people have contacted the helpline about it. AUK have provided 10 workshops across Wales dealing with issues with Education, Sleep and Therapeutic services and more are planned to focus on health and development issues, and Life Journey Work.
- Local government is implementing a national policy on financial allowances in adoption; regions are working with their local authorities to implement this from 1st April 2018.
- We are implementing the new framework for **Life Journey Work** in adoption, which has been co-produced with children, young people and adopters. A new 'Toolkit' has been developed, which together with the Framework and Good Practice Guide, are on the [www.adoptcymru.com](http://www.adoptcymru.com) website. This work has been supported by AFA Cymru; all staff have received support and training from AFA Cymru and this is to continue. Recurring investment of £75k has been made available from the Welsh Government to create capacity for improvement and is available to regions to embed the changes going forward.
- We have continued to work with Welsh Government and Adoption UK to make education services more 'adoption aware'. Lots of adopters express concerns about the way their child's needs are understood in school settings; AUK provides awareness raising work for education professionals across Wales. This year, with funding from Welsh Government, 'Master Classes' have been held across Wales. Adoptive parents, teachers and adoption social workers have come together to hear about the latest theories in brain development and the impact of early trauma, as well as sharing strategies on supporting adopted children in school. A comprehensive bank of resources has been gathered and is available for teachers on the Hwb Education Intranet and from Adoption UK. This complements the two guides produced in previous years.

*A guide for teachers* <https://www.adoptionuk.org/nations/cymruwales#GettingItRight>

*A guide for parents* <https://www.adoptionuk.org/nations/cymruwales#GettingItRightParents>

- We have produced and made a **Legal Guide for Adopters** available. Developed by AFA Cymru for NAS it is available on [www.adoptcymru.com/publications](http://www.adoptcymru.com/publications) and on the AFA Cymru website.
- We have continued to work on improving access to CAMHS and other health services that support emotional well-being. A productive meeting was held between clinical leads for CAMHS services in Wales and managers from the National Adoption Service for Wales in May 2017. The current CAMHS development plans include a commitment to improve the offer to vulnerable children, of which looked after children (such as adopted children) are a key group. Initial links have been made in four of the five regions, although there is still room to improve what is available to families. NAS has been invited to join the re-formed Early Intervention and Resilience workstream of the 'Together for Children and Young People' programme, and in early 2018 gave evidence at the National Assembly for Wales CAMHS inquiry building on the written evidence that NAS submitted.

The business case estimates the cost of implementing the Adoption Support Framework to be in the region of £1.4m – not including individual targeted and specialist services, some of which would be provided by others e.g. health. On the next page are some other priorities in the business case that are being considered currently.



What	Update	Future needs
Improved access to consistent, 'adoption informed' specialist advice and information about adoptive parenting and being adopted – preferably provided by Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA) in a 'triage' type service – preventing statutory involvement for many.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NAS website developed to include Adoption Support pages</li> <li>• Adoption UK (AUK) membership for all new adopters – grant funded by Welsh Government (WG) to 31st March 2019</li> <li>• AUK and Association for Fostering &amp; Adoption (AFA) advice lines – grant funded by WG to 31st March 2019</li> <li>• NAS adopter database to be part of new WAR</li> <li>• Business case identifies triage service development costs as £50k minimum</li> </ul>	<p>Develop the triage concept and service offer including links with regions and, where appropriate, Local Authority (LA) and Information &amp; Advice (IAA) services</p> <p>Funding to be identified</p>
Update pre-approval training for adopters and develop a post approval/placement program for all adopters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post approval training for adopters developed (grant – one off)</li> <li>• Scoping of pre-approval training content included in above</li> <li>• Some regions have invested in staff and adopter training in specific therapeutic and behaviour management techniques</li> </ul>	<p>Funding for ongoing delivery to be identified</p> <p>Project to review and update pre-approval training to be scoped and funding identified</p> <p>Other opportunities to add to the range of options available to be explored</p>
Arrangements for adopters, children and young people to access new post adoption support assessments through the regional services as well as enhancing oversight of existing support plans for adopters/ children who live in each regional area,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four of five regional adoption services now offer post adoption assessments</li> <li>• The South East Wales regional collaborative has developed a service delivery model for this has been made available to all regions to consider implementing</li> </ul>	<p>Fifth region to develop its plan</p> <p>Scope what is needed for regional services to have improved oversight of adoption support plans and develop a plan</p>
Integrating adoption support plans into children's care and support plans (Part 6 plans) and keeping these plans and services live and active for as long as they need to be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires legislative change – advice including independent legal advice provided to Welsh Government. Formal requests for the changes to be made.</li> </ul>	<p>Continue to request and work with WG to achieve this</p>
Help other agencies/services become 'adoption aware'.	<p>NAS education plan mirrors and works with WG plan for the education of looked after children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health services</li> <li>• Other services</li> </ul>	<p>Priorities for 18/19 to be followed up including recent agreement by WG to track educational outcomes of adopted children</p> <p>Consider similar approach for other partner services</p>
Letterbox and Contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's commissioner annual report on siblings views on contact/separation</li> <li>• WG response includes working with NAS</li> <li>• Recognition of growing area of work</li> </ul>	<p>Share good practice and develop an improvement plan</p>





PRIORITY

# Placing Children Effectively

The key to being able to place children in a timely way is having sufficient adopters to meet the needs of children with an adoption plan.

We are placing children more quickly and having success in placing siblings groups and more complex children. Despite this however, the number of children waiting has begun to increase again and at 31st March 2018 there were 350 children in Wales subject to a placement order waiting to be matched. Although we know that at least 20% of these children had matches being considered, we also know that we need to recruit more adopters so that we reduce the number of children waiting overall and the time that any child waits.

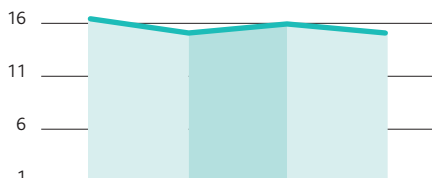


We have done a lot of work this year on our recruitment strategy, as well as developing better information and data to help us try to predict demand for placements. This is making good progress but we know that services will need to increase recruitment by a good margin to be able to place the children currently waiting, as well as the children likely to have placement orders made in 2018/19 and beyond.

## WHAT HAVE WE DONE

- All regions and VAAs now have marketing and recruitment plans in place, and in the second half of this year we started to develop recruitment goals based on the analysis of likely need
- Our Welsh Government development grant was used to support the regions in developing marketing plans, encouraging greater collaboration where there was opportunity for this. It also supported national and regional recruitment campaigns including by the VAA's
- Nationally, our social media presence continues to grow, and we have made improvements to the national website and how we use it following a review
- We ran a successful radio campaign at the end of the year that had a positive impact on enquiries
- We have worked with our 'Adoption Champions' to inform the content of our marketing and a number of champions have provided feature stories for this
- Our VAAs partners have worked together to develop a specialist recruitment project 'Adopting Together' for the children who wait longest
- We will continue to use web analysis and digital marketing to further improve our marketing nationally and regionally

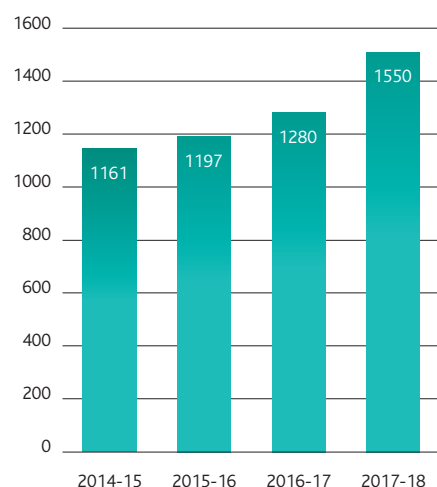
Average in months it has taken from the date of the most recently looked after to date of placement for adoption



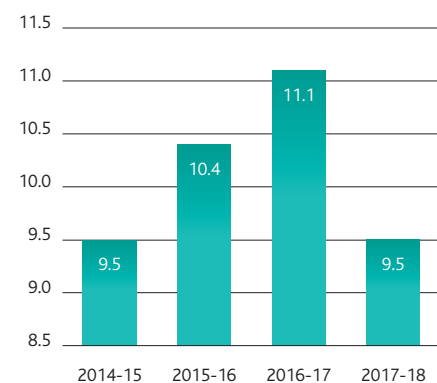
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
16.5	15.0	15.8	14.6

Benchmark: 13 months or less

## Number of Initial Enquiries



## Average time (months) for Adopters to progress from initial enquiry to agency decision to approve



Benchmark: 8 months or less

## CHALLENGES

There are many challenges facing us, not least ensuring marketing skills and resources are available across what is essentially a social work service, and using data to predict demand in an environment where many factors (e.g. numbers of placement orders made) are beyond the control of the service. Adopter sufficiency planning is new for NAS regions and agencies, and we are developing the data set alongside addressing the re-emerging gap.

Marketing is not something that all services have invested in to date and the central team is losing its part time marketing support at end of June.

The work we have done on marketing to date has however resulted in increased enquiries. These are responded to in a timely way, and there have also been improvements in the average timeframe for approval of adopters, as well as more assessments were commenced last year than in the previous.

We therefore have good foundations for the plans to address this nationally and regionally over the coming year, where we are aiming to maintain a good level of enquiries and begin to increase recruitment again.

Our plan is to commission expert marketing support, and monitor the implementation of marketing plans including improved use of analytics, better co-ordinating our digital and social media marketing, as well as working with our Adoption Champions to further develop our #SeeTheWholeChild campaign.



Alongside this we will see the roll out of Adopting Together, a collaborative project supported by the National Adoption Service, in partnership with the statutory sector and delivered by the Voluntary Adoption Agencies in Wales. The project has emerged from a common and clearly defined purpose of securing permanence for children who wait longest for a family; it has been developed during 2017/18.

Led by St David's Children Society, Adopting Together brings together theoretical knowledge and best practice models that have been developed across the UK into one distinct model with four interlinking components for Wales:

- effective transitions using structured therapeutic play;
- an early interventions approach that supports the main carer – child relationship;
- Team for Child meetings pre-matching which brings together information from those who know the child best;
- specific recruitment, assessment and training of adopters by St. David's Children Society and Barnardo's, including child specific recruitment in partnership with Local Authority and Regional family finding teams.

## EXCHANGE AND ACTIVITY DAYS

The Wales Adoption Register continues to work creatively in finding adoptive families for children who are waiting. In 2017/18, we have held an Adoption Activity Day (AAD) and Exchange Days in South and North Wales respectively.

Adoption Activity Days are an opportunity for prospective adopters to meet a range of children waiting to be adopted. In that sense, AADs are child and adopter-led, and enable them to be active participants in family-finding. Unlike more traditional family-finding mechanisms, AADs give children and adopters the chance to emotionally connect and respond directly to each other through fun and enjoyable activities in a safe and supportive setting. Most importantly this is an opportunity for children to be seen as children first.

- Our first AAD in March 2017 was an overwhelming success with very positive feedback from the adopters, social workers, children and foster carers who attended. 6 children were matched with families as a result – 1 in 4 children who attended. One little boy who has since been placed said he feels he chose his family on the day, and it is very much part of his life journey story!
- Our second AAD in March 2018 was an even greater success and matched 40% of children who attended – 14 children out of the 35 and we expect at least 4 further matches. The majority of these placements are for children who have been on the Wales Adoption Register for more than 6 months and include 5 sibling groups.
- We held an Exchange Day in September 2017 in North Wales. 10 children were matched through this event including a sibling group of 3.

In feedback to the Register, most adopters express the importance of adopter-led opportunities and how much they learn about the children waiting by attending such events. Many expressed an interest, and have subsequently been matched with children they would not otherwise have considered or been linked with, including older children and large sibling groups.

These events, along with practitioner meetings and VAA meetings to the Register, make up the majority of the matches made by the Register in 2017/18 (28 out of 38). The matches from the AAD in March 2018 will be accounted for in 2018/19 once they have been progressed.

## MATCHING AND PLACING CHILDREN

We are doing other work to improve the arrangements for placing children.

- We know that adopters really value the input of Medical Advisors before their child is placed with them. However, Medical Advisors were aware of poor notification pathways when children are placed for adoption with their adoptive families and when adoption orders are granted. They undertook a review to gain a better understanding of improvements that could be made. There were different issues across Wales that are being considered through the regional management boards.
- We have been working with the Welsh Government to upgrade the database that supports the Wales Adoption Register and facilitate an adopter database. This had been delayed but in February a decision was made to proceed. Cardiff Council, as the host authority for the NAS central team, will be procuring the new database. It is anticipated the register will go live during 2018, a project plan is in place and a Steering Group established to inform and implement the changes in practice required.



# UNDERPINNING WORK

---

## DEVELOPING OUR PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The National Adoption Service Performance Management Framework (PMF) is detailed, but it now provides essential context and understanding to the delivery of adoption services across Wales. The work we have done on data to support the recruitment strategy this year exemplifies the value of this and we are beginning to develop additional data and intelligence to meet our needs.

NAS is continuously working to improve systems for data collection and verification on a regional and national basis. To this end we completed a review of the PMF this year, including an examination of any inconsistencies in the quality of data, with an eye to the future. We had hoped that Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) would be sufficiently implemented as a potential replacement and have been working with WCCIS to develop the relevant modules, but realistically this is looking unlikely. Our review identified that reliance on local authorities for accurate and timely data was a factor, as was the quality of regional data systems and infrastructure; ownership of performance culture is still not universally embedded across NAS.

Practice Solutions were commissioned to provide an initial assessment of the National Adoption Services' use, processing, storage and dissemination of information. We want to use the opportunity of renewing our system to improve and consolidate our knowledge management, increasing analytical capability in the short term and inform the longer-term position. We also want to integrate the data capabilities of the new Wales Adoption Register so we reduce duplication and unnecessary burden.





## CONTINUING TO USE CO-PRODUCTION TO ENGAGE USERS AND INTEGRATING SERVICE USER VIEWS INTO OUR GOVERNANCE

We have continued to use co-production to engage with adopters, adopted children and young people. Events have been held across Wales by regions and VAA's through support groups and focus groups, as well as for National Adoption Week last October.

During National Adoption Week 2017, a family event was held in Techniquet, which the former Cabinet Secretary the late Carl Sargeant attended.

This was a fun event for the families that came from every part of Wales and also launched the **National Adoption Service Adopter Champion initiative**.

We appealed to current adopters across Wales to become champions of adoption and have received an excellent response.

NAS believes that the story of adoption is best told by the people who have experienced it and whose reality it is. People who may not have thought about adoption, or may be considering it but feeling unsure, should hear these stories to feel that, with support, they could complete their family too.

The Adoption Champions have an important role in promoting a positive and realistic view of adoption by sharing how it positively changes their lives, the difference it made to the lives of children they adopted, and encouraging and empowering others to consider adoption with an open mind.

The initiative was launched during National Adoption Week 2017, and we look forward to developing it further by involving the Champions in future campaigns and linking them with regional services so that they can support local groups and activities.

During 2017/18, we also began to embed more structured and systematic ongoing ways of engaging with adopters, children and young people, as well as continuing to co-produce projects such as the development of the Life Journey Work framework.

'**Adopter Voice**' is an initiative developed by Adoption UK in Wales and supported by NAS. It mirrors a similar English scheme and began in Wales in the second half of 2017/18, continuing this year. Information was gathered across Wales by Adoption UK via attendance at support group meetings and a short online survey. 8 support groups, at least 1 in each region, were visited, where a set of standard questions were used to create a discussion about the strengths and challenges in the adoption system in Wales currently. Generally there was a feeling that the recruitment and assessment stages of the adoption journey are mainly effective, but the post adoption order experience is more variable. Adoption support, including specialist services, was highlighted as the main area of concern, alongside the need for improvements in communication about the support available locally.

'**Talk Adoption**' is a national (UK-wide) support service for adopted children and young people run by After Adoption. It encourages adopted children and young people to build relationships and learn new skills, boosting their confidence.

Talk Adoption Wales provides monthly groups for children and young people aged 7-10 years old and 11-25 years old. The service currently runs 2 groups (1 for each age group) in Cardiff and Swansea, and bi-annual family days for all family members. The groups offer a safe and supportive space to meet, have fun and explore issues which are important to adopted children and young people. The groups are very much led by the children and young people, their ideas, their thoughts, their voice.

Talk Adoption Wales promotes the voice of adopted children and young people by encouraging group members to attend/speak at adoption events, such as those run by National Adoption Service in Wales, Local Authority adoption teams and other adoption agencies.



Indeed, in Wales, young people from Talk Adoption spoke at the launch of the National Adoption Service at the Senedd in November 2014 and at the same time produced a DVD to highlight some of the issues important to them. This provides an important opportunity for adopted people to have their voices heard by the wider community, by professionals involved in adoption, their peers, and others e.g. teachers, politicians and senior officers. It is open to all who wish to take part, but is not part of the monthly sessions.

Maintaining the link with Talk Adoption Wales has been a priority for NAS and a core element of the NAS plan for engaging with those who use adoption services.

The **support groups** to children and young people in Cardiff and Swansea have continued, with both groups being oversubscribed. Exploratory discussions about the expansion of the service in Wales, including a group in North Wales, have been ongoing but hampered by lack of resources. After Adoption has been considering re-shaping its service in Wales to focus on support groups to children and young people.

Talk Adoption have been engaged in the **Life Journey Work** project, sessions to develop a training DVD as well as a sample 'Life Journey' book outlining what they think it needs to contain and how this work should be undertaken.

A **draft newsletter** has been also developed. The groups discussed further possible webpage/App content (for Talk Adoption and The National Adoption Service), which would have the same type of content as the newsletter, but with additional video interviews, audio interviews, links to other websites, and links to relevant social media platforms.

## INFORMING THE LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT, ADVOCATING CHANGE WHERE NECESSARY

NAS has continued to advocate for improved services on behalf of those using adoption services to the Welsh Government, National Assembly for Wales and others.

NAS is a member of the Improving Outcomes for Children Ministerial Advisory Group, where the improvements in adoption support are being monitored as part of a wider work stream on Permanency Planning and Building Stable Placements. During this year, NAS has kept the group updated on the development and implementation of the Framework for Adoption Support, and delivered a presentation on the improvement programme 'Life Journey Materials' for children who are or will be adopted.

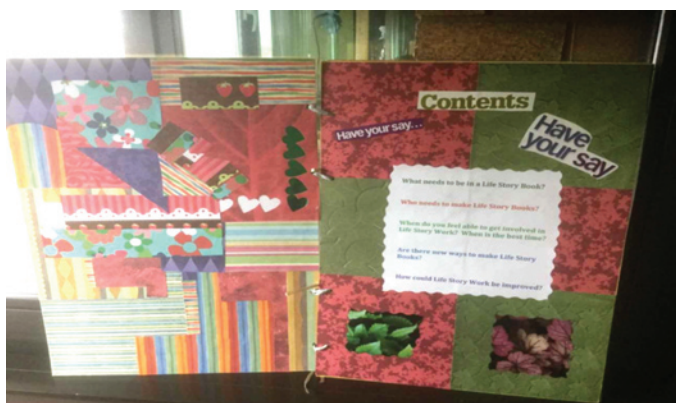
NAS provided written evidence to the National Assembly for Wales inquiry into the Emotional and Mental Health of Children and Young People, and subsequently the Director gave evidence in person with colleagues from the All Wales Heads of Children's Services group and the Welsh Local Government Association. The subsequent report 'Mind over Matter' has recently been published and makes specific reference to issues and recommendations for the future of services to support the emotional wellbeing of adopted children.

NAS also collaborated with the All Wales Heads of Children's Services group and the Welsh Local Government Association to provide written evidence to the National Assembly for Wales Public Accounts Committee inquiry, which looks at public services for care experienced children and young people. The Independent Chair of the NAS Advisory group also wrote to the committee chair.

NAS meets twice a year with the relevant Welsh Minister for Children to discuss the NAS Annual and Mid Year reports.

NAS has been engaged with the Welsh Government review of the adoption regulations prompted by the implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Act 2017. Alongside this, NAS has made a formal request to the Welsh Government to make changes to the regulations for the assessment of adopters, and for the provision of adoption support services. These changes are being requested to facilitate the improvements that NAS wishes to see implemented.

NAS has also engaged with the Welsh Government's development of new arrangements for Additional Learning Needs by attending workshops and meeting with officials.



NAS has worked with the Care Inspectorate Wales in their development of a revised methodology for adoption services in Wales. One of the regions, Western Bay, was inspected as a pilot, alongside an inspection of the national functions between January and March 2017. Early feedback for both is positive and the publication of both reports is awaited. The remainder of the regions will be inspected during 2018/20 with the VAA's towards the end of the programme.

### ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED PROFESSIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS IN PERMANENCE AND ADOPTION RELATED TASKS ACROSS THE WORKFORCE

A number of our initiatives are impacting on the workforce within regional services and local authorities. Examples of this include our marketing and recruitment work, the new life journey materials for children who are or will be adopted, and training in specific therapeutic techniques, which are available to staff and adopters within regions.

Our Welsh Government grant aid has enabled NAS to contract with AFA Cymru and Adoption UK, allowing us to develop post approval training modules for adopters based on feedback. We aim to make these available during 2018/19 in a variety of ways to suit different learning styles.

Intelligence nationally and regionally, backed up by research, consistently indicates that support in the first year of placement and beyond is particularly needed. Our vision is that adopters will have access to more detailed and specific training/development at any stage after the child is placed or formally adopted. This forms a key part of the Framework for Adoption Support that we have developed, and is in recognition that adoption has lifelong implications for all involved.



### ENSURING OUR GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS WORK WELL

NAS has been in existence for three years and a review has been commissioned, using Institute of Public Care, to ensure the governance, management and operational arrangements of NAS are 'fit for purpose', enabling successful delivery of its stated role and purpose. The review commenced in the final quarter of 2017/18 and will be completed during 2018/19.

Reviews of the collaborative arrangements for North Wales and the Vale, Valleys & Cardiff also took place during 2017/18.

## YOUR FEEDBACK

Regional adoption services record compliments and complaints received at the service. There may be some under-reporting of both, particularly where these are received and dealt with by individual local authorities.

Across Wales during 2017/18, there were 14 complaints and 17 compliments specifically recorded. There are no national themes arising from these complaints or compliments; two regions have noted receipt of more than one complaint about a similar element of service and have taken appropriate action.



# FINANCE

The local government elements of the National Adoption Service are funded in the same way as all other local authority services in Wales.

The central team receives an allocation from the rate support grant which was £311,000 for 2017/18 and is used for the small team, governance and development/improvement. The Wales Adoption Register, managed by the central team, is funded by grant aid from the Welsh Government.

The Voluntary Adoption Agencies are independent charities but also receive funding from the Welsh Government Third Sector grant. This funding provides a little over £300,000 additional funding for adoption services.

## Welsh Government Adoption Support Development Grant and Additional Resources

Welsh Government provided a development grant of £90,000 and recurring additional annual resources of £125,000 available up to 31st March 2019, against a business case focused on the continuing implementation of the 'Adoption Support Framework' and supporting recruitment.

Adoption Support	Life Journey materials framework	Adopter Training	Recruitment
<p>Recruitment to Adoption Support Development Manager post including capital costs of post creation</p> <p>Continued support to the development of the Adoption Support Framework.</p>	<p>Continued development and implementation of the Life Story Toolkit and Good Practice Guide</p> <p>Allocation to each region for cost of additional capacity for this work to be undertaken with children placed for adoption</p> <p>Development of members section on <a href="http://www.adoptcymru.com">www.adoptcymru.com</a></p> <p>Development of additional toolkits for other stakeholders</p> <p>Co-production with adopters and adopted children and young people</p>	<p>Post approval training modules developed</p> <p>Project expanded to include a review of the current pre-approval package</p>	<p>A national radio campaign ran for one month</p> <p>National and regional expert public relations and media services including development of marketing plans and recruitment campaigns</p> <p>Review of <a href="http://www.adoptcymru.com">www.adoptcymru.com</a> website</p> <p>Family day and promotional activity during National Adoption Week</p>

# PRIORITIES FOR 2018/19



## PLACING CHILDREN EFFECTIVELY

This will include:

- Keeping recruitment focused on the needs of children likely to be adopted
- Implementing the new Wales Adoption Register and adopter database

## CONTINUING TO IMPROVE ADOPTION SUPPORT

This will include:

- Agreeing the next priorities and identifying funding
- Continuing things that are already helping e.g. improving life journey work, improving 'adoption awareness' in schools, trying to change the law for adoption support, improving training and development for adopters, consistent approaches across Wales



## FUNDAMENTAL TO ACHIEVING THESE WILL BE THINKING AHEAD

- Continuing co-production and engagement with those who use adoption services
- Thinking ahead about the sort of adoption service we want for the future
- Working to improve the legal, policy & evidence framework that affects adoption
- Encouraging the development of improved professional understanding and skills

**The National Adoption Service was created to improve services for all those affected by adoption in Wales.**

The National Adoption Service (NAS) for Wales, launched in November 2014, is an innovative collaborative for the provision of adoption services. It brought together Welsh local authority adoption services into a three-tier structure which includes partnerships at all levels with Voluntary Adoption Agencies based in Wales, Health and Education Services, as well as others.

At local authority level, all 22 Welsh councils continue to provide services to all looked after children whilst identifying and working with those children for whom a plan for adoption is appropriate.

Regionally, local authorities work together within five regional collaboratives to provide a range of adoption services. Each regional collaborative has links with the voluntary adoption agencies, health and education. The services provided differ in each collaborative but all provide the adoption agency functions for children, recruit and assess adopters, offer counselling to birth parents and advice to adopted adults. Some currently directly provide adoption support services, whereas in others this remains with their local authorities.



National Adoption Service Central Team  
c/o City of Cardiff Council  
Room 409 County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff CF10 4UW

T: 029 2087 3927

E: [contact@adoptcymru.com](mailto:contact@adoptcymru.com)

[www.adoptcymru.com](http://www.adoptcymru.com)

This page is intentionally left blank

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**24<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2019**

#### **THE INTRODUCTION OF FIXED PENALTY NOTICES TO DEAL WITH SMALL SCALE FLY-TIPPING**

#### **REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETCARE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR A. CRIMMINGS CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND HERITAGE**

**Author:** Nigel Wheeler Director of Highways and Streetcare

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider new legislative powers through the Amendment of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and The Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) (Wales) Regulations 2017, introducing and setting of the level of the fixed penalty for small-scale fly-tipping to £400 with no early payment discount option.
- 1.2 To consider the range of measures to improve the approach to address fly-tipping. The report outlines the opportunities of dealing with issues associated with fly-tipping through adopting new technologies and legislative powers.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Set the amount of the small-scale fly-tipping FPN at £400 with no early payment scheme. This ability to issue a fixed penalty notice is an amendment under Section 33z(b) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

#### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Government has made provision to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to include a fixed penalty notice as a means of disposal of a fly tipping offence instead of taking the matter to court. The amendment focuses on small scale fly tipping of up to 4 black bags. Commercial and hazardous waste would not be afforded this option and

would be taken to prosecution. The measures have been taken to avoid small scale fly tippers from attending court.

- 3.2 The advantage of utilising this disposal of offence is to avoid costly legal processes.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of waste on to land. It can pollute the environment, be harmful to human health and spoils our enjoyment of our towns and countryside.
- 4.2 To tackle fly-tipping across the county, Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for small-scale fly-tipping offences can be issued by an authorised officer to those who commit this offence. This new measure will enable the authority to provide a more proportionate response to low-level, high-volume offences and act as a deterrent to offenders.
- 4.3 The FPN fines for small-scale fly-tipping can range between £150 and £400. If no amount is specified by the waste collection authority, the amount of the fixed penalty is £200. Provision can be made by the waste collection authority for a discount for early payment of a fixed penalty.

#### **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Equality and Diversity Assessment has not been carried out in connection with the recommendation set out in this report as the contents and actions do not require a policy or service change, resulting in no reasonably foreseeable differential impacts.

#### **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 No requirement for consultation to be undertaken

#### **7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 7.1 Currently action through the courts results in fines and costs being awarded. Any fines issued are sent to HM Treasury and costs awarded are given back to the local authority.
- 7.2 In the event of small scale fly tipping and a fixed penalty being issued, the revenue is given back to the local authority.

- 7.3 Any failure to pay the fixed penalty ticket will result in court proceedings and the outcome is as described above.
- 7.4 If Cabinet agree to the introduction of fixed penalties for small-scale fly-tipping as proposed, the number of fines and financial impact will be monitored by the Service and budget adjustments will be made if appropriate.

## **8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 Enforcement Officers have existing powers and authorised under S33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- 8.2 This amendment under section 33z(b) enables the officers to issue fixed penalty tickets for the offence of fly tipping

## **9 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

- 9.1 The delivery of this strategy will contribute to the Council's corporate priorities:
- Economy –building a strong economy
  - People – promoting independence
  - Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work
- 9.2 The proposal is made in full consideration of the sustainable development principles. The proposal also will support the Council to contribute to four of the seven well being goals namely:-
- A globally responsible Wales
  - A Wales of Cohesive communities
  - A more equal Wales
  - A healthier Wales

## **10 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 The list below is from Natural Resources Wales and provides guidance on what constitutes small scale fly tipping and will help LA's achieve a consistent approach to issuing fly-tipping FPN's in Wales. There will be individual circumstances that will need to be considered on occasion but this list should be followed where possible.
- First time non-habitual offenders only
  - Non-hazardous waste only

- Up to 4 black bags
- One or two bulky items (e.g. furniture, white goods)

### **Fly-tipping and Litter**

It should be counted as fly tipping if the waste is “too large to be removed by a normal hand-sweeping barrow”. In simple terms, a single full bin bag upwards would constitute a fly-tip. Similarly, several carrier bags full of rubbish dumped together would also constitute a single fly-tip.



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**24.01.19**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETCARE IN  
DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR A. CRIMMINGS CABINET MEMBER FOR  
ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND HERITAGE**

**Item: THE INTRODUCTION OF FIXED PENALTY NOTICES TO DEAL WITH  
SMALL SCALE FLY-TIPPING**

**Background Papers**

None

Officer to contact:

This page is intentionally left blank

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019

#### PORTH TOWN CENTRE: DRAFT STRATEGY

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION, PLANNING AND HOUSING IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING, COUNCILLOR BEVAN

**Author:** Derek James, Head of Regeneration and Prosperity

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out the results of the public consultation exercise carried out on the draft Porth Town Centre Strategy; and the focussed service user consultation on the specific proposals to relocate the services currently provided by Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub at Porth Plaza.
- 1.2 In addition, this report seeks Cabinet to approve the Porth Town Centre Strategy and the further development and delivery of schemes as set out within the document.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Considers the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the Porth Town Centre Strategy and determines whether any amendments are required to the proposals.
- 2.2 Considers the responses to the focussed service user consultation on the specific proposals to relocate the activities currently provided at Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub at Porth Plaza and determines whether any amendments are required to the proposals.
- 2.3 Subject to 2.2, and in response to the feedback received through the consultation as set out in paragraph 7.4 and 7.8 of the report, authorise the Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services to undertake a further engagement exercise with the service users of Alec Jones Day Centre to identify and put in place the necessary arrangements for alternative hot meal provision.

- 2.4 Subject to 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 above, approve the Porth Town Centre Strategy (subject to any changes as result of the engagement process outlined above) and the further development and delivery of schemes as set out within the document.

### **3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To continue to deliver on the Council's commitment to support the regeneration of town centres and encourage private sector investment in the high street economy, as set out in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan "*The Way Ahead*".
- 3.2 To deliver this commitment and to tackle the many challenges currently faced by our town centres, the solution requires an integrated, co-ordinated and holistic approach to town centre regeneration that harnesses the many exciting opportunities currently presented through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.

### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Enabling vibrant and enticing town centres, with a strong offer, which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities is a clear commitment within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan "*The Way Ahead*". The plan also makes a commitment that they will benefit from investment to ensure an attractive environment exists for businesses, residents and shoppers.
- 4.2 To deliver this commitment and to tackle the many challenges currently faced by our town centres, the solution requires a sophisticated and sustainable approach to regeneration.
- 4.3 As such, the Porth Town Centre strategy sets out an integrated, co-ordinated and holistic approach to town centre regeneration that takes into account the distinctive role Porth has at the heart of the community and its important location for services, employment, housing and transport functions.
- 4.4 On the 16<sup>th</sup> October, Cabinet agreed to initiate a public consultation exercise on the draft Porth Town Centre Strategy and receive a further report detailing the results from the consultation exercise.

### **5.0 PORTH TOWN CENTRE: PROPOSED STRATEGY (SUMMARY)**

- 5.1 The proposed vision for Porth Town Centre is:

*'To transform Porth Town Centre into a prosperous and attractive town, which offers a wide range of opportunities for visitors, residents and*

*businesses; anchored by Porth Transport Hub and a much regenerated Station Quarter’.*

- 5.2 To achieve this vision, the strategy is supported by a series of strategic objectives that will drive its delivery and translate directly into a series of projects and actions:
1. To improve connectivity with the town centre and surrounding areas through the development of a Transport Hub.
  2. To create the conditions for the town to become a thriving Station Quarter.
  3. To improve the key gateways into the town.
  4. To support the development of housing.
  5. To provide the conditions to strengthen employment opportunities.

### **Making it Happen – the Key Schemes**

- 5.3 Achieving the vision and objectives for the town cannot be achieved with one simple scheme. Instead, it demands the implementation of a wide range of co-ordinated and integrated **physical** development projects. The draft Porth Town Centre Strategy takes each of these strategic objectives and sets out a wide range of projects and investment opportunities in more detail. This includes:

**The development of a modern quality Transport Hub and Station Quarter that efficiently links commercial development with residential areas.**

- 5.4 The delivery of this project will result in transformational change for Porth by improving the connectivity within the town centre and surrounding areas. This has the potential to attract more people to the town to work, live, visit and invest therefore improving the footfall and the ability of the town to attract investment by creating jobs and homes. The potential also exists to create a modern well-designed arrival point that welcomes visitors, business people and residents, providing a high quality experience.
- 5.5 The strategy has identified the site currently occupied by the Alec Jones Day Centre as having the potential to accommodate a new Transport Hub. This site is ideally positioned for a Transport Hub; housing a bus interchange, taxi rank, cycle racks and linking to the train station and the park & ride. The site covers approximately 1,700 sq m allowing for the delivery of a new fit for purpose bus station, which will act as a catalyst for a much-regenerated *Station Quarter* with a mix of commercial, retail, office and residential developments.

(Appendix 1 within the strategy document includes a map outlining the proposed area for the transport hub and station quarter).

- 5.6 The development of a Transport Hub at this site would provide an integrated and improved interchange that aligns both the bus and train stations that will allow them to cope with future, increased passenger numbers and increased services, whilst offering easy access to the whole public transport network. Opportunities to encourage active travel through improved pedestrian and cycle routes and the creation of cycle docking facilities will also be a key feature of the Transport Hub development.
- 5.7 This project will also seek to work with Transport for Wales to develop an integrated ticketing system that offers local residents and visitor's simplicity, convenience and value for money across the bus and rail services serving the metro. This would address the current issue of passengers using a connecting bus service to Porth train station and currently have to pay separately for their bus and train journeys.

#### **The development of Porth Plaza into the Community Hub for Rhondda South.**

- 5.8 The opportunity exists for Porth Plaza to be developed as a Community Hub to provide a range of Council services from the same location. This will provide direct access to many of the services residents need on a daily basis as well as providing opportunities to receive business support, employment support and information, advice and assistance on a range of issues that affect people's quality of life and well-being.
- 5.9 Community hubs provide a focal point and facilities to foster greater local community activity and bring residents, the local business community, and smaller organisations together to improve the quality of life in their areas. This development, located in the heart of the town centre, would bring more residents into the town; improving footfall levels and potential spend at local businesses.
- 5.10 In developing Porth Plaza into a Community Hub, it was proposed to re-locate the services currently provided by Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub. The current Day Centre is currently underutilised with an average of 27 meals served per day. The co-location of services within Porth Plaza will enable the Council to provide residents and community groups with access to rooms to meet and socialise.
- 5.11 Bringing the current Day Centre services together with other services will provide a better offer and create economies of scale in terms of staffing and building costs. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new or retrofitted, fit for

purpose buildings will enable services to be sustainable in the longer term.

**The provision of additional long and short term parking to accommodate the future regenerated Porth Town centre.**

- 5.12 Improving the car parking offer throughout the town will improve the quality of infrastructure needed to support town centre investment and also allow visitors and shoppers to enjoy improved access to the town whilst creating a more positive experience.

**Extending the current Park and Ride provision within the town centre.**

- 5.13 The development of a **Phase 2 park and ride** facility is currently in the early stages of development and will be progressed during 2018 with completion expected in 2019. The facility aims to provide a further 72 (circa) parking spaces, taking the overall park and ride offer in the town to almost 150 parking spaces.

**The redevelopment of existing underused, disused and derelict buildings throughout the town to create housing, office and retail accommodation.**

- 5.14 A number of properties close to the train station and at key locations throughout the town centre have the potential for mixed-use development, with commercial and retail opportunities on the ground floors and the reuse of vacant floor space at upper levels, suitable for residential use. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the town.

**Explore opportunities to relocate Council Staff into Porth Town Centre.**

- 5.15 As part of the Council's proposal to transform Adult Social Care, Bronwydd House, which currently houses over 200 Council employees, has been identified as a site for extra care housing developments. As such, the first phase of this project will be to explore opportunities to relocate these staff to underused or vacant office space/premises within Porth Town Centre. This will generate footfall into the town that has the potential to enhance the town centre economically.

**Public realm improvements.**

- 5.16 The enhancement of the town centre streets and spaces as part of the Station Quarter and Transport Hub developments will raise the quality,

value and confidence in the town. This will create a far more attractive environment for shoppers and visitors to the town, and enhance the town's distinctiveness.

#### **The introduction of the Town Centre Maintenance Grant.**

- 5.17 The Town Centre Maintenance Grant will provide financial support to town centre traders / landlords (including vacant properties) to undertake minor improvements and maintenance works which will improve the external front elevation of town centre properties. The scheme will contribute to a positive impact on the street scene, creating a more attractive and vibrant environment which has the potential to increase retail spend and stimulate further private sector investment.

#### **The redevelopment of the former Porth Junior school site for residential use.**

- 5.18 The development of new residential units within Porth will help diversify the existing housing stock, promote housing in sustainable locations that are well served by public transport; and increase the footfall into the town centre.

#### **Developing extra care housing for the elderly and vulnerable.**

- 5.19 The economic value of this development will be beneficial to the town as older people will be able to live within and be part of thriving local communities, including the town centre, and increase regular daily footfall to benefit the mix of local independent traders and national retail chains.

### **6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 An equality Impact Assessment form (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time.
- 6.2 In relation to the specific proposals to relocate the services currently provided by Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub at Porth Plaza a full equality impact assessment has been undertaken. This was undertaken given the proposal will affect persons with a protected characteristic, particularly age and disability. The full equality impact assessment is presented at Appendix 2 and shows that although there are areas of concern it is possible to take steps to mitigate any adverse impact, for example:
- Whilst the current Day Centre activities can be successfully transferred to the Community Hub, the reconfigured building may not



be suitable to offer the hot meals that are currently provided from the Day Centre. Therefore, it is proposed that, subject to members decision, to mitigate the impact on service users the Council will explore alternative provision within the town centre where service user can be signposted to other local cafes/providers. Ongoing community engagement will be central to the development and future of the Porth Plaza Community Hub.

- By exploring the potential of allocating additional disabled parking bays at Porth Plaza car park to meet the potential increase in demand if the Day Centre activities are transferred to Porth Plaza community hub.

## **7.0. CONSULTATION**

7.1 As previously mentioned, on the 16<sup>th</sup> October, Cabinet agreed to initiate a public consultation exercise on the draft Porth Town Centre Strategy over a 6 week period. It was also agreed that this would include a focused service user consultation on the specific proposals to relocate the services currently provided by Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub at Porth Plaza.

7.2 The following paragraphs present the findings of the consultation on the proposed strategy for the regeneration of Porth Town Centre:

### **Porth Town Centre Strategy Consultation**

7.3 The 6 week consultation period ran from the 29th October until 10th December 2018. The consultation used a range of methods including a questionnaire, two public face to face engagement events held at Porth Plaza and Morrisons and a number of smaller engagement events held at community and leisure centres. In addition to this, officers attended an Older Persons Wellbeing event at Ystrad Sport Centre to raise awareness with over 70 people in attendance.

7.4 The response to the consultation exercise are presented at Appendix 3 and can be summarised as follows:

- In total, 139 people attended the face to face events and there were 72 responses to the questionnaire.
- 80% of respondents to the questionnaire felt that the strategic objectives outlined in the proposals would improve Porth Town Centre although some concerns were raised about increased parking issues and the timeline for the project causing disruption to the area.
- The face to face engagement events responses were mostly positive with very few negative comments being made. The majority of people were supportive of the overall strategy and particularly supportive of the proposed transport hub. Negative comments centred mainly

around concerns about increased traffic and parking issues. Local food businesses also expressed concern that if Porth Plaza were to include a café/dining area this will be unwelcome competition and contradict the vision set out within the strategy specifically around support for town centre businesses. The businesses did however express an interest in working with the Council to come up with an appropriate solution and possibly provide the hot meals themselves.

- 7.5 The full consultation report is presented at Appendix 3 and includes comments received from respondents during the consultation exercise. Overall, the consultation shows that respondents are supportive of the Porth Town Centre Strategy and welcome the proposals.

### **Alec Jones Day Centre Consultation**

- 7.6 The targeted consultation period ran for 6 weeks, from the 29<sup>th</sup> October to the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2018. The following methods were used to consult with Day Centre service users;

- An online and paper questionnaire.
- Drop in Engagement events on the 16th and 22nd November 2018, located at the Day Centre
- A dedicated email address ([consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk)) and freepost address if needed.

- 7.7 The responses to the consultation exercise are presented at Appendix 4 and can be summarised as follows:

- Overall, 27 people filled in a questionnaire and 39 people engaged directly with us at the events.
- The main reasons for using the Day Centre were for meeting friends and socialising (82% of service users) and to have lunch (70% service users).
- Respondents were asked what they would do if the Day Centre activities were to transfer to Porth Plaza. 92% of service users responded to this question stating that they would attend the new Community Hub and nobody stated that they would stop attending the activities.
- Respondents were asked what they would do if the Day Centre meals were to transfer to Porth Plaza. 91% of service users responded to this question stating that they would attend the new Community Hub for a hot meal.
- It is important to note that further comments from the service users were focussed on their desire to have the same service and meals, at the same cost, as they currently receive in the Day Centre.

- Service users were asked what the impact of the proposed transfer of the day centre would have on them. Some of the responses stated that there would be no impact, as long as the current facilities were transferred to Porth Plaza.
  - There were concerns raised regarding the lack of parking at Porth Plaza.
  - Discussion with the service users showed that they value the work and friendliness of the staff at the centre and some of the comments made were regarding concerns about the impact the proposal would have on the current Day Centre staff.
- 7.8 In addition to the above points, during the consultation a number of service users expressed concerns about the layout and open plan nature of Porth Plaza. Some service users expressed a wish to see a separate dining area exclusively for their use. With the proposed reconfiguration/usage of Porth Plaza this would not be possible.
- 7.9 Service users also expressed a view that the provision at Porth Plaza should be the same type of meals, available at the same time of day and at the same cost. If Porth Plaza is reconfigured to make the ground floor and entrance more vibrant, including the movement of the library to create a better service offer with additional community room capacity, it may not be possible to provide like for like service provision to that currently available in Alec Jones Day Centre. However, the current Day Centre activities, including community group activities, could still be successfully transferred to the Community Hub
- 7.10 As part of the consultation process the Council also engaged with the family of the late Alec Jones' regarding the proposals to relocate the Day Centre to the new Community Hub in Porth Plaza and to look at how it could recognise the name and contribution made by Alec Jones going forward if the proposals were agreed. The family thanked the Council for its consideration of them as part of the consultation process, and as such found the proposals for Porth to be very interesting. The family suggested an appropriate way in which to recognise Alec Jones' positive contribution would be to erect a plaque on the site of the former Day Centre or new Transport Hub.
- 7.11 In conclusion, in light of the consultation feedback, the concerns raised by local businesses and existing service users of the day centre and the constraints around the layout of Porth Plaza, it will be necessary to explore alternative options for provision of hot meals in the town. One option would be to explore an arrangement with a local café or food business which would address the wishes of existing service users and respond to the concerns of local businesses around potential competition.

7.12 The full consultation report is presented at Appendix 4 and includes comments received from respondents during the consultation exercise. Overall, the consultation shows that respondents are supportive of the services they receive at the Alex Jones Day Centre transferring to the Porth Plaza Community Hub.

## **8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

8.1 There are no direct financial implications in developing this outline strategy for Porth, but as the opportunities are developed, the financial implications will be fully assessed, and where appropriate reported to Cabinet.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

9.1 There are no current legal implications, but as the opportunities are developed, the legal implications will be fully assessed.

## **10.0 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

10.1 The delivery of this strategy will contribute to the Council's corporate priorities:

- Economy – building a strong economy
- People – promoting independence
- Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work

10.2 Enabling vibrant and enticing town centres, with a strong offer, which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities is a clear commitment within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan "The Way Ahead".

10.3 The strategy is consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

- Long term – the objectives identified, and the actions that will deliver these objectives, are part of a longer-term vision of enhancing Porth and builds upon the long term vision of the Council.
- Prevention – the strategy recognises that there are a number of challenges that need to be addressed in order to achieve the vision. The projects identified will respond to these concerns in order to ensure that they don't get worse or occur in the first place.
- Integration – the projects identified in the strategy will help deliver a number of the objectives identified within the Council's Corporate

Plan. A key feature of the strategy is to ensure the approach to regenerating Porth is joined up, integrated and co-ordinated.

- Collaboration – intrinsic to this approach is collaboration with other public services and third sector organisations.
- Involvement – communities will be involved with the delivery of a full public consultation to obtain the views of wider stakeholders.

10.4 This approach makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities and a more equal Wales.

## **11.0 CONCLUSION**

11.1 This report sets out the results of the public consultation exercise carried out on the draft Porth Town Centre Strategy; and the focussed service user consultation on the specific proposals to relocate the services currently provided by Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub at Porth Plaza. Overall, the consultation shows that respondents are supportive of the Porth Town Centre Strategy and welcome the proposals.

11.2 The new Community Hub at Porth Plaza will provide a range of services that are responsive to the needs of Porth town centre; these would include a front facing newly designed library and employability support. Whilst the current Day Centre activities can be successfully transferred to the Community Hub, the reconfigured building may not be suitable to offer the hot meals that are currently provided from the Day Centre. Therefore, it is proposed that, subject to members decision, to mitigate the impact on service users the Council will explore alternative provision within the town centre where service users can be signposted to other local cafes/providers. Ongoing community engagement will be central to the development and future of the Porth Plaza Community Hub.

11.3 The outline strategy includes a wide range of activity which is both short and long term for delivery involving a range of partners. It is both ambitious and realistic in its approach and achieving the vision and objectives for the town cannot be achieved with one simple scheme. Instead, it demands the implementation of a wide range of co-ordinated and integrated physical development projects.

11.4 The delivery of these projects would result in **transformational change** for Porth by improving the connectivity within the town centre and surrounding areas. This has the potential to attract more people to the town to work, live, visit and invest therefore improving the footfall and the ability of the town to attract investment creating jobs and homes.

11.5 As Porth is the gateway to the two Rhondda Valleys this transport interchange will not just benefit the residents of Porth but will also have a positive impact on a much wider population.

**Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee***

Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity

***Contact Officer***

Derek James, Head of Regeneration and Prosperity (01443 281115)

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**PORTH TOWN CENTRE: DRAFT STRATEGY**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION, PLANNING AND HOUSING IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING, COUNCILLOR BEVAN**

**Item:**

**Background Papers**

[Cabinet](#) – 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2018.

Officer to contact:

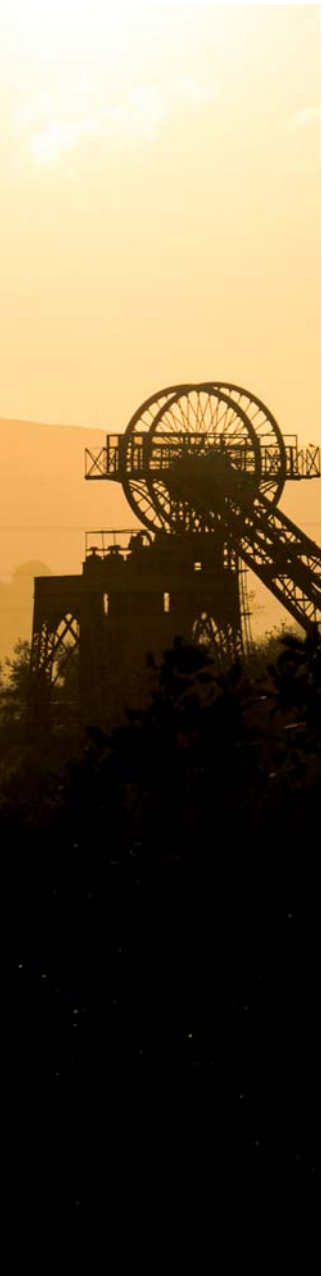
Derek James, Head of Regeneration and Prosperity (01443 281115)

This page is intentionally left blank



Enabling vibrant and  
enticing town centres,  
at the heart of our  
communities.

**STRATEGY  
2018/19**



# PORTH TOWN CENTRE



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Porth Town Centre:</b> The current challenges and opportunities	<b>1</b>
	• Connectivity .....	2
	• Town Centre Gateways .....	4
	• Retail .....	5
	• Carparking .....	6
	• Housing .....	7
<b>2</b>	<b>Vision &amp; Objectives:</b>	<b>8</b>
	• The Vision .....	8
	• Strategic Objectives: .....	8 - 9
<b>3</b>	<b>Making it Happen:</b> The key schemes	<b>10</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Next Steps</b> What the Council will do	<b>14</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Implementation Plan</b> Timescales and objectives	<b>15</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Appendix</b> Porth Town Centre Zonal Map	<b>17</b>

# Introduction

Enabling vibrant and enticing town centres, with a strong offer, which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities is a clear commitment within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan "The Way Ahead". The plan also makes a commitment that they will benefit from investment to ensure an attractive environment exists for businesses, residents and shoppers.

To deliver this commitment and to tackle the many challenges currently faced by our town centres, the solution requires a sophisticated and sustainable approach to regeneration.

As such, this regeneration strategy sets out an integrated, co-ordinated and holistic approach to town centre regeneration that takes into account the distinctive role Porth Town Centre has at the heart of the community and its important location for services, employment, housing and transport functions.

Pivotal to this strategy is the key aim to harness the many exciting opportunities currently presented through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, the Valleys Taskforce and the Council's Strategic Opportunities Area approach to regeneration and provide a framework for taking Porth forward into the future that delivers economic growth and job creation. A range of projects and investment opportunities in and around Porth town centre is included in the framework; many of which can be delivered within the short to medium term, whilst others will be longer-term schemes.

# PORTH TOWN CENTRE: The current challenges and opportunities

In developing this strategy, it is important to understand the key challenges, but also the opportunities that exist in and around Porth that have the potential to support the regeneration of the town.

These challenges and opportunities have been identified and summarised under the following themes:

- **Connectivity**
- **Town Centre Gateway**
- **Car Parking**
- **Retail**
- **Housing**



# Connectivity

**Transport is fundamental to connecting people, businesses and services; whether it is connecting people to jobs, education, leisure or community facilities, or connecting visitors and residents.**

Porth is a key settlement identified within the County Borough's Northern Strategy Area, as set out in the Council's Local Development Plan. It is regarded as the gateway to the Rhondda Fawr and Rhondda Fach valleys because both valleys meet at Porth, and it is reasonably well connected with Pontypridd and Cardiff via the A4058 and the A470 (see appendix 1 for a map of Porth Town Centre and the focus for this strategy). However, the A4058 south of Porth experiences daily high volume traffic as it leads to Pontypridd and the A470 to Cardiff.

Porth train station is located on the Treherbert line, with two trains per hour running from Porth into Cardiff. The National Cycle Network 881 connects to the station via an off-road dedicated cycle/footway route that connects from the southbound platform northward up the Rhondda Fach. According to the Office of Rail and Road, in 2016/17 there were 341,742 entries and exits at Porth station, making it the 33rd (out of 222) busiest in Wales.

Porth also benefits from an established, **but at capacity**, Park and Ride facility conveniently located adjacent to the train station. The £1.8M scheme, opened in the summer of 2016, provides 73 park and ride spaces together with improved disabled access, cycle parking and improved access to the station.

However, a poor transport interchange still exists between bus and rail services within the town, with bus stops currently located along Pontypridd Road and Porth Street (B4278), several hundred metres from the train station with no accessible taxi rank or cycle storage. This current set up prevents a seamless transition for those who use the bus link service from the surrounding areas to the train service in Porth. This is especially an issue for residents of the Rhondda Fach, Trebanog, Tonyrefail and Gilfach Goch as no rail link exists and therefore bus links to Porth Station are vital to allow commutable journeys.

In addition to this, passengers using a connecting bus service to Porth train station currently have to pay separately for their bus and train journeys. This unintegrated approach is inconvenient for passengers and often results in them paying more for their journey. The current deregulated bus market makes it difficult to achieve an integrated approach.

## Opportunity

Porth's key location and its train station is seen as one of the towns greatest assets – many similar sized towns in the UK do not benefit from such connectivity, and it is therefore fundamental that such an asset is capitalised upon.

Major infrastructure projects are an instrument for kick-starting regeneration with train stations, and their surrounding environments, increasingly seen as the steer for regeneration programmes as previously inaccessible land is unlocked and dilapidated buildings bought back into use.

Through Cardiff Capital City Deal there is an exciting opportunity to facilitate significant change and kick start the regeneration of Porth, which has the potential to provide resources to unlock significant economic growth, delivering jobs and private sector investment. The City Deal Investment Fund will also facilitate the delivery of the South East Wales Metro, which will make substantial improvements to the connectivity by public transport across the region

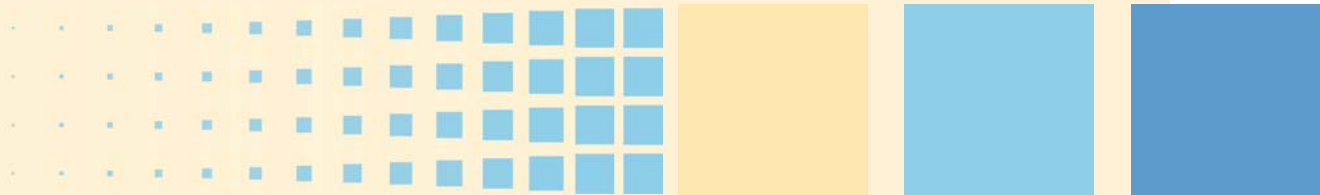
The Metro will focus on modernising the core valley lines resulting in far more frequent and faster trains in and out of Cardiff. As part of this development, Porth Train Station will see an increase in train services from two trains per hour to four trains per hour from 2022. This presents an excellent opportunity to capitalise on this investment and transform Porth into a key **Transport Hub** and open up the possibility of a much-regenerated **Station Quarter**.

The development of Porth as a Transport Hub would provide an integrated and improved interchange that aligns both the bus and train stations that will allow them to cope with future, increased passenger numbers and increased services, whilst offering easy access to the whole public transport network. Opportunities to encourage active travel through improved pedestrian and cycle routes and the creation of cycle docking facilities will also be a key feature of the Transport Hub development.

Furthermore, one of Transport for Wales's strategic goals is to achieve a fully integrated, joined-up transport system with integrated ticketing. This provides an opportunity to work with Transport for Wales to develop such scheme that offers local residents and visitor's simplicity, convenience and value for money across the bus and rail services serving the metro. This would address the current issue of passengers using a connecting bus service to Porth train station and currently have to pay separately for their bus and train journeys.

Alongside this, developing and investing in the delivery of **park and ride enhancements** would also provide transportation and environmental benefits. In particular, an extended Porth Park and Ride facility would attract drivers from a wide catchment area, significantly shorten vehicular journeys, improve accessibility to areas of employment by sustainable travel, reduce congestion on the local and strategic highway network and improve air quality.

The delivery of these projects would result in **transformational change** for Porth by improving the connectivity within the town centre and surrounding areas. This has the potential to attract more people to the town to work, live, visit and invest therefore improving the footfall and the ability of the town to attract investment creating jobs and homes.





## Town Centre Gateways

**The gateways to a town are what visitors see first and create the perception of what can be expected from the rest of the town. The appearance of gateways can be used to raise the profile of the town, increasing the awareness as an attractive and worthwhile place to visit and invest.**

Stations are intrinsically attached to their local community and act as a gateway to both town and railway. Porth station gateway extends westwards along Station Street to the junction with Hannah Street. Porth Train Station and the approach to the station is currently aesthetically uninviting and very uninspiring. Many visitors travelling to the town will arrive at Porth without a real sense of arrival as the relationship between the transport interchange and the town is extremely poor.

In addition to this, there are at present a number of prominent, vacant and under-used buildings in the vicinity of the train station and the town centre, specifically Station Street and Hannah Street. Some of the buildings have seriously dilapidated and become local 'eyesores' and hotspots for anti-social behaviour resulting in the long term blight of the area, which will affect inward investment, businesses and property prices.

## Opportunity

---

The station is an important gateway into the town. With the development of the metro and Porth as a Transport Hub, there is an excellent opportunity to transform the area into an attractive, modern and well-designed arrival point for residents and visitors to the town with enhanced public realm and improved signage and infrastructure (soft landscaping).

Developing the area around the Train Station and Transport Hub into a **Station Quarter** would provide a fitting gateway into Porth, creating a fully integrated, accessible and welcoming town centre with a focus on the redevelopment of key buildings that offer diverse uses. Commercial, office, retail and residential developments in the Station Quarter and town centre has the potential to strengthen the existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the town.

# Retail

**As with many of Rhondda Cynon Taf's town centres the main economy of Porth is retail, with the centre of Porth home to the shopping district based around Hannah Street, with other businesses mainly located on nearby Pontypridd Road and Porth Street.**

Town centre retail is facing a multitude of challenges to their future vitality and viability. Many of our High Streets are characterised by falling retail sales, reduced footfall, increased business failures and rising vacancies. The growth of internet shopping and multi-channel retailing also means that many retailers are actively seeking to reduce rather than increase their store portfolios.

Porth's town centre footfall has dropped year on year from 2011, from a weekly average of 13,210 to 9,274 currently, although the vacancy rate in 2017 was 11.6%, which is below the Welsh average of 13% but slightly higher than the UK average of 11%.

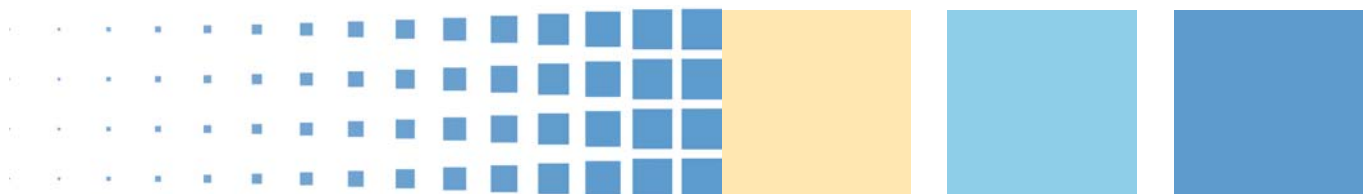
Over recent years, three national banks have closed their branches in the town leaving it without a single bank. Traders firmly believe that this has affected and contributed to the decline in footfall which has had a negative impact on local businesses.

## Opportunity

The Transport Hub has the potential to attract new economic investment to the Station Quarter, town centre and surrounding area with the development of mixed-use neighbourhoods and multi-functional buildings within a few hundred metres of the station. There is the potential to incorporate quality, town centre accommodation, which is attractive to young professionals, and the development of retail units suitable for entrepreneurs, small businesses and start-ups.

As part of the Council proposals to transform Adult Social Care, Bronwydd House, which currently houses over 200 Council employees, has been identified as a suitable site for extra care housing developments. As such, an opportunity exists for many of these staff to be relocated to underused or vacant office space/premises within Porth Town Centre. Locating over 200 Council staff into Porth Town Centre will not only bring back to use one or a number of vacant buildings but will also generate footfall into the town that has the potential to enhance the town centre economically.

A further opportunity to locate public sector services within the town also exists with the Council's commitment to develop Community Hubs across the borough. Due to Porth's pivotal location and soon to be improved transport links, it is ideally placed to provide the Community Hub approach to serve the Rhondda South. The hub will provide a range of services such as business support, employment support and information, advice and assistance on a range of issues. This development, located in the heart of the town centre, would bring more residents into the town; improving footfall levels and potential spend within local businesses.



# Car Parking

**The provision of town centre parking can be considered as customer service, the aim of which is to provide good access to the town for residents, workers, shoppers and visitors.**

Porth Town Centre currently benefits from a mixed but limited parking offer with two main public car parks; one short-stay in West Taff Street (up to 2 hrs) offering 30 spaces and one long-stay in Foundry Place offering 46 spaces. Both car parks are located in the south of the town which provides the main route of access into the town for vehicles. An additional 35 limited waiting spaces (1 hour, no return within 1 hour) area also available throughout Hannah Street.

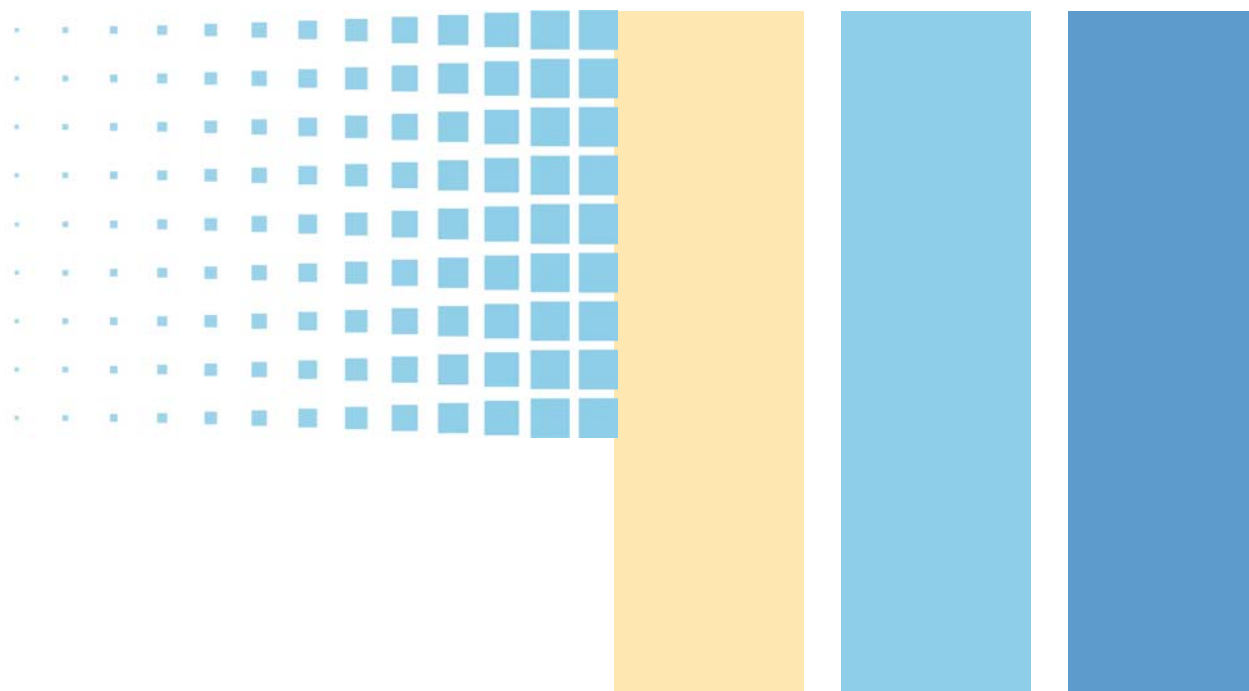
Although a decision made by the Council in 2017 to introduce free parking across many of its towns, including Porth, has gone some way to improving the parking offer, a lack of physical parking still exists which presents a challenge and acts as a barrier for those accessing the town.

## Opportunity

Improving the car parking offer throughout the town will improve the quality of infrastructure needed to support town centre investment and also allow visitors and shoppers to enjoy improved access to the town whilst creating a more positive experience.

Whilst it is envisaged that the enhancements to public transport as part of the Metro will increase the number of people travelling to and from Porth by public transport, the potential relocation of 200 Council employees to the town centre, means that there is still a need for additional car parking.

The availability of quality parking in the right locations play a key role in the perception and attractiveness of the town centre and in turn is fundamental to increasing footfall. Throughout the town there are a number of vacant sites that have the potential to provide further car parking spaces.





# Housing

**The 2015 Mid-Year Population Estimates indicated that Porth had a population of 6,000 people living in different areas of the town, namely Birchgrove, Britannia, Glynfach, Llwyncelyn, Mount Pleasant and Porth town centre.**

Porth has habitually been identified as a mid-housing market area across Rhondda Cynon Taf in recent Local Housing Market Assessments. It is known locally as the 'Gateway to the Valleys', due to its pivotal position at the foot of the Rhondda Fawr and Rhondda Fach, rendering it one of the higher demand parts of the Rhondda specifically.

The Council's annual Housing Market Needs Assessment has identified a need in Porth for one bedroom apartments, plus four units for Low Cost Home Ownership comprising a mix of two and three bedroom houses. Furthermore, and as part of the Council's approach to Transforming Adult Social Care and the development of extra care housing, it has been estimated that Rhondda Cynon Taf will need a further 220 extra care housing units to meet the needs of an increasingly older population. In relation to Porth, it is estimated that an additional 60 units will be required to meet the needs of the community.

## Opportunity

---

The development of new residential units within the town centre and surrounding area would help diversify the existing housing stock, promote housing in sustainable locations that are well served by public transport; and increase the footfall into the town centre. This type of accommodation is likely to appeal to young professionals who may be unable to afford the house prices for similar accommodation in Cardiff. The increase in train services from Porth to Cardiff as part of the metro development would make living in Porth an even more attractive proposition.

Furthermore, as part of Pontypridd's Regeneration Strategy, Transport for Wales is committed to locating approximately 500 staff to the new Taff Vale office complex on its completion in 2020. Given Taff Vale's close proximity to Porth, and the forthcoming Metro programme which will improve connections between Pontypridd and Porth, it is not inconceivable to envisage an increased demand for housing in the Porth area.

To accommodate this potential demand, a number of properties close to Porth train station have the potential for mixed-use development; with commercial and retail opportunities on the ground floors and the reuse of vacant floor space at upper levels for residential use. Such opportunities can help to seamlessly integrate retail, open market sale and affordable units for rent within the town centre. The incorporation of additional residential units can provide natural surveillance of the streets when retail outlets are closed and help to combat the issues associated with a transient evening population. This can make a positive contribution towards the ongoing regeneration of the town centre, improve commercial property vacancy rates and increase regular daily footfall. Furthermore, such developments also present an opportunity to support growth and investment in the Town Centre by increasing the potential pool of labour for traders and providing job opportunities for the residents, closer to home.

As previously mentioned, Bronwydd House in Porth has been identified as a suitable location for an extra care development. This site has been identified as it is close to the town centre, has good access to transport, health services and local amenities, and the site is of sufficient size to deliver an aspirational offer with good social and community opportunities for residents in the scheme and surrounding area. The economic value of this development will be beneficial to the town as older people will be able to live within and be part of thriving local communities, including the town centre and increase regular daily footfall to benefit the mix of local independent traders and national retail chains.

# VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this section is to set out the kind of place that Porth could become if it positively harnesses its assets and effectively co-ordinates the regeneration effort.

## The Vision:

‘To transform Porth Town Centre into a prosperous and attractive town, which offers a wide range of opportunities for visitors, residents and businesses; anchored by Porth Transport Hub and a much regenerated Station Quarter’.

Central to the vision is the ability to create a sense of place by boosting the perception and experience of the town, generating a positive environment in which to live, work, visit and invest. The vision will help to rejuvenate and sustain the town centre, grow the local economy, increase job opportunities and provide for urban living. The renewal of key sites across the town and the development of the Transport Hub and Station Quarter will be the catalyst for such changes.

## Strategic Objectives:

To achieve this vision and address many of the challenges identified in section 2, this strategy is supported by a series of strategic objectives that will drive its delivery and translate directly into a series of projects and actions:

- 1 To improve connectivity with the town centre and surrounding areas through the development of a Transport Hub. This includes:**
  - Developing a modern quality transport interchange to efficiently link commercial development with residential areas that capitalises on and maximises the opportunities being presented through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, specifically the delivery of the South East Wales Metro.
  - Work with Transport for Wales to develop and introduce a fully integrated, smart ticketing scheme that offers local residents and visitor’s simplicity, convenience and value for money across the bus and rail services serving the metro.
  - The provision of additional long and short term parking to accommodate the future regenerated Porth town centre.
  - Extending the current Park and Ride provision within Porth.

## **2 To create the conditions for the town to become a thriving Station Quarter. This includes:**

- Optimising the area around the station and proposed transport hub to create a thriving hub of enterprises.
- Targeting existing underused and vacant buildings around the station and proposed Transport Hub to create modern mixed-use accommodation that is attractive to young professionals and units suitable for entrepreneurs, small businesses and start-ups.
- Transforming the perception of Porth from a peripheral town into a fully integrated part of the Cardiff Capital Region.
- Creating the conditions to attract and develop new amenities.

## **3 To improve the key gateways into the town. This includes:**

- Creating a fully integrated, accessible and welcoming town centre with a focus on the redevelopment of key buildings, which offer diverse uses, on the main approaches into the town.
- Creating a modern well-designed arrival point for residents and visitors to the town, with particular focus on the Transport Hub and Station Quarter.
- Introducing a Town Centre Maintenance Grant to provide financial support to traders/landlords (including vacant properties) to undertake minor improvements and maintenance works which will improve the external front elevation of town centre properties.
- Public realm improvements including the creation of new public spaces.

## **4 To support the development of housing. This includes:**

- Identifying key residential opportunities, including vacant properties that need redeveloping or renovating, that can be unlocked to create the best mix of private and affordable housing.
- Improving the standard of existing housing and broaden the mix of housing through new developments.
- Developing extra care housing for the elderly and vulnerable, which provides affordable, flexible and adaptable accommodation that meets the criteria for lifetime homes.

## **5 To provide the conditions to strengthen employment opportunities. This includes:**

- Strengthening employment opportunities through investment in disused and underused sites and the development of a Transport Hub and thriving Station Quarter.
- The development of a Community Hub to provide a range of Council services from the same location. This will provide direct access to many of the services residents need on a daily basis as well as providing opportunities to receive business support, employment support and information, advice and assistance on a range of issues that affect people's quality of life and well-being.
- Connecting people to opportunities; getting residents to work, education and training, connecting businesses with suppliers and customers, as well as providing easy access for visitors.

# MAKING IT HAPPEN THE KEY SCHEMES

This Porth Town Centre Strategy is both ambitious and realistic in its approach. Achieving the vision and objectives for the town cannot be achieved with one simple scheme. Instead, it demands the implementation of a wide range of co-ordinated and integrated physical development projects.

The following projects have therefore been identified that, if delivered, will be the most effective at bringing about the desired change in Porth:

## Project One

**The development of a modern quality Transport Hub and Station Quarter that efficiently links commercial development with residential areas.**

The delivery of this project will result in transformational change for Porth by improving the connectivity with the town centre and other areas. This has the potential to attract more people to the town to work, live, visit and invest therefore improving the footfall and the ability of the town to attract investment creating jobs and homes. The potential also exists to create a modern well-designed arrival point that welcomes visitors, business people and residents, providing a high quality experience.

This strategy has identified the area currently occupied by the Alec Jones Day Centre as having the potential to accommodate a new Transport Hub. This site is ideally positioned for a Transport Hub; housing a bus interchange, taxi rank and cycle racks, and linking to the train station and park & ride. The site covers approximately 1,700 sq m allowing for the delivery of a new fit for purpose bus station, which will act as a catalyst for a much-regenerated Station Quarter with a mix of commercial, retail, office and residential developments. (Please see appendix 1 for map outlining the proposed area for the Transport Hub and Station Quarter).

The development of a Transport Hub at this site would provide an integrated and improved interchange that aligns both the bus and train stations that will allow them to cope with future, increased passenger numbers and increased services, whilst offering easy access to the whole public transport network. Opportunities to encourage active travel through improved pedestrian and cycle routes and the creation of cycle docking facilities will also be a key feature of the Transport Hub development.

This project will also seek to work with Transport for Wales to develop an integrated ticketing system that offers local residents and visitor's simplicity, convenience and value for money across the bus and rail services serving the metro. This would address the current issue of passengers using a connecting bus service to Porth train station and currently have to pay separately for their bus and train journeys.

This project contributes towards the delivery of all objectives outlined in this strategy and will act as a catalyst for further investment and all proposed projects.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Short to medium term (0-6 years)**

## Project Two

**The development of Porth Plaza into the Community Hub for Rhondda South.**

The opportunity exists for Porth Plaza to be developed as a Community Hub to provide a range of Council services from the same location. This will provide direct access to many of the services residents need on a daily basis as well as providing opportunities to receive business support, employment support and information, advice and assistance on a range of issues that affect people's quality of life and well-being.

Community hubs provide a focal point and facilities to foster greater local community activity and bring residents, the local business community and smaller organisations together to improve the quality of life in their areas. This development, located in the heart of the town centre, would bring more residents into the town; improving footfall levels and potential spend within local businesses.

In developing Porth Plaza into a Community Hub, it is proposed to re-locate the services currently provided by Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub. The current Day Centre is currently under utilised with an average of 27 meals served per day. The co-location of services within Porth Plaza will enable the Council to provide a café style food outlet where food is available throughout the day, including hot meals. Residents and community groups would continue to have access to rooms to meet and the activities currently delivered as part of the Day Centre offer.

Bringing the current Day Centre services together with other services will provide a better offer and create economies of scale in terms of staffing and building costs. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new or retrofitted, fit for purpose buildings will enable services to be sustainable in the longer term.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:

**Short term (0-3 years)**

## Project Three

**The provision of additional long and short term parking to accommodate the future regenerated Porth Town centre.**

Improving the car parking offer throughout the town will improve the quality of infrastructure needed to support town centre investment and also allow visitors and shoppers to enjoy improved access to the town whilst creating a more positive experience.

A number of key sites with the potential to provide further car parking throughout the town will be explored and a feasibility study carried out with a view to developing them in a way that compliments the current offer and ensures a flexible and balanced parking offer exists for those who visit, work and shop in the town.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:

**Short term (0-3 years)**

## Project Four

**Extending the current Park and Ride provision within the town centre.**

The completion of the town's first park and ride facility in 2016 resulted in the creation of 73 new parking spaces adjacent to the train station. This has gone some way to creating a more integrated transport interchange in the town, however with plans to increase the frequency of the train service to Treherbert to four trains per hour (north and southbound) from December 2022 as part of the South Wales Metro, the demand for an additional park and ride facility is highly likely.

With this in mind, a project to develop a **Phase 2 park and ride** facility (north of the current facility) is currently in the early stages of development and will be progressed during 2018 with completion expected in 2019. The facility aims to provide a further 72 (circa) parking spaces, taking the overall park and ride offer in the town to almost 150 parking spaces.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Short term (0-3 years)**

## Project Five

**The redevelopment of existing underused, disused and derelict buildings throughout the town to create housing, office and retail accommodation.**

A number of properties close to the train station and at key locations throughout the town centre have the potential for mixed-use development, with commercial and retail opportunities on the ground floors and the reuse of vacant floor space at upper levels, suitable for residential use.

Commercial, office, retail and residential developments in the Station Quarter and town centre has the potential to strengthen the existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the town.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Short to medium term (0-6 years)**

## Project Six

**Explore opportunities to relocate Council Staff into Porth Town Centre.**

As part of the Councils proposal to transform Adult Social Care, Bronwydd House, which currently houses over 200 Council employees, has been identified as a site for extra care housing developments. As such, the first phase of this project will be to explore opportunities to relocate these staff to underused or vacant office space/premises within Porth Town Centre.

Locating over 200 Council staff into Porth Town Centre will not only bring back to use one or a number of vacant buildings but will also generate footfall into the town that has the potential to enhance the town centre economically.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Short term (0-3 years)**

## Project Seven

**Public realm improvements.**

The enhancement of the town centre streets and spaces as part of the Station Quarter and Transport Hub developments will raise the quality, value and confidence in the town. This will create a far more attractive environment for shoppers and visitors to the town, and enhance the town's distinctiveness.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Short to medium term (0-6 years)**

## Project Eight

**The introduction of the Town Centre Maintenance Grant.**

The Town Centre Maintenance Grant will provide financial support to town centre traders / landlords (including vacant properties) to undertake minor improvements and maintenance works which will improve the external front elevation of town centre properties. The scheme will contribute to a positive impact on the street scene, creating a more attractive and vibrant environment which has the potential to increase retail spend and stimulate further private sector investment.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Short term (0-3 years)**

## Project Nine

**The redevelopment of the former Porth Junior school site for residential use.**

The development of new residential units within Porth will help diversify the existing housing stock, promote housing in sustainable locations that are well served by public transport; and increase the footfall into the town centre.

The former Porth Junior School site has the potential to address much of the prevailing housing need in the area through the development of one bedroom apartments and two, three and four bedroom houses, but also provides scope for sustainable tenant progression on site.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Short to medium term (0-6 years)**

## Project Ten

**Developing extra care housing for the elderly and vulnerable.**

Bronwydd House in Porth has been identified as a key site for extra care developments. This site has been identified as it is close to the town centre, has good access to transport, health services and local amenities, and the site is of sufficient size to deliver an aspirational offer with good social and community opportunities for residents in the scheme and surrounding area.

The economic value of this development will be beneficial to the town as older people will be able to live within and be part of thriving local communities, including the town centre, and increase regular daily footfall to benefit the mix of local independent traders and national retail chains.

---

Approximate implementation times scales:  
**Medium term (4-6 years)**

# NEXT STEPS

To realise these opportunities the Council will:

<b>Consult the right people at the right time...</b>	to achieve the best results we will talk to the appropriate people and organisations to benefit the project development. Involvement of stakeholders and our residents is vital in ensuring that our regeneration projects deliver the best possible outcomes. We will be continuing to work with local businesses, education institutions, training providers, the housing sector, individuals and communities to shape and support projects for the benefit of everyone.
<b>Work in partnership...</b>	with the right people and organisations at the right time. This will include the Council and other public sector bodies including Welsh Government and the private sector.
<b>Put in place the best delivery arrangements...</b>	that will make sure that we work with partners to project manage delivery effectively, ensuring that we drive the most successful outcomes.
<b>Source funding and investment...</b>	in a timely and creative way so that we can develop the most effective financial packages to ensure projects can go ahead.
<b>Develop effective business cases...</b>	for individual projects and initiatives to ensure that they are viable and cost effective, deliver the optimum benefits and outcomes and are sustainable into the future.
<b>Monitor and evaluate...</b>	so that we will ensure that we are able to improve delivery by understanding and learning from good practice and challenges experienced.
<b>Review and consider available opportunities...</b>	new opportunities often arise and some identified now, may become more difficult to achieve. We will review and appraise the portfolio of projects regularly.





# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan sets out each project, along with an indication of the delivery timescales and which strategic objective the project supports.

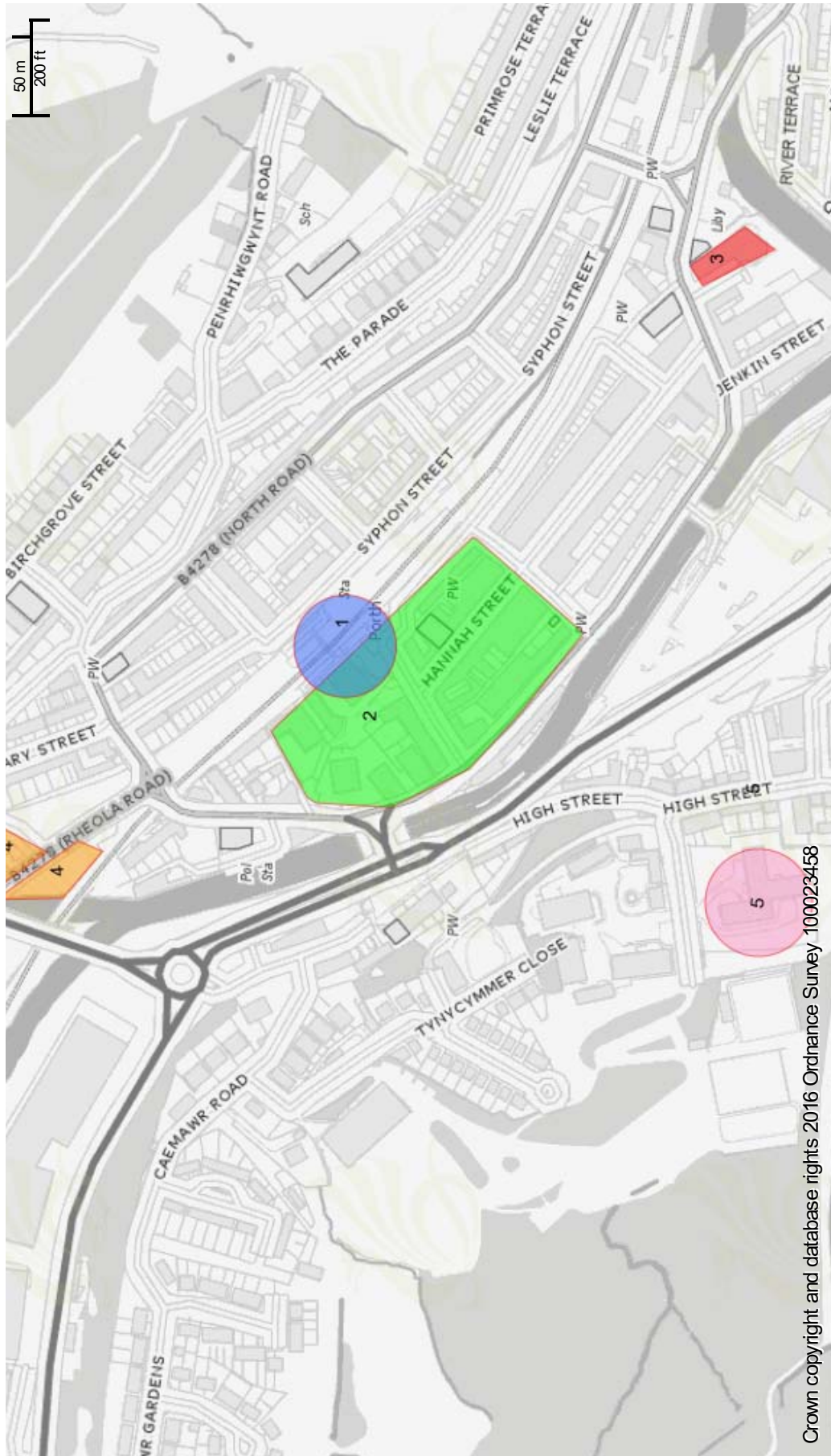
	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE MET					SHORT TERM 0-3 yrs			MEDIUM TERM 4-6 yrs			LONG TERM 7+ yrs	
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>ONE</b>	The development of a modern and quality Transport Hub and Station Quarter that efficiently links commercial development with residential areas.	The Transport Hub will provide an integrated and improved interchange that aligns both the bus and train stations that will allow them to cope with future, increased passenger numbers and increased services, whilst offering easy access to the whole public transport network.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
<b>TWO</b>	The development of Porth Plaza into the Community Hub for Rhondda South.	The opportunity exists for Porth Plaza to be developed as a Community Hub to provide a range of Council services from the same location. The co-location of public and voluntary sector services within the town will result in increased footfall.	✓			✓									
<b>THREE</b>	The provision of additional long and short term parking to accommodate the future regenerated Porth Town centre.	Improving the car parking offer throughout the town will enhance the quality of infrastructure needed to support town centre investment and also allow visitors and shoppers to enjoy improved access to the town.			✓	✓									
<b>FOUR</b>	Extending the current Park and Ride provision within the town centre.	The completion of the town's first park and ride facility in 2016 resulted in the creation of 73 new parking spaces adjacent to the train station. A project to develop a Phase 2 park and ride facility is currently in the early stages of development and will be progressed during 2018 with completion expected in 2019.	✓	✓	✓										

	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE MET					SHORT TERM 0-3 yrs			MEDIUM TERM 4-6 yrs			LONG TERM 7+ yrs		
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>FIVE</b>	The redevelopment of existing underused, disused and derelict buildings throughout the town to create modern, housing, office and retail accommodation.	A number of properties close to the train station and at key locations throughout the town centre have been identified as being suitable for mixed use development.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									
<b>SIX</b>	Exploring opportunities to relocate Council Staff into Porth Town Centre.	Bronwydd House which currently houses over 200 Council employees, has been identified as a site for extra care housing developments. As such, an opportunity exists for many of these staff to be relocated to underused or vacant office space/premises within Porth Town Centre.	✓	✓	✓		✓									
<b>SEVEN</b>	Public realm improvements.	The enhancement of the town centre streets and spaces as part of the Station Quarter and Transport Hub developments will raise the quality, value and confidence in the town.			✓											
<b>EIGHT</b>	The introduction of the Town Centre Maintenance Grant.	The Town Centre Maintenance Grant will provide financial support to town centre traders / landlords (including vacant properties) to undertake minor improvements and maintenance works which will improve the external front elevation of town centre properties.			✓	✓										
<b>NINE</b>	The redevelopment of the former Porth Junior school site for residential use.	The development of new residential units within Porth will help diversify the existing housing stock. The former Porth Junior School site has the potential to address much of the prevailing housing need in the area through the development of one bedroom apartments and two, three and four bedroom houses.				✓	✓									
<b>TEN</b>	Developing extra care housing for the elderly and vulnerable.	Bronwydd House in Porth has been identified as a key site for extra care developments. This site has been identified as it is close to the town centre, has good access to transport, health services and local amenities.	✓				✓									



# Appendix

## Porth Town Centre Zonal Map



Crown copyright and database rights 2016 Ordnance Survey 100023458

**KEY: 1. TRANSPORT HUB ZONE 2. STATION QUARTER 3. COMMUNITY HUB 4. PROPOSED PARK & RIDE 5. EXTRA CARE FACILITY**  
 Scale: 1:3622

Printed on: 2/8/2018 at 11:44 AM



© Rhondda Cynon Taf

This page is intentionally left blank

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

**Please ensure that you refer to the 'Equality Impact Assessment Guidance' when completing this form. If you would like further assistance please contact the Equality & Diversity Team.**

### Details

Name of initiative to be assessed: Relocation of Alec Jones Day Centre activities to Porth Plaza

Name of responsible officer: Paul Mee

Group/Directorate: Children and Community Services

Service Area: Community Services and Day Services

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018

**a) What are you assessing for impact?**

Service/ Function	Policy/ Procedure	Project	Strategy	Plan	Proposal	Information/ Position statement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**b) Please name and describe below:**

The Council owns Alec Jones Day Centre at Porth which is an open access centre for the use of adults aged 50 and over. It is open from Monday to Friday from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and provides a subsidised meal service and social activities for its users. Currently, the numbers attending for lunch-time provision is an average of 27 customers per day.

The daytime activities include the following:

- Wales Council for the Deaf meeting
- Singing for the brain
- CISWO
- Arosfa Senior Citizens meeting
- Age Concern Nail cutting service
- Welsh Language Group

The Local Authority does not have a statutory duty to provide a Day Centre service with subsidised meals and activities for people over the age of 50.

The proposal under consideration is to merge the Day Centre with other Council services that are delivered at Porth Plaza and to invest in changing the internal lay-out and refurbishing the Porth Plaza building to accommodate the needs of service-users. In addition to maintaining services for current users this would allow opportunities to develop further partnerships for the benefit of residents and to attract more people to the venue.

The Council currently delivers and/or facilitates a range of services at Porth Plaza including:

- a library service

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

- One4All advice service
- the provision of jobsearch and employment advice in partnership with a range of partners
- community meetings
- education and training courses
- youth activities

The facilities available for community use include:

- Public access PCs
  - free Wi-Fi
  - community meeting rooms
  - education/training room
  - IT suite
  - consultation rooms for use by external providers for delivery of advice and information on a range of health and well-being, welfare and other issues.
- There is also a creche on-site.

Under the current proposal the activities undertaken at Alec Jones Centre would transfer to Porth Plaza where there is scope for further activities and initiatives of benefit to current Day Centre users (and other residents) to be developed. This would then enable the Alec Jones Day Centre site to be redeveloped as part of the wider Town Centre Regeneration Strategy while strengthening the development of Porth Plaza Community Hub.

- c) Is the delivery of this initiative affected by legislation or other drivers such as codes of practice?  
If so, please identify what and how**

Legislation:

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places an emphasis on the principle of sustainable development. This proposal makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new or remodelled, fit for purpose buildings will enable services to be sustainable in the longer term.

Other drivers

The development of community hubs are identified as strategic priorities in the following plans and projects:

Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018- 2023

The Public Service Board's aim to promote safe, confident, strong and thriving communities improving the well-being of residents and visitors and building on our community assets can be achieved through the development of community hubs. The proposed relocation of Day Centre activities to Porth

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Plaza can help to reduce loneliness and social isolation by creating a town centre venue where a wide range of activities and events can be facilitated and a programme developed in partnership with all of its users.

The Cwm Taf Regional Plan 2018-2023

This five year plan sets out how the Cwm Taf Social Services and Well-being Partnership Board will respond to the findings of the Population Needs Assessment completed in 2017.

Evidence gathered from talking to people for the Population Assessment demonstrated that the following are important to the wellbeing of people with care and support needs:

- Making connections with others
- Access to Information and advice
- Organisations working better together
- Stopping problems before they start or get worse

The needs of vulnerable people and families can sometimes escalate into statutory services because there are limited opportunities available for people to seek help earlier. Good practice research has identified that strong community based initiatives are effective in providing low level support options and these are usually available from a community hub or open access facility.

It is intended that the proposal to create a hub at Porth Plaza will provide wellbeing opportunities for those who are most vulnerable in the community as well as providing a wider range of activities for current users of the day centre. The Porth Plaza building consists of 1973sq metres gross internal area (compared to Alec Jones Day Centre's 393 sq metres gross internal area) and this allows room for expansion and growth as the hub develops so that it can meet the community's needs over the longer term.

Our Valleys, Our Future

This plan's priorities for ensuring better public services includes an action to use existing, and create new, community hubs as well as a range of actions that will improve the health and well-being of communities.

Town Centre Regeneration

Enabling vibrant and enticing town centres, with a strong offer which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities, is a clear commitment within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's 2016-2020 Corporate Plan ('The way Ahead').

To deliver this commitment and to tackle the many challenges currently faced by our town centres the solution requires a sophisticated and sustainable approach to regeneration. The relocation of Alec Jones Day Centre forms an integral part of the proposed Porth Town Centre Regeneration Strategy which sets out an integrated, co-ordinated and holistic approach to town centre regeneration that takes into account the distinctive role Porth has at the heart of the community and its important location for services, employment, housing and transport functions.

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

d) **Does the initiative directly affect service users, employees or the wider community?**

Yes   
No

Continue assessment

No need to continue screening or carry out an EqIA



## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Screening/Relevance Test: Is an equality impact assessment required?

Screening is used to decide whether the initiative you are responsible for has a high or medium impact on any of the protected groups and will require a full EqIA.

Please provide details of the possible impact your proposal may have on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

You should also identify whether this constitutes a high, medium or low impact.

Please refer to Equality Impact Assessment Guidelines for further information.

Protected Characteristic	Impact
Age	<p>High. There are potentially negative and positive impacts on older people.</p> <p>As the proposal is to close Alec Jones Day Centre and to transfer its services to Porth Plaza, it has a major impact on adults over the age of 50 who currently use this service. In general Day Centre users were supportive of the proposed relocation of their current activities to Porth Plaza, but some service users who completed the survey expressed a wish to continue with the provision of both activities and hot meals at Porth Plaza.</p> <p>Beyond this user group the proposal has a potentially positive impact on people over the age of 50 in the community who would benefit from the development of a community hub with easy access to a wide range of services within Porth.</p> <p>See mitigations in the full Equality Impact Assessment below for how the provision of hot meals will be addressed.</p>
Disability	<p>High. There are potentially negative and positive impacts on people with disabilities. Accessibility has been identified as an issue for a small number of Day Centre users as the current car park that is adjacent to Porth Plaza is always in high demand and spaces are at a premium. It is also further for at least one user to walk from the bus stop.</p> <p>However on the positive side relocation of activities to the Porth Plaza Community Hub will enable disabled customers to access a wider range of information and advice at one venue and there will be opportunities to develop more activities and provision to support them through partnerships with third sector and other organisations.</p> <p>See mitigations in the full Equality Impact</p>

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

	Assessment below for how concerns relating to parking can be addressed.
Gender Reassignment	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Race	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Religion or Belief	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Sex	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
<b>Other Characteristics</b>	
Welsh Language	Low positive - access to a training room will facilitate the delivery of Welsh language classes or other community learning classes in the medium of Welsh if there is a demand for these locally. The current Welsh language group held at Alec Jones Day Centre will be able to transfer to Porth Plaza and potentially this provision could be further developed at the new venue.
Carers	Medium positive - the potential to develop more provision on the Porth Plaza site could result in more activities being developed for people with a range of ill-health issues such as dementia, and engagement with third sector organisations who have space to deliver information and advice from Porth Plaza community hub would facilitate easy access to information on a range of issues that affect carers and their families.
Armed Forces Community	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.

**If after completing the EqlA screening/relevance test, you determine that this service/function/policy/project is not relevant for an EqlA you must provide adequate explanation below. (Please use additional pages if necessary).**

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

**Are you happy that you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?**

Yes

No

Signed: W. Edwards  
4/1/19

Position: Head fo Community Services

Date:

**N.B. If the initial screening process has identified actual or potential high or medium negative impact on a particular group or groups then you MUST carry out a full EqIA.**

Approved by Head of Service or Director

Signed:

Position:

Date:

### **Full Equality Impact Assessment**

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impact and clearly identify which groups are affected.

In terms of any disproportionate/negative/adverse impact that the proposal may have on a protected group, what steps (if any) could be taken to reduce that impact for each group identified. Attach a separate action plan if necessary.

#### Age

Concerns were raised by Day Centre users about potential changes to the lunch-time meals provision specifically the possible loss of access to hot meals and potential impact on the cost of meals provided. Questions were raised regarding the ability to deliver this provision at Porth Plaza.

It is unlikely that the meal provision can be facilitated within Porth Plaza community hub so that other alternatives will need to be explored.

#### Actions to address the issues:

Officers will continue to engage with Day Centre users and local café proprietors to assess the best way in which access to meals can be sustained for this customer group within Porth town centre. there is potential to explore an arrangement with local food business operator(s) whereby service users could be signposted to access a hot meal.

A solution will be agreed prior to the potential closure of the Day Centre.

#### Disability

A concern was raised in relation to the access to parking spaces for Day

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Centre users if the provision is relocated to Porth Plaza as the car park adjacent to the building is very busy and parking places are limited.

Actions to address the issue:

The Porth Town Centre Regeneration Strategy has identified the need for additional parking spaces in the town centre and if these are created it could alleviate pressure on the Porth Plaza car park in future.

Officers will explore the potential of allocating additional disabled parking bays at Porth Plaza car park to meet the potential increase in demand if the Day Centre activities are transferred to Porth Plaza community hub.

If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

### Evidence Sources

(i) Give details of any data or research that has led to your reasoning above, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users.

Service usage data held with Adult Services was used to ascertain service level and activity data for the Day Centre.

Service usage data held by the Library Service was used to ascertain the level of room usage and activities delivered currently at Porth Plaza.

(ii) Give details of how you have engaged with service users on the proposals and steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group and how you have used any feedback to influence your decision.

A 6 week consultation was undertaken between 29<sup>th</sup> October and 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018. This included two drop-in sessions on 16<sup>th</sup> November and 22<sup>nd</sup> November. Full details of the consultation are provided in the Consultation Report produced by the Consultation team.

Key feedback from the consultation events were as follows:

- overall acceptance of the rationale for moving the Day Centre activities from the Day Centre to Porth Plaza
- concern about the effect the proposal would have on the provision of subsidised hot meals for Day Centre users
- need for the nail-cutting service to be retained
- some concern about parking issues at Porth Plaza and the town in general

Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Statutory Equality Duties?

Yes

No

**Decision Log** - detail how Elected Members and Senior Managers have been involved in the decision process (give dates of key meetings and decisions made).

Rhondda Cynon Taf Cabinet Report 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018

### Review

Date of Next Review:

If review is not required, explain why:

Completed by:

Signature:

Job Title:

Date:

**This assessment must be approved by an appropriate Head of Service or Director**

Approved by:

Signature:

Job Title:

Approval date:

**Please return a copy to:**

Equality & Diversity Team  
The Pavilions  
Cambrian Park  
Clydach Vale  
CF40 2XX

Email: [equality@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rctcbc.gov.uk)

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM



# **Porth Town Centre Regeneration Strategy Consultation**

*Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough  
Council*

*December 2018*



## CONTENTS

		Page
	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.</b>	Introduction	<b>4</b>
<b>2.</b>	Background	<b>5</b>
<b>3.</b>	Methodology	<b>6</b>
<b>4.</b>	Consultation Results	<b>7</b>

### List of figures

Figure No.	Page
<b>Fig 1.</b> Which of the Strategic Objectives do you think would help the regeneration of Porth Town Centre	8
<b>Fig 2.</b> Do you think the Strategic Objectives will improve Porth Town Centre	10
<b>Fig 3.</b> Key Scheme- Development of modern quality Transport Hub and Station Quarter	11
<b>Fig 4.</b> Key Scheme- Development of Porth Plaza into a Community Hub	11
<b>Fig 5.</b> Key Scheme- Provision of long and short term parking	12
<b>Fig 6.</b> Key Scheme- Extending the current Park and Ride provision	12
<b>Fig 7.</b> Key Scheme- Redevelopment of existing underused, disused and derelict buildings	13
<b>Fig 8.</b> Key Scheme- Explore opportunities to relocate Council Staff into Porth Town Centre	13
<b>Fig 9.</b> Key Scheme- Public realm improvements	14
<b>Fig 10.</b> Key Scheme- Introduction of the Town Centre Maintenance Grant	14
<b>Fig 11.</b> Key Scheme- Redevelopment of the former Porth Junior school site for residential use	15
<b>Fig 12.</b> Key Scheme- Developing extra care housing for the elderly and vulnerable	15
<b>Fig 13.</b> Respondent profile- Gender	18
<b>Fig 14.</b> Respondent profile- Age	18



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report presents the findings of the consultation on the proposed strategy for the regeneration of Porth Town Centre.
- The consultation was conducted in-house. The 6 week consultation period ran from the 29<sup>th</sup> October until 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018. The approach taken included a questionnaire for members of the public and face to face engagement events.
- 139 people attended the face to face events and there were 72 responses to the questionnaire.
- The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed strategy, welcoming the likely benefits that regeneration could bring.
- 80% of respondents to the questionnaire felt that the strategic objectives outlined in the proposals would improve Porth Town Centre although some concerns were raised about increasing current parking issues and the timeline for the project causing disruption to the area.
- The table below shows the results of respondents views on which of the Strategic Objectives they think would help with the regeneration of Porth Town Centre.

To improve connectivity with the town centre and surrounding areas through the development of a Transport Hub.	83%
To improve the key gateways into the town.	80%
To provide the conditions to strengthen employment opportunities.	77%
To create the conditions for the town to become a thriving Station Quarter.	75%
To support the development of housing.	39%

- Respondents were asked whether they thought a series of key schemes will improve Porth Town Centre. The table below shows the results of those who responded 'Yes'.

The redevelopment of existing underused, disused and derelict buildings throughout the town	90%
The development of transport Hub and Station Quarter	86%
The provision of additional long and short term parking	85%
The introduction of the Town Centre Maintenance Grant	85%
Extending the current Park and Ride provision	83%

Public realm improvements	77%
The development of Porth Plaza into a Community Hub	75%
Developing extra care housing for the elderly and vulnerable	73%
Explore opportunities to relocate Council Staff into Porth Town Centre	69%
The redevelopment of the former Porth Junior school site for residential use.	47%

- The face to face engagement events responses were mostly positive with very few negative comments being made. The majority of people were supportive of the overall strategy and particularly supportive of the proposed transport hub. Negative comments centred mainly around concerns about increased traffic and parking issues.
- Overall the consultation shows that respondents are supportive of the strategy for regeneration.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a consultation to gather public views on the proposed strategy for the regeneration of Porth town centre.
- 1.2 The strategy has the following vision for the future – “To transform Porth Town Centre into a prosperous and attractive town, which offers a wide range of opportunities for visitors, residents and businesses; anchored by Porth Transport Hub and a much-regenerated Station Quarter” and to obtain views on this strategy.
- 1.3 Section 2 outlines the background to the proposal and the proposed new changes that were consulted upon.
- 1.4 Section 3 details the methodology used.
- 1.5 Section 4 presents the consultation results.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### The Proposal

- 2.1 The proposed vision for Porth Town Centre is:

*‘To transform Porth Town Centre into a prosperous and attractive town, which offers a wide range of opportunities for visitors, residents and businesses; anchored by Porth Transport Hub and a much regenerated Station Quarter’.*

### Background

- 2.2 Enabling vibrant and enticing town centres, with a strong offer, which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities, is a clear commitment within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council’s 2016-20 Corporate Plan “The Way Ahead”. The plan also makes a commitment that they will benefit from investment to ensure an attractive environment exists for businesses, residents and shoppers.
- 2.3 To deliver this commitment and to tackle the many challenges currently faced by our town centres, the solution requires a sophisticated and sustainable approach to regeneration.
- 2.4 As such, the Porth Town Centre regeneration strategy sets out an integrated, co-ordinated and holistic approach to town centre regeneration that takes into account the distinctive role Porth has at the heart of the community and its important location for services, employment, housing and transport functions.
- 2.5 To achieve this vision, the strategy is supported by a series of strategic objectives that will drive its delivery and translate directly into a series of projects and actions:
1. To improve connectivity with the town centre and surrounding areas through the development of a Transport Hub.
  2. To create the conditions for the town to become a thriving Station Quarter.
  3. To improve the key gateways into the town.
  4. To support the development of housing.
  5. To provide the conditions to strengthen employment opportunities.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

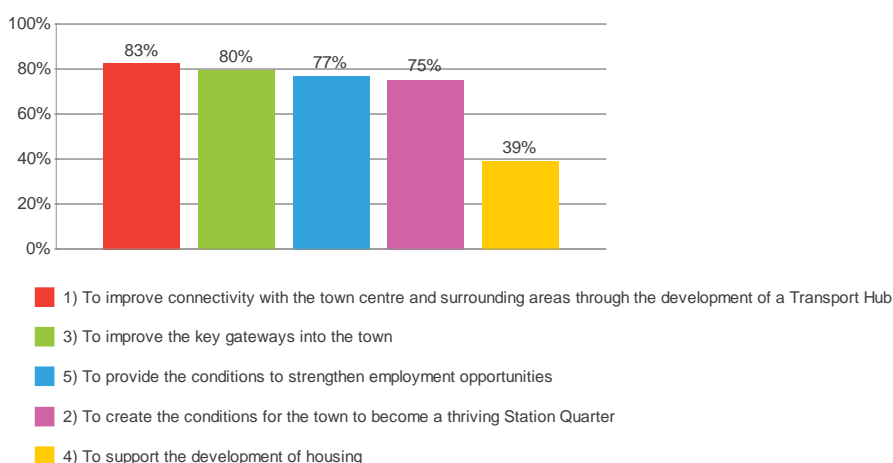
- 3.1 The purpose of the consultation was to seek views on the proposed strategy for the regeneration of Porth town centre.
- 3.2 The consultation has been conducted in-house. The consultation period ran from 29<sup>th</sup> October until 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018.
- 3.3 There were 2 public face to face events held at Porth Plaza and Morrisons and a number of smaller engagement events held at community and leisure centres. The locations of the smaller events were based on their location in relation to Transport Hub connections to communities on bus routes, without access to rail.
- 3.4 There was an online campaign with a dedicated page on the consultation webpage and social media posts created to raise awareness of the strategy and consultation events.
- 3.5 In addition to the face to face engagement, a questionnaire was produced with responses being collected either via tablet at the face to face events or being completed online.
- 3.6 Officers attended an Older Persons Wellbeing event held at Ystrad Sports Centre to raise awareness with over 70 people in attendance.
- 3.7 Two emails were received from members of the public providing their views on the proposed strategy.
- 3.8 Family members of the late Alec Jones were consulted with in respect of how the strategy may continue to recognise Alec Jones, in light of proposals to close the day centre and relocate services to the Community Hub.

## 4 CONSULTATION RESULTS

### Results Questionnaire

- 4.1 Respondents were asked ‘Which of the Strategic Objectives do you think would help the regeneration of Porth Town Centre?’ and were able to select more than one answer.

Q1 Which of the Strategic Objectives do you think would help the regeneration of Porth Town Centre?



**Figure 1**

Objective 1 – ‘To improve connectivity with the town centre and surrounding areas through the development of a Transport Hub’ received the highest response (83%) closely followed by objective 3 – “To improve key gateways into the town” (80%). The lowest response was for objective 4 – “to support the development of housing”.

Comments included:

#### Transport Hub

*“By developing a transport hub within the town centre, I would imagine this would lead to improved footfall within the town, which they need to be geared up to with the necessary support.”*

*“More central area for transport is a good thing.”*

*“This will help with development of Porth. Flow of transport to Cardiff and surrounding area.”*

## Parking

*“Parking needs to be drastically improved.”*

*“The roads are too congested going through Porth and up to Pontypridd Road, make sure it doesn’t get even more congested with buses pulling in and out of Station Street. Parking is an issue in Porth and often find myself parking in Morrisons to go to the Plaza/Pop Factory.”*

*“Get rid of the ugly job centre building and provide people that are employed on Hannah Street with somewhere to park their cars. The street is always badly cluttered with cars.”*

## Employment Opportunities

*“.....Lots of buildings are empty and businesses have left the town centre. Redevelopment would encourage business to return, and increase employment opportunities.....”*

*“Supporting businesses within Hannah St to continue trading is of vital importance to improve the current provision within the town...”*

- 4.3 Overall, the results showed respondents were positive about the objectives with many supportive comments for each proposed objective.

*“They are all good ideas especially targeting vacant buildings.”*

*“We would like Porth to be a busy town again.”*

*“Well done with the question, my answer is yes to all 5.”*

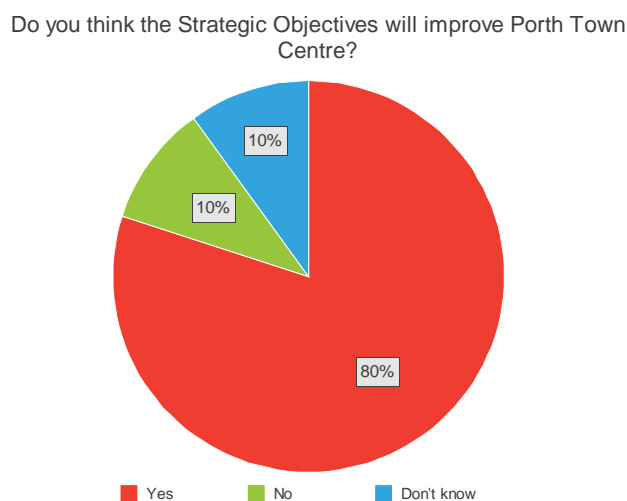
- 4.4 Of the few negative responses, concerns were raised regarding the possible downsides of the objectives not providing the desired outcome.

*“Additional housing will not necessarily increase footfall within the town centre as shopping habits are very much individual to a person’s needs. Additionally, more housing specifically where it has been suggested could significantly add to the already congested areas around the schools.”*

*“One of my concerns is that the Station Quarter could degenerate into an area of fast food outlets, set up to cater for the increasing needs of traveller for food and drink.”*

4.5 Respondents were also asked ‘Do you think the Strategic Objectives outlined in Q1 will improve Porth Town Centre?’

Results show that the majority of people who responded (80%) agreed that the objectives would improve Porth Town Centre.



**Figure 2**

Of those who answered ‘Yes’ some of the positive comments included:

*“This is a great opportunity for businesses and residents that could see a vast improvement in the town centre, compared to how it has declined over recent years. Promotion of any opportunities for businesses/residents to get involved in this process should be undertaken and there is a vital need to highlight the benefits these objectives can bring to them.”*

*“Yes this will improve Porth which is really needed.”*

*“Any help would be greatly appreciated.”*

*“The developments look positive and important. I hope work will be able to begin soon.”*

*“Centralised services will make Porth a more attractive town to commute from and visit ...”*

*“Better connectivity. Integrated transport connections, and positive encouragement or people to transfer to Public Transport options.”*

4.6 Of the small number who responded ‘No’ some comments included:

*“Redevelopment on the suggested scale would disrupt the economic social use of the town for a long time.”*



*“Unless Porth is made accessible for driving customers then this initiative will not work. A transport hub will cause more traffic therefore people will avoid going into Porth.”*

**4.7 Respondents were then asked whether they thought a series of key schemes would improve Porth Town Centre.**

The results show that the majority of people agreed with all of the schemes outlined in the questionnaire.

**1. The development of a modern quality Transport Hub and Station Quarter that efficiently links commercial development with residential areas.**



**Figure 3**

Comments included:

*“Transport networks are the key to regeneration. People will only shop in Porth if there are shops, centre is worth coming for. Support for traders etc. is essential.”*

*“The business strategy has many facets to it and needs dividing and consulting individually. For example, business and residential should complement each other not have one to the detriment of the other.”*

**2. The development of Porth Plaza into the Community Hub for Rhondda South.**



**Figure 4**

*“...Also thought needs to be given to which are the most relevant services needed in the community hub based on the demographic of the area and also the levels of poverty experienced by residents.”*

**3. The provision of additional long and short term parking to accommodate the future regenerated Porth Town centre.**



**Figure 5**

*“Extra parking for what purpose? .....Unless you attract major retail brands, you can build all the car parks you want, won't help, same with transport, won't help.”*

*“When such a good sustainable transport hub is proposed I don't agree that spending on car parking is a compatible proposal. Traffic reduction (actual reduction in the number of vehicles) would enhance the visual and environmental attractiveness of Porth as a destination, particularly as a sustainable hub centre that doesn't require the car to get to it.”*

**4. Extending the current Park and Ride provision within the town centre.**



**Figure 6**

There were a number of comments made in relation to parking and the Park and Ride provision concerning effects on residents and traffic levels.

Comments included:

*“If your to increase parking for Park and Ride residents around that that live next to the station would like permits as most days it's a struggle to park near our home and frustrating.”*

*“When such a good sustainable transport hub is proposed I don’t agree that spending on car parking is a compatible proposal. Traffic reduction (actual reduction in the number of vehicles) would enhance the visual and environmental attractiveness of Porth as a destination, particularly as a sustainable hub centre that doesn’t require to car to get to it.”*

*“I don’t see many people using the park and ride for its specific use (to park and ride the train). I see lots of people parking there just to go to the shops in town or to the Rheola or the Dr’s Surgery. Why make it bigger if people don’t use it for its intended use anyway?”*

**5. The redevelopment of existing underused, disused and derelict buildings throughout the town to create housing, office and retail accommodation.**



**Figure 7**

*“..... I am not convinced of the argument creating more housing will automatically lead to more expenditure in the Town centre.”*

**6. Explore opportunities to relocate Council Staff into Porth Town Centre.**



**Figure 8**

There were a few comments provided in relation to these questions in support of the proposals and acknowledging the issue of derelict buildings and the benefits to be gained from relocating Council Staff. However there were a small number of comments that questioned the potential for negative impacts on businesses as a result of relocation.

Comments included:

*“From my past experience in leafleting in Rhondda I have been shocked by the number of empty derelict properties.”*

*“Closing the council offices in Bronwydd will reduce the number of people visiting Hannah Street each day and keeping trade alive.”*

*“I think it’s a great idea to bring people from the Council into the Town as they have the opportunity to engage more with businesses. It also gives them the opportunity to pop out on their lunch and buy lunch in the town’s shops and cafes. As long as they don’t get relocated near Morrisons as that will take away business from the town shops again.”*

**7. Public realm improvements.**



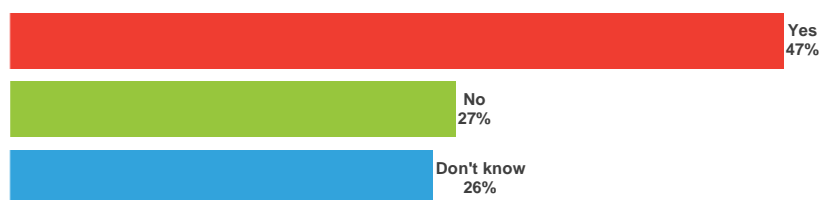
**Figure 9**

**8. The introduction of the Town Centre Maintenance Grant to provide financial support to town centre traders / landlords (including vacant properties) to undertake minor improvements and maintenance works which will improve the external front elevation of town centre properties.**



**Figure 10**

**9. The redevelopment of the former Porth Junior school site for residential use.**



**Figure 11**

A number of comments were made in relation to the redevelopment of Porth Junior School with an even split of both negative and positive comments on this proposal.

Comments included:

*“Under no circumstances should Porth Junior School be used for housing when the council finally realises that super schools DO NOT WORK we will need these schools to re-open to give our children the best start to their educational life which they haven’t got currently with the new super school initiative.”*

*“Creation of residential accommodation within Town Centre could provide more encouragement for better use of facilities. However it is important that as residential presence grows, so must community facilities, such as shops, recreational facilities, service facilities (eg Libraries. Community Centres. Doctor Surgeries etc.)*

**10. Developing extra care housing for the elderly and vulnerable.**



**Figure 12**

Comments included:

*“Extra care housing and care support will provide more options for people, not leading to full residential care.”*

*"I originally come from a place which had an initiative to provide more extra care housing for elderly residents and now most are surplus to requirements. It's a business model that only makes sense to the developers as they make money but usually the initiative falls flat."*

- 4.8 Finally, respondents were asked 'Do you have any views on the development or content of the implementation plan? And they were also given the opportunity to provide further comments'

37% of people who responded to this question answered 'yes', with a theme emerging in the comments concerning the timeline for the strategy and possible disruption caused.

*"It would be better done seamlessly than in bits."*

*"It appears that the strategy will be delivered a small part at a time and this could mean delays in completing the whole plan."*

*"As long as it doesn't take too long. I think the timing allocated for each project in the plan is far too long. Porth has struggled enough so why not give them what they deserve sooner rather than later? Businesses have struggled enough so the least the council can do is move it a little quicker."*

*"Provide timely updates for the residents of Porth and Cymmer area. Least disruption. Quick wins."*

*"Great concept and plans, however, as Porth resident I am concerned of potential traffic congestion during the building/construction of the hub and surrounding areas."*

- 4.9 Some of the respondents were keen to be involved in the ongoing regeneration plans, as they develop.

*"A plan that grows with the project is preferable to a rigid one. This is a good idea"*

*"that for this implementation plan to succeed, then I believe a strong focus should be on advertising how businesses and key stakeholders can be involved - not just the usual few."*

*"I think that the implementation plan would need contribution from local representatives from the community. Key stakeholder organisations have been mentioned above which understood is important, however it is the people who use the town centre on a daily basis who should be consulted. Representatives from organisations will likely have an overarching view in terms of numbers and figures, however decisions shouldn't be made solely by representatives who don't have day to day involvement in the town."*

*“All plans should have public opinion it adds to public buy in of the plan and makes it easier to deliver.”*

- 4.10 Further positive comments in support of the proposals were provided at the end of the survey, including the following;

*“I think it's a great plan and I hope it's carried through.”*

*“I think this is really positive for Porth and I commend the plans”*

*“Really positive for Porth”*

*“It should happen sooner than later.”*

*“Very clear and easy to understand”*

*“Will look forward to Porth being developed. It will certainly bring more customers to the shops and build a lovely high street to visit.”*

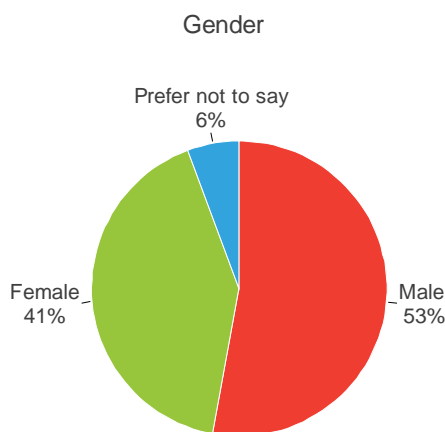
*“Support the plans”*

*“Hope this happens and gets the funding needed”*

Respondent Profile

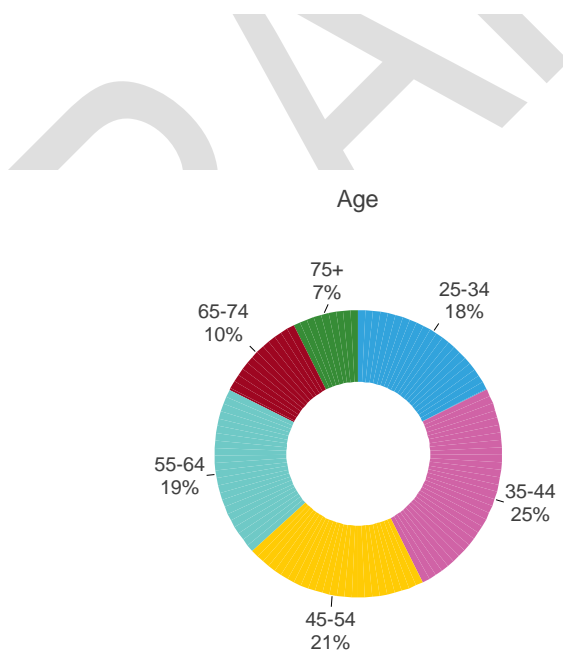
4.11 In total 72 people took responded to the questionnaire. The breakdown by type of respondent is shown below.

4.12 Gender



**Figure 13**

Age



**Figure 14**

4.11 Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. Respondents felt the proposal would affect them because of age and disability characteristics, the following are a small selection of the comments received:

*“More disabled parking is a must.”*



*"I am a disabled person so would want suitable access to all parts of the town after regeneration completed."*

*"As I get older, I will be looking closer to home for the facilities that I need both on a practical level and socially."*

- 4.12 Under the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on the Welsh Language. The following are a selection of the comments received:

*"All services and signage should be offered bilingually and should be promoted as such by all stakeholders. Both languages should be treated as equals."*

*"I am a Welsh learner I would welcome more Welsh language opportunities in the area, specifically any way to practice with other learners/Welsh speakers."*

*"More use of Welsh throughout the communication hub."*

*"The Welsh language doesn't appear to be supported anywhere in Porth."*

*"Positive effect would be to give people the option to learn Welsh through promoting Welsh valley culture."*

*"Encourage use and jobs offering the Welsh language as an option."*

## Results - Face to Face Engagement

- 4.13 There were a number of face to face engagement events held during the course of the consultation with 139 people actively engaging with officers during these events.

The events provided an opportunity for a mixture of residents, business owners, traders and staff affected by the proposed strategy to provide their views.

Overall, the responses to the consultation were largely positive with only a few minor concerns being noted.

Some positive comments included:

*“Anything to improve Porth is a positive thing.”*

*“I’m so glad something is being done.”*

*“Bronwydd site is a good location for the extra care facility.”*

*“Overall it’s fantastic to see the Council being creative in improving Porth Town Centre.”*

- 4.14 There were some concerns raised regarding parking and suggestions for additional regeneration ideas, including the provision for young people and tourism.

*“Why don’t we purchase the land at the rear of upper cuts to provide a car park for Porth Farm Surgery?”*

*“Why can’t each Community Hub house a Tourist Information Centre?”*

*“What is tourism doing to link in with businesses about their products/services and how these can boost tourism?”*

*“Turning Porth Plaza into a Community Hub is only for the older generation and to downgrade a vital council run service. Where are the plans to improve things for the younger generation so they can have access to community hubs/youth clubs? These plans should be for the benefit of everyone to attract the local community but more than that make Porth a better place to live not a place where you have to survive.”*

- 4.15 Of the few negative comments, these included:

*“I don’t like the coffee shop idea within the transport hub as it takes away business from the other coffee shops.”*

*“The extra care facility on Bronwydd site is not suitable for the elderly as it is located on a hill and is too far from the town, would be better to locate it in the old offices/flats in town where the area is more flat and central.”*

*“What Porth needs is to be regenerated for the present day and more importantly for the future. The regeneration should be for the community of Porth and not about attracting visitors from elsewhere. There isn’t currently anything in Porth to attract the local community let alone anyone else! The town centre needs much more variety in local shops, community buildings and services and not more takeaways and hairdressers.”*

- 4.16 There was some level of concern expressed by the local food businesses in the area. They felt that if Porth Plaza were to include a café/dining area, that this may affect their trade and would be unwelcome competition. The businesses did however express an interest in working with the Council to come up with an appropriate solution and possibly provide the hot meals themselves.
- 4.17 Comments were also made regarding the Transport Hub and concerns regarding safety of this proposal.

*“The new station quarter where buses pull into the station and reverse out is hazardous to pedestrians walking behind the vehicles when reversing. It should be a pull in, drop off and drive straight out layout so buses don’t have to park and reverse out.”*

*“The route for the buses to get in and out of the bus station will become dangerous. Turning from Station Street to Pontypridd Road is difficult now as many people think it’s a one way street as well as the parked cars plus no one lets the traffic out from Station street. This will inevitably cause delays. The whole idea of a ‘Transport Hub’ is to make it easier to travel by public transport.”*

---

This page is intentionally left blank



HAVE  
YOUR SAY  
DWEUD  
EICH  
DWEUD

# Alec Jones Day Centre Consultation

*Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council*

*December 2018*



## CONTENTS

		Page
	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.</b>	Introduction	<b>4</b>
<b>2.</b>	Background	<b>5</b>
<b>3.</b>	Methodology	<b>6</b>
<b>4.</b>	Questionnaire Results	<b>7</b>
<b>5.</b>	Engagement Event Results	<b>13</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report presents the findings of the consultation on proposals to relocate the services of Alec Jones Day Centre to a new Community Hub in Porth Plaza as part of a new proposed strategy for regenerating Porth Town Centre (also subject to consultation).
- The targeted consultation ran for 6 weeks, from the 29<sup>th</sup> October to the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2018. The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders;
  - An online and paper questionnaire.
  - Drop in Engagement events on the 16th and 22nd November 2018. A dedicated email address ([consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk)) and freepost address if needed.
- Overall, 27 people filled in a questionnaire and 39 people engaged directly with us at the events.
- The main reasons for using the Day Centre were for meeting friends and socialising (22 service users) and to have lunch (19 service users).
- Respondents were asked what they would do if the Day Centre activities were to transfer to Porth plaza. The majority (24 service users) who responded to this question said they would attend the new community Hub and nobody stated that they would stop using the service.
- Respondents were asked what they would do If the Day Centre meals were to transfer to Porth Plaza. Nearly all (21 service users), who responded to this question said they would attend the new Community Hub for a meal.
- Further comments from the service users focussed on their desire to have the same service and meal as they currently receive in the Day Centre.
- Service users were asked what the impact of the proposed transfer of the day centre would have on them. Some of the responses stated that there would be no impact, as long as the current facilities were transferred to Porth Plaza.
- There were concerns about parking at the proposed new venue and service users wanted the meals currently provided to be transferred to the new facility along with other facilities.

- Discussion with the service users showed that they value the work and friendliness of the staff at the centre and some of the comments were concerned about the impact the proposal would have on the staff.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the consultation on proposals to relocate the services of Alec Jones Day Centre to a new Community Hub in Porth Plaza as part of a new proposed strategy for regenerating Porth Town Centre (also subject to consultation).
- 1.2 Section 2 outlines some brief background.
- 1.3 Section 3 details the methodology.
- 1.4 Section 4 presents the results from the online questionnaire.
- 1.5 Section 5 presents the views that were received at the engagement events.



## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The proposed vision for Porth Town Centre is:

*‘To transform Porth Town Centre into a prosperous and attractive town, which offers a wide range of opportunities for visitors, residents and businesses; anchored by Porth Transport Hub and a much regenerated Station Quarter’.*

2.2 The proposed strategy has identified the site currently occupied by the Alec Jones Day Centre as having the potential to accommodate a new Transport Hub. This site is ideally positioned for a Transport Hub; housing a bus interchange, taxi rank, cycle racks and linking to the train station and the park & ride. The site covers approximately 1,700 sq m allowing for the delivery of a new fit for purpose bus station, which will act as a catalyst for a much-regenerated *Station Quarter* with a mix of commercial, retail, office and residential developments.

2.3 The development of a Transport Hub at this site would provide an integrated and improved interchange that aligns both the bus and train stations that will allow them to cope with future, increased passenger numbers and increased services, whilst offering easy access to the whole public transport network. Opportunities to encourage active travel through improved pedestrian and cycle routes and the creation of cycle docking facilities will also be a key feature of the Transport Hub development

2.4 The opportunity exists for Porth Plaza to be developed as a Community Hub to provide a range of Council services from the same location. In developing Porth Plaza into a Community Hub, it was proposed to re-locate the services currently provided by Alec Jones Day Centre to the new Community Hub.

2.5 Bringing the current Day Centre services together with other services would provide a better offer and create economies of scale in terms of staffing and building costs. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new fit for purpose buildings would enable services to be sustainable in the longer term.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The targeted consultation ran for 6 weeks, from the 29<sup>th</sup> October to the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2018.
- 3.2 The aim of the consultation was to gather the views of the Alec Jones Day Centre service users on the proposal to re-locate the services currently provided by the Day Centre to the new Community Hub in Porth Plaza.
- 3.3 The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders;
- An online and paper questionnaire.
  - 2 Drop in Engagement events on the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018.
  - A poster to advertise the above events.
  - A dedicated email address ([consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk)) and freepost address if needed.
- 3.4 Overall, 27 people filled in a questionnaire and 39 people engaged directly with us at the events.

## 4 Questionnaire Results

- 4.1 27 survey responses were received.
- 4.2 All responses received were from service users (26), apart from 1 who did not say.
- 4.3 The main reasons for using the Day Centre were for meeting friends and socialising (22 service users) and to have lunch (19 service users) as shown below;

Counts Base % Respondents	
<b>Base</b>	<b>27 100.0%</b>
<b>If yes, what are your main reasons for using the Day Centre</b>	
<b>Meet friends / socialise</b>	22 81.5%
<b>To have lunch</b>	19 70.4%
<b>Member of a group that is based in the Day Centre</b>	9 33.3%
<b>To take part in an activity that is provided at the Day Centre</b>	3 11.1%
<b>Other (Please state)</b>	2 7.4%

- 4.4 Further comments for the main reason for using the centre included;

*Breakfast everyday*

*CISWO - Coal Industry Social Workers Organisation*

*I have a shower there approx. twice weekly another purpose built facility.*

*I take part in the nail cutting service provided. This is important to me as I can no longer reach and cut my own toenails.*

*Old Age- Thursday, Bingo  
TV Room*

*The cooked food at lunch time is so important to us. I attend the nail cutting service.*

*The Centre provides me with a sense of companionship and I enjoy a warm affordable meal*

*Would be happy to join new groups and activities*

- 4.5 Respondents were asked what they would do if the Day Centre activities were to transfer to Porth Plaza. The majority (24 service users) who responded to this question said they would attend the new community Hub and nobody stated that they would stop using the service.

Counts Base % Respondents	
	<b>Base</b>
	<b>26 100.0%</b>
<b>If the Day Centre activities were to transfer to Porth Plaza</b>	
<b>Attend the new Community Hub in Porth Plaza</b>	24 92.3%
<b>Stop attending the Day Centre</b>	- -
<b>Attend an alternative venue</b>	1 3.8%
<b>Other (Please State)</b>	1 3.8%

- 4.6 Further comments in relation to activities at the centre included;

*As long as they have the meals and nail cutting service.*

*Free to attend. Big enough for 25/30 people. Private area. Accessible/lift.*

*Tea/coffee*

*Need to be central to Porth. Meal provisions.*

- 4.7 Respondents were asked what they would do if the Day Centre meals were to transfer to Porth Plaza. Nearly all (21 service users), who responded to this question said they would attend the new Community Hub for a meal.

Counts Base % Respondents	
	<b>Base</b> <b>23</b> <b>100.0%</b>
<b>If the Day Centre meals were to transfer to Porth Plaza, ...</b>	
<b>Attend the new Community Hub in Porth Plaza</b>	21 91.3%
<b>Stop attending the Day Centre</b>	- -
<b>Attend an alternative venue</b>	1 4.3%
<b>Other (Please State)</b>	1 4.3%

- 4.8 Further comments from the service users focussed on the desire to have the same service and type of meal as they currently receive in the Day Centre.

*Cooked dinners- would want exactly the same at the same price*

*Meals the same. Price the same. Service received.*

*Meals, price and service the same*

*Would expect to have the same type of meal as I get in Alec Jones*

*Same meals- hot meals*

*Don't know- parking is a problem by the Plaza. Want similar meals.*

*Is there enough room to prepare cooked food in the Plaza because we want our dinner there*

- 4.9 Service users were asked how the transfer of the day centre would impact upon them. The following are a selection of the comments received;

No Impact

*As I have had confirmation that my group can continue to meet in the plaza with the same conditions there will be no impact.*

*No difference as long as you can still have meals and socialise*

*No impact*

*None if like for like*

*Would attend in Porth Plaza*

*Would make it easier*

*It would be just a matter of getting used to the new venue*

Parking Concerns

*Difficult parking*

*Did query car parking in the town centre.*

*I have concerns about the parking availability around the Plaza*

*Parking/disabled. Unsure.*

*Parking availability*

*Personally, I am capable of the extra walking involved, should I need to use my car then parking space is needed.*

*Wouldn't see friends as they couldn't park. Isolation.*

Other concerns

*Health and safety- dangerous y/p running around. Need our own area.*

*I will miss the warmth and kindness*

*Large impact- attended for 16 years*

*Loss of social outlet*

*Longer walk to get there from my bus stop. Sometimes I take the taxi, not regular.*

*Negative impact if there is nowhere to go or nothing to do during the days*

#### 4.10 Any other comments and suggestions included;

##### Similar Service required

*As long as kept the same would be happy*

##### Meals

*I feel that the Porth plaza should be able to provide an adequate meal service in line with the Alec Jones day centre, a service well provided by the workforce down the years*

*If meals at lunchtime can't be provided toast and tea provision would be important. Want somewhere to sit and socialise all AM. Not a café feel*

##### Staff

*I am concerned about the staff*

*We are worried about the ladies working at Alec Jones Day Centre. They cook good food we want them to cook for us.*

##### Parking

*Concerned about car parking around the plaza*

##### Keep the Day Centre as it is

*Keep it as it is. Take account of older people and disabled.*

*Keep this open*

*Keep the Alec Jones Day Centre, instead build bus station etc. around this.*

##### Respondent Profile

4.11 The gender split of respondents was 50/50.

4.12 The majority of respondents were 75+ (84%)

- 4.13 Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. The comments below show a selection of those received;

*Age*

*Age and Mobility - my eyes are very poor. I would need to get used to going to another building.*

*Age, Disability*

*Disability*

- 4.14 Under the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards the Council has a legal duty to look at how the decisions impact on the Welsh Language. The comments below show a selection of those received;

*As I attend a welsh group I feel that more people may attend the centre.*

*Consideration for Welsh classes*

*This centre already has a Welsh language class 10am Friday takes place in the TV room.*

- 4.15 As part of the consultation process the Council also engaged with the family of the late Alec Jones' regarding the proposals to relocate the Day Centre to the new Community Hub in Porth Plaza and to look at how it could recognise the name and contribution made by Alec Jones going forward if the proposals were agreed. The family suggested an appropriate way in which to recognise Alex Jones' positive contribution would be to erect a plaque on the site of the former Day Centre or new Transport Hub.



## 5 Engagement Events

### Drop In events

- 5.1 We engaged with 39 people at the drop in events. The Day Centre service users were mainly guided through the questionnaire to respond. In addition the conversations at the events can be summarised under the following themes;

#### Keep the Centre

- Purpose built building and facilities why not keep
- Why can't they build the bus station next to the Day Centre?
- Purpose built, 30 years ago, stay as it is here
- Was purposefully built using European funding

#### Replicate in Porth Plaza

- Importance of the Centre for social interaction. The new one needs to look the same.
- Nail cutting facility must continue
- Need similar size rooms/space as are available now.
- Old Age Arosfa Group (Bingo – 30 people) - Meet every other week, would like to meet weekly in Porth Plaza if possible. Happy to move across, as long as they can continue to meet and hopefully weekly.

#### Meals

- Concerns about the layout and open plan nature of the existing Porth Plaza. Some service users wanted to see a separate dining area exclusively for their use.
- Concerns that the cooking facilities in Porth are not adequate/large enough
- The provision at Porth Plaza should be the same type of meals, available at the same time of day and at the same cost.
- Want hot food/meals the same as they are now.
- Hot meals at same cost as now.
- Not so much about moving down to Porth Plaza, more about the fact we want hot meals down there

### Parking

- Disabled parking issues at the Porth Plaza, lack of parking

### Health/Social

- Health - "helps with my depression"
- Fairly mobile so I will be able to get to the Porth Plaza
- Good for old and disabled people in the community
- Saves money on placements in care and health
- Helps with loneliness and isolation, depression and dementia
- Interaction with people important
- Older people need help cooking, due to health, standing up and mental health.

### Other

- Need for the shower room
- TV Room well used
- Dangerous road on the corner of Porth Plaza, could be dangerous, may need a new crossing

By virtue of paragraph(s) 13 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 13 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 13 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank