



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, 21st March, 2019 at 10.30 am**

**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, 19 March 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

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. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA

To receive the report of the Director, Education & Inclusion Services advising Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of proposals to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the greater Pontypridd area.

(Pages 5 - 364)

3. EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES PLANNED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20

To receive the report of the Director, Education & Inclusion Services outlining details of the capital works for approval for 2019/20 as part of the Council's three-year Capital Programme.

(Pages 365 - 380)

4. HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

To receive the report of the Group Director, Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services providing the detailed capital programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects 2019/20 - 2021/22.

(Pages 381 - 404)

5. DIGITAL STRATEGY WORK PROGRAMME - DATACENTRE RELOCATION

To receive the report of the Director, Finance & Digital Services setting out a proposal for the relocation of the Council's Datacentre facility, which forms part of a wider work programme to support the ongoing delivery of the Council's Digital Strategy 2020.

(Pages 405 - 416)

6. PRE-SCRUTINY - PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2019-20

To receive the report of the Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services providing details of the pre-scrutiny undertaken by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

(Pages 417 - 560)

7. 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
Gio Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Colin Atyeo, Director of Corporate Estates & Procurement
Jane Cook, Director, Regeneration, Planning & Housing
Nigel Wheeler, Group Director, Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Paul Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources
Simon Gale, Service Director, Planning
Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Derek James, Head of Regeneration and Prosperity

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21ST MARCH 2019

21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA

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

Authors: Mrs Gaynor Davies Director of Education and Inclusion Services and Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools

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 reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the greater Pontypridd area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 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 Consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report and note its publication and distribution to the relevant stakeholders as required by the Welsh Government School Organisation Code.
- 2.3 Agree to progress the proposals to the next stage of the review process by firstly agreeing to publish the Consultation Report, and secondly, issuing appropriate Statutory Notices after the Consultation Report is published.
- 2.4 Agree to an amendment of the proposals in relation to catchment changes such that there will be no change to the catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School.

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 3rd October 2018, approval was given to begin a process to formally consult on proposals to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the greater Pontypridd area.
- 4.2 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. 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 1st August 2019 in this instance.
- 4.3 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix A 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.
- 4.4 Members' attention should be drawn to the summary of the responses from Estyn on page 6 of the Consultation Report, which are reproduced in full as Appendix 5 to the attached consultation report.

5. THE STATUTORY PROCESS

- 5.1 Four statutory notices will need to be published in respect of these proposals, as follows:-
- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11 – 19 years to 11 – 16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision;
 - The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;

- The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
 - The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh medium Primary School on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School.
- 5.2 If agreed, and subject to the matter not being called in for consideration by Scrutiny, the Consultation Report will be published on 28th March 2019. Following this the Statutory Notices will be published on 1st April 2019 and will allow for a minimum 28 day period for objections, ending on 10th May 2019.
- 5.3 If any objections are received during this period, in accordance with the aforementioned Code, an Objection Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, probably in June 2019, for Members to receive and consider the Objection Report and to make a final decision on this to Welsh Government approval.
- 5.4 The proposals consulted upon, in this report, are dependent on decisions taken on the future restructuring of sixth form provision. The School Organisation Code states that any proposals which affect sixth form education must be approved by the Welsh Ministers; and the Council **must** also send to the Welsh Ministers any proposals which it considers are related to the proposals requiring determination.
- 5.5 However, Welsh Government have already confirmed that they will only determine the proposal relating to the removal of the sixth form from Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School. Any statutory objections received must be sent to the Welsh Ministers, in addition to the Objection Report referred to above, within 35 days of the end of the objection period for them to consider and determine the outcome of the Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School proposal. The remaining proposals will be for the Council’s Cabinet to determine.
- 5.6 The closure of the schools and the opening of new schools in accordance with the statutory notices will still be subject to the approval by Welsh Government of the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme Final Business Cases associated with these proposals.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 If the proposal proceeds, it is proposed that £37.4 million be invested in building new or refurbishing / remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21st Century learning environment. This will be funded by the 21st 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.
- 6.2 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.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 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 included at Appendix 2 of the attached consultation report.

8 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP

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

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 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 on 1st April 2019 to progress these proposals.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People

Background Papers

The paper included as an appendix to the report is:

- **The Consultation Report**

Contact Officer

Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager - 01443 744062

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21.03.19

Item: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA

Background Papers

NONE

Officer to contact:

APPENDIX A

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONSULTATION REPORT

Proposals: The reorganisation of primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area.

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This report is prepared in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

1. 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

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School, Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School, Pontypridd High School, Cilfynydd Primary School, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and YGG Pont Sion Norton
- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Abercynon Primary, Cefn Primary, Coedpenmaen Primary, Coedylan Primary, Craig yr Hesg Primary, Ffynnon Taf Primary, Gwauncelyn Primary, Gwaunmeisgyn Primary, Llanilltud Faerdref Primary, Llantrisant Primary, Llwynocrwn Primary, Maesybryn Primary, Maesycod Primary, Parclewis Primary, Penygawsi Primary, Trallwng Infants, Trehopcyn Primary, Trerobart Primary, Ynysboeth Primary, YGG Abercynon, YGG Evan James, YGG Garth Olwg, St Michaels RC Primary, Our Lady's RC Primary, SS Gabriel & Raphael RC Primary, St Helens RC Primary (Caerphilly), Mountain Ash Comprehensive, Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg and Ysgol Ty Coch.
- Other Governing Bodies of neighbouring primary and secondary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of St David's College
- The City and County of Cardiff Council
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Pontypridd, Ogmore and Cynon Valley constituencies
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- Teaching and support staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner

- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities for Work Plus Employment Support Programme
- Community Councils: Pontypridd Town Council, Llantwit Fardre Community Council, Llantrisant Community Council, Ynysybwl/Coed y Cwm Community Council
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Menter Iaith
- The Welsh Language Commissioner

2. The Proposals

The proposals are to:

- Develop post 16 education provision at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School site, which will incorporate the two Welsh medium provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools to better meet and match the demand for school places;
- Improve the learning environments for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was available to all the stakeholders listed and which is attached as Appendix 1. The Community Impact Assessments, Equality Impact Assessment and the Welsh Language Impact Assessment are also attached as Appendix 2.

3. The Consultation Process

All stakeholders identified in Section 1 were advised of the availability of the consultation document and when required were provided with a hard copy. In addition to this, the following meetings were also convened:

School Affected	Group	Time, Date & Venue
Hawthorn High School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday, 12th November 2018, 3.30pm, Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday 12th November 2018, 3.30pm, Pontypridd High School
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 4pm, Heol Y Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 4pm, Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday, 19th November 2018, 4pm, Cilfynydd Primary School

School Affected	Group	Time, Date & Venue
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	Governors and Staff Meeting	Tuesday, 20th November 2018, 4pm YGG, Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 3.30pm, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 3.30pm, Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Hawthorn High School	School Council	Monday, 12th November 2018, 2pm Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High School	School Council	Monday, 12th November 2018, 2pm Pontypridd High School
Heol Y Celyn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 2.30pm, Heol Y Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 2.30pm, Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary School	School Council	Monday, 19th November 2018, 2.30pm, Cilfynydd Primary School
YGG Pont Sion Norton	School Council	Tuesday, 20th November 2018, 2.30pm, YGG Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	School Council	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 2pm Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	School Council	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 2pm Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School

Notes of all of the above meetings are attached at Appendix 3. These notes record the questions raised, and the comments and statements made, with responses provided where appropriate.

In addition to these meetings, and in order to provide the opportunity for more debate and dialogue on the proposals, five open evening/exhibitions were held at various locations throughout the areas affected by the proposals. Officers from the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate, Corporate Estates, Highways, School Transport and Human Resources were in attendance.

At these open evenings all attendees were requested to sign in so that the level of attendance could be recorded. The attendance registers indicate that a total of 187

people attended these events over the five nights. Attendees included school governors, staff, pupils, local councillors, the constituency Assembly Member, the Member of Parliament, parents and local residents. The highest number of consultees that attended a single session was 59, and the lowest number of attendees was only 20.

A meeting with the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee was held on 19th 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 4.

We are required to consult with the Education Inspectorate for Wales, Estyn on each of our proposals. A summary of their response is set out below, and the detailed response is available in Appendix 5.

- **Proposal to change sixth form provision** — *It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education;*
- **Proposal to change primary and secondary school provision in the Hawthorn area** – *It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education;*
- **Proposal to change primary and secondary provision in Pontypridd** – *It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area;*
- **Proposal to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School and create a Welsh medium community primary school** – *It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.*

4. Summary of Responses to Consultation

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 3.

Questionnaires

2,168 questionnaires were received during the consultation period. Some were sent in via email, some were received at the open evenings, some by post, by hand, and the vast majority came via the schools affected by the proposals.

Pupils at Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools completed a large proportion of questionnaires received. We have been made aware by staff members and pupils of these schools that the questionnaires were completed during school time and under staff supervision. These questionnaires were either delivered by, or collected directly from the schools themselves.

Both Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High Schools wrote to parents and carers sharing their intended response to the consultation proposals. The letter encouraged parents and carers to copy the responses shared by the respective schools. These letters are included in Appendices 6 and 7 respectively.

For transparency it should be noted that the template for recording consultation responses had been altered by two of the schools and a significant proportion of responses were subsequently recorded on the modified proforma. We acknowledge that these may have been modified as it was felt that not all of the questions were personally relevant to all consultees. It is considered however that each individual proposal is an integral part of the wider strategic school management plan, and by not giving consultees the opportunity to complete the full questionnaire, they were inadvertently not given the opportunity to comment fully on all proposals as intended. It is also unclear whether or not learners were given full access to consultation information in order to make an informed decision on all proposals.

The number of altered questionnaires received totals 1,016. This equates to 47% of the total number of questionnaires received.

The breakdown of the respondents who submitted questionnaires is below:

Total Received	2,168
Parents	533
Pupils	1,040
Staff	163
Residents	64
Other/Unspecified	368

The results of the questionnaires received are below:

Proposal 1 – The Proposed Changes to Sixth Form Provision							
For	150	Against	1,735	Unsure	130	N/A Not answered	153
Proposal 2 – Create a new 3-16 school for Hawthorn							
For	278	Against	504	Unsure	299	N/A Not answered	1,087
Proposal 3 – Create a new 3-16 school for Pontypridd							
For	205	Against	746	Unsure	738	N/A Not answered	479
Proposal 4 – Creation of a new Welsh medium primary school							
For	125	Against	427	Unsure	333	N/A Not answered	1,283

Proposal 5 – Catchment area changes							
For	926	Against	698	Unsure	317	N/A Not answered	227

General Correspondence

In addition to the questionnaires, a number of respondents sent in letters and emails. There were 427 written responses received during the consultation period, and of these 109 were duplicates. Copies of all responses have been scrutinised by Cabinet and will be fully considered as part of the decision making process.

Owen Smith MP undertook a separate consultation on the proposals via the schools affected, the results of which are not included in the body of this report. This is an inappropriate use of school time and resources duplicating a statutory process over which Mr Smith has no mandate. The results of this additional consultation were collated and analysed by Owen Smith MP. In the interests of transparency, this information is included at Appendix 8.

A summary of the comments received during the consultation period taken from the questionnaires and other correspondence, as well as feedback provided verbally at the public drop-in sessions, is recorded below.

We received a number of letters and emails that were duplicated, and a number of responses whilst not duplicated, contained common themes, questions and concerns. Where this is the case, to avoid repetition we have captured these as singular comments in this part of the report.

Responses have been grouped below in relation to the section of the proposals to which they refer. Where required, and/or appropriate, our responses are also included. The comments are in bold and where appropriate, our response follows:

Proposal 1 – Sixth form changes

Cardinal Newman

- **Why isn't Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School receiving any investment similar to that being invested in the other schools in the proposal?**

Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School is a voluntary aided school and is governed, managed and controlled by the Roman Catholic Church. It is the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Diocese to apply to Welsh Government for capital funding to improve the quality of the buildings or to create 3-16 schools. Welsh Government has a capital allocation available at favourable terms for church schools, where 85% of the capital investment requirements are met by Welsh Government. However, the Council is supporting the Diocesan to develop business cases to secure 21st Century Schools funding for a number of potential investments in church schools.

- **Does St David's College have the capacity to take on new pupils?**

The Principal of St David's College has confirmed that they do.

- **How will pupils be transported to St David's College?**

Free transport will be provided for those who meet the Home to School Transport criteria. Pupils that do not live in RCT will have to contact their own Council's School Transport Department for further information on criteria and eligibility.

- **The proposals to co-operate with St David's College, Cardiff, are welcomed.**

The A Level outcomes at St David's College are very good, for example in 2018, 30% achieved A*-A, 84% achieved A*-C and 98% achieved A*-E.

- **Why wasn't Cardinal Newman considered an appropriate site for the sixth form centre?**

There is already post-16 education provision in this area at the Nantgarw Campus of Coleg Y Cymoedd. Post 16 students in Cardinal Newman, Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School are already opting for Coleg Y Cymoedd with retention rates of year 11 pupils transferring into year 12, in their current school equating to 35.83%, 35.71% and 32.26% respectively, with 47.5%, 48.2% and 48.3% respectively transferring to Further Education.

- **Where is the equality impact assessment and community impact assessment for Cardinal Newman?**

The consultation document and the consultation process is prepared in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. These documents are not a requirement for the changes that affect Cardinal Newman.

- **Have students been consulted?**

Yes they have. In accordance with the School Organisation Code, officers from the Council met with individual school councils as a part of the consultation process. Notes taken at these sessions are included within Appendix 3.

In addition to this, numerous written responses from pupils were received during the consultation period.

- **Will Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School still work with Y Pant Comprehensive School? What scope is there to widen the catchment area for post 16 to include Y Pant?**

The advice given to the school is to continue to work collaboratively with Y Pant and to further strengthen the links and shared learning opportunities that both schools have forged. At this moment in time there are no plans to include Y Pant in these proposals.

- **Why hasn't Cardinal Newman Comprehensive School been taken into account for the 3-16 proposals? St Michael's RC Primary School should join Cardinal Newman to make a 3-16 school.**

As previously stated, the decision to progress any such scheme would be have to be made by the Diocese.

Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School

- **What will be the result of the investment in the new school?**

The £10m funding that has been allocated to this project is a part of a larger sum that has been approved in principle by the Welsh Government through its 21st Century Schools Programme. The Council will need to undertake a full review of the school site and will undertake site and building surveys before early design work can commence. This will be done in collaboration with the school.

Priority for this funding will be to improve the sixth form facilities at the school, however it is envisaged that other improvements and refurbishment works to the school will also be incorporated.

- **Can you extend the ALN provision to post 16 to ensure the sixth form centre of excellence is inclusive for all?**

As a Council we are committed to ensuring that learners access the most appropriate post 16 provision suitable to their needs. Not all learners with additional learning needs are able to access the level 3 courses that are predominantly available in our mainstream schools as this would not be appropriate to their needs. However, thorough effective person centred planning continued focus will be placed on securing the most appropriate post 16 provision for learners with additional learning needs. For learners who are able to access post 16 courses within a mainstream setting, a robust assessment of their needs and bespoke provision will be required to ensure curriculum access and successful outcomes. For some learners with additional learning needs, more vocational routes to learning within a further education institution is more appropriate to their needs and effective transitional planning will be required.

The Council has a well-established partnership with Coleg Y Cymoedd and post 16 special school satellite bases are situated on Aberdare, Llwynypia and Nantgarw campuses for learners with severe and complex learning needs.

- **What is a centre of excellence?**

Excellent is a term used by Estyn to judge the performance of an education provider in a number of defined categories. An excellent school demonstrates very strong and sustained performance and practice and it is the Council's education ambition to ensure all that pupils have access to high quality educational experiences and excellent provision at all key stages, including post 16 provision.

In terms of these proposals, we would define this as an education provision that has excellent standards of leadership, learning and well-being, in facilities that are equipped to deliver a 21st Century learning experience.

- **It will be difficult for pupils from different schools to come together at sixth form.**

Data suggests that this is already happening very successfully at a post 16 level in Coleg Y Cymoedd and at a number of schools within the County Borough. All secondary schools will continue to provide impartial careers advice and guidance, and

will work in partnership with schools that provide sixth form provision and Coleg Y Cymoedd to ensure that the transition at post 16 continues to be well managed and successful. Offering choice for learners and securing the most appropriate learning pathway is a priority for ensuring engagement and successful outcomes for post 16 learners.

- **The school will be too large, you will lose the personal touch.**

There are a number of larger schools in the County Borough, and significantly larger schools across Wales. The benefits of having a larger sixth form provision outweigh the advantages of smaller schools as the curriculum offer provided in larger school settings ensures greater choice for learners.

- **It will benefit pupils as more courses will be available.**

Yes. There will be a greater number of post 16 courses available and greater opportunities for students to opt for their preferred combination of subjects.

- **The buildings are outdated and need upgrading. The investment will provide better facilities and opportunities.**

Yes. The investment will benefit all students not just those studying in the sixth form.

- **Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is an excellent school with improving results**

Yes. The Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 data for 2018 evidences this statement.

- **Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is the natural choice for the sixth form centre – budget, capacity and attainment.**

Yes. The school has strong and effective leadership and this is evident by many performance indicators.

- **Slightly larger post 16 class sizes will provide a better learning environment for children**

Yes. Having larger post 16 classes creates greater opportunities for collaboration between students and for sharing a wider range of experiences.

Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School

- **Partnership working has already been attempted with Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Y Pant Comprehensive School and it failed.**

The proposal is not suggesting a partnership between Pontypridd/Hawthorn High School and Bryncelynnog/Y Pant. The proposals are to establish a larger and improved provision based at Bryncelynnog. This is not a consortium arrangement. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the schools do offer and share a limited number of post 16 courses.

- **Only a small number of pupils in both schools have expressed an interest in attending Bryncelynnog for sixth form.**

We cannot comment on the survey undertaken by the two schools with their pupils. However, the actual data on the number of pupils that choose to stay in Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School for their sixth form provision is very low. For example, for Pontypridd High School in September 2018 out of a potential 155 pupils in year 11 (as at July 2018), only 50 returned to Year 12, indicating that 67.74% choose alternative provision. This clearly suggests that Pontypridd High School does not currently provide the choice of curriculum options or educational experiences that some learners are seeking. Furthermore, if the curriculum offer is likely to be further restricted in future due to the deficit position, a further decline in numbers is inevitable and the provision will become even more unviable. The position was the same for Hawthorn High School in September 2018. Out of a potential 112 pupils in year 11 (as at July 2018), only 40 returned to Year 12, indicating that 64.29% choose not return to Hawthorn High School. By enhancing the curriculum offer in Bryncelynnog School it is likely that an increase in pupil numbers will be experienced as evidenced in Tonyrefail Comprehensive School following the implementation of the recent 21st Century Schools developments in the Rhondda.

- **£10m in Bryncelynnog will be used for the poor quality buildings, not just the sixth form.**

All the improvements made to the buildings at Bryncelynnog will potentially benefit sixth form learners and other pupils. For example, science labs upgrades will be utilised by all students.

- **Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools should not be compared to Bryncelynnog given that they are in different Free School Meals categories**

For the post 16 provision the Welsh Government data does not compare performance of schools based on the free school meal categories. However, the Council's data evidences that the majority of pupils eligible for free school meals do not return to the sixth forms in Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools. The majority opt to study at Coleg Y Cymoedd. In September 2018, only 10.7% of the Key Stage 5 cohort were eligible for free school meals in Pontypridd High School and 14.0% in Hawthorn High School - a significantly lower figure than that in Key Stage 4 in both schools. Therefore, as the free school meal comparison at Key Stage 5 between Pontypridd, Hawthorn and Bryncelynnog secondary schools is not significantly different, it is not unreasonable to compare and contrast the performance of learners, particularly at A-level.

- **Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools commented that the A-level results are misleading in the consultation document. They maintain that they have been above the Welsh average on the majority of the indicators**

The data in the consultation document is based on Welsh Government data sets. Welsh Government updated the Key Stage 5 results on 12/11/18. The following table shows the most recent results published on the Welsh Government All Wales Core Data Sets and provides data relating to Level 3 outcomes, the Average Wider Points Score (AWPS) and the percentage of learners achieving 3A*/C. The results confirm that the Key Stage 5 results for both schools at 3A*/C are consistently below both the RCT and the Welsh average from 2015-2017.

		Level 3 %	Average Wider Points Score	3 A*/C %
2015	Hawthorn High	98.2	772.7	14.0
	Pontypridd High	95.2	856.8	20.6
	Cardinal Newman	96.2	832.4	30.4
	Bryncelynnog	98.6	670.2	34.7
	RCT lowest	89.2	455.9	14.0
	RCT average	97.0	730.2	28.6
	Wales average	97.0	799.7	40.0
2016	Hawthorn High	97.6	772.3	14.3
	Pontypridd High	100	928.4	27.5
	Cardinal Newman	98.7	812.1	21.3
	Bryncelynnog	100	823.8	46.6
	RCT lowest	92.2	521.9	11.8
	RCT average	97.0	765.7	29.0
	Wales average	98.0	823.2	38.3
2017	Hawthorn High	100	739.9	41.7
	Pontypridd High	100	820.9	42.6
	Cardinal Newman	95.6	774.8	58.8
	Bryncelynnog	94.3	787.5	52.8
	RCT lowest	86	507.1	16.3
	RCT average	96.3	677.6	45.1
	Wales average	97.1	730.6	54.7

- **The AWPS for Pontypridd High School is higher than most schools.**

The AWPS is calculated by dividing the total number of points gained from all courses sat at Key Stage 5 and not just the number of A-levels or their equivalent. Pontypridd High School provide a large number of Key Skill courses that inflate this figure and makes comparison with any other institutions very difficult. Due to this very issue, the Welsh Government no longer uses the AWPS as an assessment criteria comparator.

It should also be noted that the AWPS is not a criteria that is used by Universities in scoring a student's University application.

- **Pontypridd and Hawthorn High advised that they were not happy with the use of the negative language used to describe the schools.**

It was not the intention to convey negativity towards any schools affected by this consultation. The language and terminology used in the consultation document are commentaries based on the interrogation of the data. It is also important to reflect when considering the performance of Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools that until recently both schools were two of forty secondary schools across Wales that were identified by Welsh Government as consistently underperforming and were included in the Schools Challenge Cymru Programme. Over the three years to 2017 both schools had significant additional investment which in total was in excess of £1.24m in addition to the funding allocation from the Council and had access to high quality leadership and teaching support provided directly by Welsh Government. This investment has provided the two schools with a significant advantage over similar schools in Wales. However, despite this considerable additional resource both schools remain in a significant deficit position.

- **The education standards in Coleg Y Cymoedd were raised as a concern, as were the results and the 2017 Estyn Report.**

It is acknowledged that Estyn's inspection of Coleg Y Cymoedd in 2017 was critical of the A-Level provision. However, Estyn recognised that the College was in the process of improving the quality of the provision and graded the College's prospects for improvement as 'good'. The 2018 results support Estyn's conclusions for improvement.

Furthermore, the College has also invested in employing new A Level teachers and the new Principal continues to raise accountability and performance across both the academic and vocational subjects. The successful completion rates for the College have increased for 2018 by 3% and 8% for the A Level Centre.

The current data in the table below shows that the A-level performance of Bryncelynnog and Coleg Y Cymoedd continues to improve. Bryncelynnog is the third best performing sixth form in RCT based on the A*-C A Level performance, Coleg Y Cymoedd sixth best, Cardinal Newman ninth, Hawthorn 12th and Pontypridd 13th.

	Percentage of A-levels		
	A*-A	A*-C	A*-E
Bryncelynnog CS	34.5	81.8	97.3
Coleg Y Cymoedd	17.8	74.8	99.0
Cardinal Newman RC CS	24.4	72.6	98.8
Hawthorn HS	16.9	58.4	88.8
Pontypridd HS	17.4	58.3	90.3
RCT Average	20.2	71.6	95.4
Central South Average	25.6	75.8	97.4

The FE Colleges Learner Outcomes Report was published by Welsh Government on 7th February 2019. It evidences further progress by Coleg Y Cymoedd across a wide range of curriculum areas including A Levels. The College is now performing above the national comparator rates for the main overall qualifications and above the national comparators for 65% of all subject areas. This is a significant improvement from 2014/15 when no subject area was above the national comparators. This data also does not take into account the higher than average level of deprivation of the students, when compared to the Welsh average.

- **Questions regarding the numbers for a viable sixth form.**

250 learners was the calculated number of learners specified in the Welsh Government's Learning and Skills Measure 2009 in order for a sixth form provision to financially break even. It is likely that this figure is higher now as the funding per pupil is relatively lower, with any increases not keeping pace with inflation.

- **The accuracy of the numbers in the document that relate to sixth form class sizes were questioned.**

These have been scrutinised and are accurate.

Each school is funded directly for the number of students enrolled on each course. Hence if there are 14 students undertaking a course in Pontypridd High School but 8 are from Hawthorn, Pontypridd High School will only receive funding for the 6 Pontypridd High School students.

- **The sixth form projected figures are questioned.**

The forecasted figures are based on current data and trends.

- **What is the justification for moving all sixth form provision out of the town area of Pontypridd?**

The justification for removing the sixth forms from Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman is not based on geography alone. Coleg Y Cymoedd offers this provision and is located in the catchment area of Hawthorn High School, a school that serves Pontypridd. As stated in the consultation document the justification for this change relates to improving education standards, meeting pupil demand, providing more choice, and improving financial viability to develop a sustainable provision.

- **How can a centre of excellence be created in Coleg Y Cymoedd when the LA has no input into it?**

The Council has an effective working relationship with Coleg Y Cymoedd and has supported the campus developments in Aberdare, Llwynypia and Nantgarw.

The relationship between the College and the Council is stronger than ever with opportunities for collaboration between both parties being developed in many new areas. The Chief Executive of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Education are governors on the College Board.

- **Should the £10m earmarked for Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School be used to build a sixth form provision in Pontypridd?**

There is already a provision in Pontypridd at Coleg Y Cymoedd.

Proposal 2 – Creation of a new 3-16 school for Hawthorn

- **What evidence is there to support the fact that an all-through school works?**

The Council's first all-through school opened in Llanhari six years ago, and another three all-through schools opened in September 2018. There are also a number of other Councils throughout Wales that have opened or are in the process of opening or consulting on opening all-through schools too. As such the data on this school model is relatively new.

We are however gathering data in the form of educational outcomes, attendance figures, pupil voice surveys etc, to make sure that we are constantly monitoring these schools and will continue to do so going forward. Anecdotally we are receiving very positive reports from all of the schools.

- **Will the younger and older children be segregated? I don't want my young child exposed to older themes and inappropriate language.**

We have a number of all-through schools operating in the County Borough and this is managed with appropriate segregation of the younger and older pupils. The schools are designed so that there are separate entrances, learning environments, toilets, and outdoor learning and play spaces.

The all-through schools in the County Borough are managed differently depending on the ethos that the Headteacher instils within the school, and so no school operates in exactly the same way. However, what is common is that when pupils from different ages integrate or work collaboratively on school projects, it is done under supervision. It should also be recognised that older school children can be positive role models to younger children and can assist with peer mentoring and buddying schemes.

- **What will be the impact of the extra traffic? How will this be managed?**

A 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 most recent school changes in Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail resulted in the Council investing significant sums in improved safe routes to schools, which benefit the whole community and have proved successful in their operation.

- **Will the teachers have the experience and skills to teach across all key stages?**

The structure of the new 3-16 school, and the relevant staffing structure, will be developed and implemented by the interim Governing Body and new Headteacher, once appointed. They will ensure that appropriately experienced staff are appointed under the guidance of the Council's Human Resources Team.

All-through schools provide an opportunity for further training and staff development and for the development of specialist roles.

- **Pupils will have to be taught on a building site.**

The contractors that will be undertaking the works on site will be experienced in working on live school sites. Their experience of this will be one of many aspects scored as a part of the competitive tender process.

The health and safety of the pupils and staff will be paramount at all times, and the contractors will work collaboratively with the school and the Council to ensure that any disruption is minimised. The Council has significant experience in managing this and the processes and procedures that we have adopted on other projects have been very successful.

- **Does this model copy England's Academy Schools?**

No it does not.

- **Class sizes will be too big.**

The capacity of the school and the classrooms will be designed for 30 pupils.

- **By closing the primary schools we are negatively impacting the local communities.**

A Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken and was published on the Council's website. It is also attached within Appendix 2 of this report.

- **Some of the communities affected have vulnerable families. How will you ensure that these families will be integrated into the new school?**

We already have considerable experience of bringing pupils and their families together when we open new schools and the process of transition is well planned and managed over a period in the run up to the start of the new school year. We will apply the previous approaches, working with the respective Headteachers to plan this effectively as early as possible.

Since we undertook the last school reorganisations in the Rhondda, the Council has established the Resilient Families Service, which delivers support to families across Rhondda Cynon Taf through a Team Around the Family (TAF) approach. The Service focuses on increasing family resilience by providing intensive support for up to 12 weeks and is designed to give families the practical help to manage the challenges they are facing by focusing on their strengths as a family.

All schools in the County Borough work closely with the Resilient Families Team to resolve any issues families are facing. Referrals to the Resilient Families Service can be made by families themselves or schools with the family's permission. Creating larger schools can also build capacity within staffing structures and opportunities for developing more specialist wellbeing and/or family liaison posts which will clearly benefit more vulnerable children and families.

Proposal 3 – Creation of a new 3-16 school for Pontypridd

- **What are the benefits of an all-through school?**

As above and as set out in the consultation document.

- **Will the younger and older children be segregated? I don't want my young child exposed to older themes and language.**

As above.

- **What will be the impact of the extra traffic? How will this be managed?**

As above.

- **Will the teachers have the experience and skills to teach across all key stages?**

As above.

- **By closing the primary schools we are negatively impacting the local communities.**

As above.

- **Concerns in relation to the pollution levels around the A470 were raised.**

The Local Authority conducts regular monitoring of ambient outdoor air quality in the County Borough and results of this monitoring are compared against health based Air Quality Objectives. The monitoring network is regularly reviewed to determine the most relevant locations to monitor, with regards to statutory guidance, previous assessments and local knowledge. The monitoring has demonstrated that the vast majority of the County Borough experiences good air quality, with the areas of poor air quality being highly localised. A copy of the latest Air Quality Progress Report is available on the Council website.

Within the County Borough it has been acknowledged that Nitrogen Dioxide, an air pollutant often associated with road traffic emissions, can be elevated in some discrete locations. This is dictated by volume of traffic, proximity of buildings/people, climate, topography of the area and the surrounding built environment. It is understood that the A470 can represent a significant source of locally experienced Nitrogen Dioxide along various parts of its length, however, a number of factors may affect its manifestation and dispersion. Therefore not all communities along the length of the A470 experience similar levels of Nitrogen Dioxide or are at risk of non-compliance to an Air Quality Objective. The Local Authority has identified three discreet areas, Cilfynydd (174 properties), Nightingales Bush (11 properties) and Treforest (8 properties) where the close proximity to the A470, the environment and topography of the area, have been significant factors in the need to declare associated Air Quality Management Areas. These three Air Quality Management Areas associated with the A470 all have resident populations in built up areas within 10-15 metres from the A470.

There is Statutory Guidance which has been utilised by the Local Authority to plan the required monitoring network in Rhondda Cynon Taf since 1998 and it assists with establishing the likelihood of compliance to an Air Quality Objective at a specific location. The current Guidance (Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance .TG16) implies that at locations such as Pontypridd High School, where members of the public/students would congregate beyond 20m from the used area of a major strategic road (the A470), they are likely to be compliant with Air Quality Objectives for Nitrogen Dioxide. There are other local factors, such as traffic flow, wind direction and topography of the area, which would also be taken into account when assessing air quality at this location. This area of the A470 has a relative free flow of traffic, compared to other more congested areas and the school is positioned on the windward side of the prevailing wind, with the wind commonly blowing in the direction to the opposite side of the A470 at this location. In addition the A470 is situated at a slightly higher elevation to the area occupied by Pontypridd High School, as a result it would benefit from improved dispersal in comparison to areas with a built environment in close proximity and directly adjacent or above the A470.

Therefore in line with statutory guidance and knowledge of the local area outlined above, no monitoring has been undertaken at Pontypridd High School, as it was not deemed to be at risk of breaching the relevant Air Quality Objective. However, to provide reassurance, a monitoring device has been set up at a potential worse case location on the campus since December 2018, to obtain the required air quality data, to enable the results to be compared against the annual Air Quality Objective for Nitrogen Dioxide.

- **Need to address traffic issues by the schools.**

A 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 most recent school changes in Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail resulted in the Council investing significant sums in improved safe routes to schools, which have benefitted the whole community.

Proposal 4 – Creation of a new Welsh Medium Primary School

- **There should be a Welsh medium school in north Pontypridd**

We are proposing to build a brand new, larger school in the Pontypridd area. School transport will be available for those who are eligible. There is already a Welsh medium school in Pontypridd i.e. YGG Evan James which has surplus capacity and there is also YGG Abercynon to the north.

- **Why not use the site in Glyncoch?**

All of the proposals included in the consultation are inter-dependant. By closing Heol Y Celyn Primary and the transferring of the English medium pupils to Hawthorn, this frees up a site, which we know is suitable, to construct a new and larger Welsh medium school which will accommodate the pupils from YGG Pont Sion Norton as well as the Welsh medium pupils already attending Heol Y Celyn.

- **Heol Y Celyn should be made into a Welsh only school as well as giving YGG Pont Sion Norton a new school.**

The demand for Welsh Medium education in this area does not justify this.

- **Pupils will have to travel further for Welsh medium education and this is not acceptable.**

It is acknowledged that this may well be the case for some pupils, however the majority of pupils will be unaffected as nearly 70% of pupils currently attending YGG Pont Sion Norton do so utilising school transport.

The school bus route distances of the new routes proposed will be shorter than the current school bus routes travelled. We have calculated the routes, and the average overall distance travelled for those pupils who already use school transport will be shortened by just over 1 mile per day.

- **The traffic caused by school transport at YGG Pont Sion Norton causes gridlock. I and other residents will be glad to see the Welsh School moved elsewhere. Years ago the school was an English medium school used by local children walking to school. This is no longer the case and the buses and parents cause misery to local residents trying to get to work.**

Yes. The home to school transport drop off and pick up each day is very difficult directly off the A4054 and this can cause congestion due to difficulties associated with the existing school site.

- **Parents would have to get two buses to pick their child up in an emergency.**

There is a direct bus to Heol Y Celyn from Glyncoch, but from Ynysybwl and Cilfynydd it would require a change of bus in Pontypridd Bus Station.

However, parents from Glyncoch and Ynysybwl needing to attend YGG Pont Sion Norton in an emergency by public transport are currently required to change buses at Pontypridd Bus Station.

The need for emergency collections should be infrequent.

- **Parents in the north of Pontypridd will not send their children to Welsh medium education because there is no Welsh medium nursery in the area. Can we put a Welsh medium nursery in another school in north Pontypridd, which could eventually feed into the new school in Rhydyfelin?**

There is already a Welsh Medium Meithrin in Ynysybwl and an unregistered setting in Cilfynydd.

- **The Council will be lowering the number of Welsh medium schools in RCT. This is unacceptable and will not help reach the Cymraeg 2050 target.**

On the contrary, these proposals are to invest in a brand new and larger primary school increasing Welsh medium pupil places by 93 across the existing provisions.

The Council is contributing to this target in other areas in the County Borough as we are increasing our Welsh medium pupils places in a number of schools through the delivery of our 21st Century School projects. We have already increased capacity and made improvements in a number of schools, including YGG Tonyrefail and YGG Llwyncelyn; we are currently consulting on increasing the Welsh medium capacity in Penderyn Community Primary School; and we are planning on increasing capacity in YGG Aberdar and YG Rhydywaun utilising 21st Century Schools investment. This highlights the Council's commitment to improving Welsh medium education.

- **25% of pupils in RCT are educated in Welsh. Does the LA spend 25% of its 21st Century Schools budget on Welsh Language Schools?**

Currently just under 20% of pupils in RCT are educated in Welsh. The 21st Century Schools programme for Band B (this is the funding that covers the works required as a part of this consultation) totals circa £168million.

Within this overarching budget, we anticipate that the investment into improving Welsh medium education will be circa £60million, which equates to 35%.

- **There is no transparency as to how this decision was made. Can we see the options that were ruled out?**

If we are to proceed with these proposals as consulted upon, then the site at Heol Y Celyn affords us with a suitable site to enable us to build a larger Welsh medium school

to our 21st Century School standards. This is a consultation period and if a decision is made not to pursue these proposals other options will then be considered.

- **The proposal for the new school should include a Welsh medium SEN unit. This is a missed opportunity.**

This may be something we consider in due course as we regularly review the need for specialist provision in the Local Authority.

Proposal 5 - Catchment Changes

- **Concerns that friendship groups of pupils in Tonteg will be split up.**

Every school has a designated catchment area, however, parents/carers have the right to state a preference for their child(ren) to attend any school. If the number of applications received for a particular year group in a school is below the school's Admission Number, all applications for admissions to that year group at the school will be granted. Bryncelynnog has over 200 surplus places and a further 200 places in the school are occupied by children from the Tonteg area. Therefore, for the foreseeable future, children that reside in Tonteg should be able to apply and secure a place at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School.

- **Concerns that there will be a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of those that attend Gwauncelyn as they transfer to a different school**

There are a number of examples across the County Borough where children in the same primary school attend a different secondary school and the transition is well planned and managed. 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 all schools involved to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and worry free as possible for the pupils.

- **Is the walking route between Gwauncelyn Primary and Hawthorn High safe?**

If the proposals to change the catchment area for Hawthorn High are to go ahead, then a review of this walking route will be commissioned to ensure the safety of pupils. This review will include an independent assessment of the route, and any recommendations made by the independent assessor will be implemented.

- **Not all pupils that live in Tonteg will be eligible for school transport to Hawthorn High School**

This is correct. The criteria used by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to determine the eligibility to receive free school transport is based on walking distance, measured by the shortest, available walking route, with free transport being provided to secondary school learners whose home address is more than two miles from the nearest or catchment school.

In terms of the distance and eligibility for free school transport, the Council operates a far more generous allowance than the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008, which

only requires transport to be provided for those secondary school pupils who live more than three miles from their nearest or catchment school.

- **Tonteg has strong community links with Llantwit Fardre and Church Village. There are no community links with Hawthorn.**

There is no reason why any community links will be adversely affected by these proposals. Gwauncelyn Primary School will remain open and so these community links will remain.

- **Concerns were raised about the walking route and the level of traffic emissions.**

There is no Air Quality Monitoring carried out in this area and the route does not go through an Air Quality Management Area. It is recognised that the A473 has congested traffic particularly at rush hours in the morning and evening along the road leading to Treforest Industrial Estate/ Upper Boat roundabout.

It's unlikely however that exposure along the route would be long enough to breach Air Quality Standards but it is recommended that exposure to air pollution is minimised as much as possible.

- **There was a lack of consultation with parents of Gwauncelyn Primary School**

The proposal is for an amendment to the catchment area of Hawthorn High School and Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, not Gwauncelyn Primary School. Notwithstanding that, the governing body, parents, carers and staff of Gwauncelyn Primary School were consulted with (a full list of consultees is included at section 1 of this report).

- **Hawthorn is a worse school than Bryncelynnog. I don't want my child to go there.**

Please see the point above that refers to pupil/parent choice.

We have acknowledged in our consultation document that Bryncelynnog has achieved consistently better results than some other secondary schools over the last few years. Also, in addition in the most recent School Categorisation System Bryncelynnog is categorised as a 'green' school where as Hawthorn High is 'yellow'.

These school reorganisation proposals are interlinked and at the heart of the proposals is raising standards in education. Through their implementation, we intend on tackling a number of the inconsistencies that exist between the schools. The removal of the sixth forms and the creation of 3-16 schools in Hawthorn and Pontypridd, will allow the schools to reallocate much needed resources to Key Stages 3-4, instead of utilising these resources to prop up small and unsustainable sixth forms. This will allow these schools to focus on appropriately resourcing and improving educational standards throughout all key stages.

Work with the new schools will continue with support from the Council to ensure that the standards of learning in the current schools will continue to improve through the transition period of the creation of the new schools and beyond.

- **There is no public transport to Hawthorn from Tonteg**

There are bus links between both areas although there are no direct transport links. A change of bus is required at the Pottery (Treforest Estate) or Parc Lewis School (Treforest).

5. Conclusion

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.

The original proposal was to:

- Close the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transfer the post-16 provision to Bryncelynog Comprehensive School or Coleg Y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Close Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton to a new school building to be constructed on the site of the current Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol-Y-Celyn will transfer to YGG Pont Sion Norton (the Heol-Y-Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn, see above);
- Amend the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained Secondary schools by:
 - Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd (that is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School) to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently part of the Bryncelynog Comprehensive School catchment).

It is recommended that the proposal set out above is maintained with the exception of the proposed change to the catchment area of Bryncelynog Comprehensive School. It is recommended that the catchment area for Gwauncelyn Primary School remains within the Bryncelynog Comprehensive School catchment area and does not transfer to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn. Since the consultation commenced in October 2018, the large brownfield site at Llanillid, Llanharan has been purchased by two major developers and the Council has entered into site master planning with the developers, to provide pre-planning advice and guidance. For the site to be developed, a new

secondary school will be required, which, will have an impact on a number of other schools as the new housing development grows. Furthermore, the Council's Local Development Plan will need to be reviewed in 2021, or an equivalent plan developed.

It is therefore proposed that the secondary school catchment areas are monitored over the next 5-10 years taking into account the planned developments and the future new Local Development Plan (or equivalent) to ensure sufficient school places are available across the County Borough.

The recommendations to be put before a forthcoming meeting of the Council's Cabinet are that the following four statutory notices are published to progress with these proposals.

- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11 – 19 years to 11 – 16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision;
- The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh medium Primary School on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School.

If agreed, the four statutory notices that make up this proposal will be published in April 2019 and it will allow for a minimum 28 day period during which time any person may lodge an objection to the proposals.

All of the proposals consulted upon, in this report, are dependent on decisions taken on the future restructuring of sixth form provision. The School Organisation Code states that any proposals which affect sixth form education must be approved by the Welsh Ministers; and the Council **must** also send to the Welsh Ministers any proposals which it considers are related to the proposals requiring determination.

However, Welsh Government have already confirmed that they will only determine the proposal relating to the removal of the sixth form from Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School. Any statutory objections received must be sent to the Welsh Ministers, in addition to the Objection Report referred to above, within 35 days of the end of the objection period for them to consider and determine the outcome of the Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School proposal.

The remaining proposals will be for the Council's Cabinet to determine. At the end of the objection period, an Objection Report will be compiled, summarising any objections received. The outcome of this part of the process will be considered by Cabinet again at a meeting to be held in June 2019.

Appendix 1

Consultation Document

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21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS



CONSULTATION ON THE REORGANISATION
OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS
AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION
IN THE PONTYPRIDD AREA

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Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposals to:

- Develop post 16 centres of excellence based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG, Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools to better meet and match the demand for school places;
- Improve the learning environments for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).

To achieve this, the proposal is to:

- Close the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transfer the post-16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Close Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Close Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and open a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol-Y-Celyn will transfer to the new school (the Heol-Y-Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn, see above);
- Amend the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained Secondary schools by:
 - Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd (that is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School) to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently part of the Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School catchment).

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, is planning to invest £37.4m in new or refurbished/remodelled school buildings and facilities.

The proposals are inter-dependent projects and it is proposed that the changes will be implemented over the period to 31 August 2022. Given the number of schools affected by the proposals, the consultation document has been set out in the following five sections, encouraging consultees to provide feedback on specific school proposals:

- **Section 1** – Overview of the Proposals;
- **Section 2** – The proposed sixth form changes;
- **Section 3** – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Hawthorn;
- **Section 4** – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Pontypridd;
- **Section 5** – The closure of YGG Pont Sion Norton and the creation of a new Welsh Medium Primary school at the current Heol-Y-Celyn site. The Welsh Medium stream of Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school also. This will increase capacity and improve Welsh Medium provision and will also remove dual language provision.

Who will we consult with?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School, Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School, Pontypridd High School, Cilfynydd Primary School, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and YGG, Pont Sion Norton
- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Abercynon Primary, Cefn Primary, Coedpenmaen Primary, Coedylan Primary, Craig yr Hesg Primary, Ffynnon Taf Primary, Gwauncelyn Primary, Gwaunmeisgyn Primary, Llanilltud Faerdref Primary, Llantrisant Primary, Llwynyrwn Primary, Maesybryn Primary, Maesycod Primary, Parc Lewis Primary, Penygawsi Primary, Trallwng Infants, Trehopcyn Primary, Trerobart Primary, Ynysboeth Primary, YGG Abercynon, YGG Evan James, YGG Garth Olwg, St Michaels RC Primary, Our Lady's RC Primary, SS Gabriel & Raphael RC Primary, St Helens RC Primary (Caerphilly), Mountain Ash Comprehensive, Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg, Ysgol Ty Coch.
- Other Governing Bodies of neighbouring primary and secondary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of St David's College
- The City and County of Cardiff Council
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Pontypridd, Ogmore and Cynon Valley constituencies
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board

- Teaching and support staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities for Work Plus Employment Support Programme
- Community Councils : Pontypridd Town Council, Llantwit Fardre Community Council, Llantrisant Community Council, Ynysybwl/Coed y Cwm Community Council
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Menter Iaith
- The Welsh Language Commissioner

What will the consultation process entail?

The consultation will start on Monday, 15th October 2018 and will be completed at 5pm on Thursday, 31st January 2019. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in February 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 address detailed on page 6 of this document.

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

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposals Statutory Notices will be 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 Statutory Notices are published.

As the proposals include changes to sixth form education, the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills will determine the outcome of the Statutory Notice in respect of the Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School proposals. The outcome of the Statutory Notices in respect of the creation of the two 3 – 16 schools and the closure and relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton will be determined by the Council's Cabinet.

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 her response to them within 7 days of the determination decision of the proposals by the Council's Cabinet, for the proposals Cabinet are responsible for. Any objections received in respect of the Cardinal Newman proposal will be sent to the Welsh Ministers for consideration within 35 days of the end of the objection period. The objection 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 address detailed on page 6 of this document.

What do you have to consider?

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed changes to Welsh and English primary, secondary and post 16 education provision in the communities within the catchment areas of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools, and YGG Pont Sion Norton. 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 outlined in the Introduction section of this document on page 1.

How do you make your views known?

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

School Affected	Group	Time, Date & Venue
Hawthorn High School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday, 12th November 2018, 3.30pm, Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday 12th November 2018, 3.30pm, Pontypridd High School
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 4pm, Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 4pm, Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday, 19th November 2018, 4pm Cilfynydd Primary School
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	Governors and Staff Meeting	Tuesday, 20th November 2018, 4pm YGG, Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 3.30pm, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 3.30pm, Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Hawthorn High School	School Council	Monday, 12th November 2018, 2pm Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High School	School Council	Monday, 12th November 2018, 2pm Pontypridd High School
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 2.30pm, Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14th November 2018, 2.30pm, Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary School	School Council	Monday, 19th November 2018, 2.30pm, Cilfynydd Primary School
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	School Council	Tuesday, 20th November 2018, 2.30pm, YGG, Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	School Council	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 2pm Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	School Council	Thursday, 22nd November 2018, 2pm Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School

School Affected	Group	Time, Date & Venue
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday, 15th January 2019, 3 - 6pm Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Wednesday, 16th January 2019, 3 - 6pm, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary Welsh Department – both schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 17th January 2019, 4 - 6pm Rhydyfelin Children’s Centre
Hawthorn High, Hawthorn Primary and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary– all three schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday, 22nd January 2019, 3 - 6 pm Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High and Cilfynydd Primary – both schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 24th January 2019, 3 - 6 pm Pontypridd High School

Consultation questionnaires are attached. These will also be available at the drop-in session detailed above and on the Council’s website at www.rctcbc.gov.uk

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

Director of Education and Inclusion Services
21st Century Schools team,
Ty Trevithick,
Abercynon CF45 4UQ

Telephone: (01443) 744227

Email: schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

All correspondence should be received no later than 5pm on Thursday, 31st January 2019.

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be treated as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the Statutory Notices.

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 language 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, please contact the address above.

SECTION 1

Overview of the Proposals

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposals to:

- Develop post 16 centres of excellence based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by creating new school provision to replace Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools to better meet and match the demand for school places;
- Improve the learning environments for pupils with additional learning needs.

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £37.4m in building new or refurbishing/remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21st Century learning environment.

This investment will include:

- New and refurbished buildings at Hawthorn Primary and High School sites and Pontypridd High School site to create two 3-16 schools;
- New and improved sixth form facilities at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School;
- Construction of a new Welsh Medium Primary school that will be constructed on the current site of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School. The capacity of the building will be sufficient to incorporate YGG Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh Medium stream of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School;
- A review of the safe routes to school, and improvements to walkways, road crossings and road speed management measures will be made to ensure the required safety standards are met. This is the approach we have implemented in other communities in earlier school reorganisation proposals with significant improvements being made to safe routes to schools.

What is the basis for the proposals to create 3 - 16 Schools?

Successful Futures

In March 2014, the Welsh Ministers commissioned Professor Graham Donaldson to undertake an independent review of curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, from the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. His report, entitled 'Successful Futures' was subsequently published in February 2015 and was adopted by the Welsh Government as policy shortly afterwards. It is now the Welsh Government's position on curriculum reform across Wales. This document can be viewed online using the following link
<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150225-successful-futures-en.pdf>.

The key recommendations from Successful Futures for all-through schools are:

- The curriculum 3–16 should be organised into Areas of Learning and Experience.
- The new national curriculum in Wales should have six Areas of Learning and Experience: Expressive Arts; Health and Well-being; Humanities; Languages, Literacy and Communication; Mathematics and Numeracy; and Science and Technology.
- Children and young people should have their learning developed across the curriculum through three cross-curriculum responsibilities that should be the responsibility of all teachers: literacy; numeracy; and digital competence.
- A digital competence framework and an accompanying 'Routes to Learning Digital Competence' should be developed and be included as a cross-curriculum responsibility.
- The expectations for the three cross-curriculum responsibilities and wider skills should be embedded within the Areas of Learning and Experience
- The new national curriculum should be organised as a continuum of learning from 3 to 16 without phases and key stages.
- Progression should be described in relation to a continuum of learning in each Area of Learning and Experience from when a child enters education to the end of statutory schooling.
- Progression should be signalled through Progression Steps at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16
- All teaching and learning should be directed to achieving the four curriculum purposes.
- Teachers should apply the pedagogical principles identified in this report when planning their teaching and learning, to ensure that the activities relate directly to the curriculum purposes.
- Children and young people should have opportunities to learn from expertise and experience from outside the school.

The first and most obvious change to the curriculum is the reorganisation of what pupils learn into six Areas of Learning and Experience and three Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities. Adopting this approach at national level will give schools more freedom to teach a wider range of things in different ways. Letting teachers make more decisions about what is taught will give schools and teachers much more freedom to work on subjects and topics that are relevant to their learners, so it will be possible for any two schools in Wales to teach and assess different things to measure progress of learners. This will affect how schools can be organised, so that all-through schools will be able to organise a wider range of staff to do things in different ways.

The removal of phases and key stages will give teachers more freedom to work by accommodating the needs of their pupils. This breaks down the distinctions between what happens in a primary and secondary school and especially between the key stages – clearly this puts an all-through school in an advantageous position when thinking about deciding what pupils learn and how they learn it across a whole-school continuum. In turn, this ability to work with a wider range of colleagues will help all teachers develop their practice. A single workforce in a school reflecting on and jointly developing and designing what works for five-year olds, teenagers and young adults is capable of a wider range of points of reference and a wider range of practices than a smaller group of teachers with a one-phase window to consider.

These changes to what pupils learn and how they learn it are easier to manage in an all-through environment than in a single-phase school or group of schools. They do, though, bring significant challenges as well as opportunities to leadership and practice. The more flexible workforce with greater capacity and flexibility, and the ability to play a role as part of a professional learning community are all likely to be enhanced by the all-through model. Simply by increasing the number and widening the variety of staff, the all-through model enjoys an advantage over the single-phase in the Successful Futures vision of learning.

Similarly, there are implications of the new reforms for buildings, for spaces within buildings for working, teaching and learning, and for access to technology across the whole learning age-range. All-through schools provide a wider range of physical spaces for teaching and learning, and a better range of specialist spaces, resources and materials that can be accessed by a wider age-range than in a single-phase setting. This includes digital, information and learning technology, which is critical to several of the recommendations and which is difficult to afford, maintain and refresh in single-phase schools.

Finally, all-through schools and the reforms in the curriculum carry implications for the role of parents, the local community and the local economy in supporting pupils' progress. The need for transition between Primary and Secondary phases is removed and this can also lead to more continuous and therefore better relationships with parents and carers. Successful Futures is very clear that not all learning that happens to young people happens in a classroom and because of a teacher.

Criteria for the Review of School Provision

In recent years, Estyn has sharpened its approach to inspection of schools and local authorities and has raised the bar in respect of what it considers to be good and excellent provision. Furthermore, Estyn has taken a very hard line on local authorities in Wales that have weaknesses in key areas such as corporate governance, educational standards, attendance levels, surplus places and safeguarding.

Following the last formal inspection of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Education Service in 2012, Estyn also highlighted that the Council had the highest number of surplus places in Wales and that action had to be taken to address this issue. This was followed up by a letter from the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills in November 2012 that instructed the Council to take action in respect of surplus places or the Welsh Government would take responsibility for removing the surplus places.

The Elected Members accepted Estyn's recommendations and have been continually reviewing school provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf ever since. The criteria that has been used for selecting schools for review is one or more of the following:

- Surplus places in excess of 25% of published capacity;
- Buildings that are beyond economic repair/not fit for purpose;
- Financially unviable (usually due to a sharp fall in pupil numbers);
- Schools considered to be 'small' schools, i.e. schools with 90 or fewer pupils;
- Separate infant and junior schools in close proximity;
- 'Paired' schools, i.e. where children progress from one of the schools to the other;
- Mixed aged classes where there are more than two age groups in one class;
- Schools considered to be at risk, based on their academic Key Stage data and the quality of the leadership, of meeting Estyn's criteria as a school in need of significant improvement or special measures.

The 3 primary schools and 2 secondary schools included within these 3-16 proposals have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- 4 of the 5 schools have surplus places in excess of 25%;
- The combined maintenance backlog of the 5 schools is £4,352,000 which equates to £1,804 per pupil;
- The educational performance and pupil attendance of the 2 LA maintained secondary schools at Key Stage 4 is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales;

In addition Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools combined have small sixth forms of less than 250 pupils (the national recommended minimum number for an efficient and effective sixth form), and with relatively poor educational performance. Please refer to the data contained in sections 2, 3 and 4 of this document for the evidence to support this statement.

Pupil numbers attending the sixth form at Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School have also fallen dramatically in the last three years; in September 2015 there were 195 pupils in the sixth form, this fell to just 80 in January 2018, a reduction of 60%. Having such small post 16 numbers has a significant impact on the post 16 provision available and on the wider sixth form experience for the students. Numbers are forecast to fall even further by January 2019. This reduction in pupil numbers and consequent reduction in post 16 funding from the Welsh Government has meant that the Cardinal Newman School budget is predicted to fall into a deficit balance of over £700k.

The opportunity exists to reconfigure the primary and secondary schools, including post-16 provision to create educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities. These proposals seek to achieve this.

What is the educational case for the proposals?

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 creating larger sixth forms and 3-16 schools will:

- **Improve educational outcomes;**
 - Create larger school departments or faculties that will promote the sharing of skills and expertise across more viable teams;
 - Provide teaching and support staff with more opportunity to develop professionally;
 - Enable greater opportunities for staff to move between key stages and further develop expertise;
 - Provide a more appropriate skills-based curriculum and wider extra-curricular opportunities which should improve attendance and educational outcomes;
 - Reduce the anxiety caused by transition

- **Improve educational provision;**
 - Provide the conditions that will enable a broader and more diverse curriculum to be developed to better meet the needs of the school's young people and in ways that will be viable and sustainable over the longer term;
 - Improve the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils;
 - Enable greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;
 - Allow for the potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to a larger school;
 - Broaden the range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities and develop them in ways that are sustainable over the longer term;
 - Deliver the future capital investment benefits that would arise from the modernisation of a small number of institutions rather than many;
 - Create schools of a sustainable size for their catchment area by removing surplus capacity, providing greater educational and financial stability;
 - Release resources that will be reinvested in improving the buildings and in improving standards of teaching and learning, which otherwise would not have been available;
 - Enable schools to build better relationships with parents and carers.

- **Improve leadership and management;**

- Provides the opportunity for the headteacher to distribute key leadership tasks such as child protection, literacy, numeracy, special educational needs etc to a greater number of staff. Often in a small Primary school, the headteacher takes responsibility for the vast majority of these tasks;
- Creates leadership opportunities for other staff, and for others to specialise in key areas, which will enhance educational provision and outcomes and improve succession planning;
- Allow teaching and support staff access to a wider range of responsibilities
 - Improved career prospects;
 - Improved curriculum co-ordination;
 - The opportunity to teach across a wider age range;
 - An increased range of expertise;
 - Improved opportunities for staff interaction /co-ordination.

These benefits apply equally to the mainstream and the pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in the schools. This argument is supported by Estyn in its report “School Size and Educational Effectiveness” (Dec 2013), which stated:

- *“Pupils’ standards are good or better in a higher proportion of large primary schools than small and medium-sized primary schools. This may be because large schools tend to have more expertise and capacity to address the needs of more vulnerable pupils and the more able and talented pupils.”*
- *“Examination results for large secondary schools are better than those for small and medium-sized secondary schools for nearly all measures”;*
- *“In general, curriculum provision is broader and better balanced in large secondary schools. Nearly all large secondary schools provide good or better learning experiences for their pupils. Large secondary schools are able to offer a wider range of options due to economies of scale”.*

What is the educational case for creating larger sixth forms?

Over the past few years secondary schools have sought to collaborate to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009 and to offer a good quality post 16 learning experience to their pupils. Despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and the Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of the students by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. A viable sixth form, both educationally and financially should, ideally, have at least 250 students; In January 2018 (source : PLASC return), Hawthorn High had 114 sixth form students attending and Pontypridd High 131, just 245 in total between the two schools. Bryncelynnog Comprehensive had 147 sixth form students at the same point in time. Numbers at Cardinal Newman have fallen from 195 in 2015 to just 80 in January 2018, a fall of almost 60%.
- The delivery of post-16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the County Borough are projected to be almost 3,500 by 2022 and over 775 in the Pontypridd area alone. This leads to valuable education funds being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf, funds amounting to over £300 per pupil that were originally provided to educate 11-16 pupils are redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes. This amount increases to an average of over £700 per pupil across both Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools; at Cardinal Newman this figure is almost £800.
- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited student interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Across the four secondary schools, 44 post-16 courses were delivered in 2017 with less than 5 pupils per course. This poor learning experience for students is impacting on the numbers of students continuing their post 16 education in the four schools. The percentage of students opting, to stay on in their respective school, for a sixth form education in September 2017, was very low, being 31% in Cardinal Newman, 36% in Pontypridd HS, 46% in Hawthorn and 51% in Bryncelynnog. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and student interactions increase. However, travel between providers is seen by some students as a barrier to access a wider choice of courses.
- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement for the County Borough;
- The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 4 (in relation to the Average Capped Wider Points Score) and Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough are below Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in Wales. A step change is still required to raise the number of young people participating in education post 16 and improve the quality of learning outcomes by raising attainment, retention and progression.

Creating a larger sixth form at Bryncelynnog, together with the existing comprehensive post 16 provision at Coleg y Cymoedd creates the capacity and economies of scale to be able to improve:

- **Standards and Achievement** – raising standards of success and achievement and increasing progression to Higher Education and employment.
- **Choice** – improving the breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for all young people to choose learning pathways that best enable them to mix and match vocational, academic and occupational qualifications and experience.
- **Participation** – increasing participation and attendance rates.
- **Equality** – to ensure every sixth form student in the Pontypridd area is able to access the curriculum of choice.
- **Ability to respond to future learners, community and business needs** – Re-skilling and up-skilling the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf as the commercial environment changes, to allow people to compete effectively in the job market.
- **Financial viability and effectiveness** – providing a cost effective and efficient model for delivery, removing unnecessary duplication, aligning capacity with demand (in light of demographic change), generating economies of scale and expanding economies of scope. This will result in the removal of surplus places, the reduction in the number of small sixth form classes, and the duplication of provision between providers.

Further information on this part of the proposals can be obtained in Section 2 of this document.

What is the educational case for creating 3-16 schools?

The great strength of all-through education is the continuity of educational experience which negates the transition “dips” in pupil performance. A 3-16 school provides the opportunity to provide a “bridge” between key stages in order to create a seamless transition for pupils in terms of curriculum planning, learning and teaching. It can allow for a significant sharing of subject expertise and primary pedagogy in particular across key stages 2 and 3.

In 2012, the Council established a new 3-19 school at Ysgol Llanhari and to date the school is making excellent progress, with pupil attainment and development outcomes improving year on year. The cross phase learning and communication with staff is having a positive effect on pupils.

The all through school eases the transition process between the key stages and staff and teachers know the children well as they progress through the year groups and this enables them to assist pupils where additional support is required.

The School has strong leadership, which creates a vision that resonates with all phases, all staff are fully engaged and the school benefits from ‘coherence and continuity’ which assists pupils’ learning progression.

Another important benefit of all-age schooling is being able to achieve greater effectiveness through the sharing of resources, and being able to target these resources, whether financial, physical or human, at key areas of school improvement. Some reported benefits include:

- Provision of specialist teaching in KS2 or extending literacy and numeracy programmes into KS3;
- Access for primary phase pupils to the facilities of secondary phase;
- Providing scope for acceleration programmes for more able and talented pupils;
- Joint Professional Development;
- Directing resources at early intervention;
- Planning a joint curriculum;
- Sharing equipment, hardware and accommodation;
- Increasing the range and capacity for extra-curricular/after school learning;
- Creating common administrative appointments.

Will primary and secondary pupils have to share facilities and resources?

It needs to be stressed that a 3-16 school would not result in young children sharing playgrounds or break times with much older pupils. There are already strict safeguarding protocols which are observed when any primary aged pupils visit a secondary site (walking in pairs in line with teachers or adult helpers at the front and rear).

The primary aged pupils will receive the majority of their lessons in a specialist remodelled primary school building. Nevertheless, the pupils will have the opportunity to be taught in the secondary school to develop their curricular skills through the use of specialised facilities e.g. science and technology. Secondary phase pupils will also be able to have learning opportunities in the primary phase especially around any care related vocational activities and meeting some of the requirements of the Welsh Bacalaureate. These learning opportunities will also provide support to the primary phase staff through such activities, for example year 11 pupils assisting primary school pupils with their reading. This is the case in Ysgol Llanhari, the first ‘all through’ age school in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

What will be the impact on the other “partner” primary schools in the community?

Other partner/associated primary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal. Pupil transition is important and the Council, through its 21st Century Band A programme has instigated some innovative programmes to ensure the quality of integration at Year 7 was seamless regardless of where they have received their primary experience. No pupil will be disadvantaged when they join the new school at Year 7.

Benefits of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School

This proposal is outlined and explained in detail in Section 5 (starting on Page 56) of this document. Please refer to this section for more information on this particular proposal.

To comply with Welsh Government guidance and its initiative to create a million Welsh speakers by 2050, which includes an expectation on local authorities to promote Welsh Medium education, the Council is reviewing its Welsh Medium school provision, to ensure that evidenced demand for places is met and that wherever possible, provision is expanded and improved to encourage parents to select a Welsh Medium education for their children. The proposal is to construct a brand new, purpose built school, that will have sufficient pupil capacity to cater for the current pupils of both YGG, Pont Sion Norton and those attending the Welsh Medium stream at Heol y Celyn Primary School; this is one of the schemes being planned to assist in achieving this aim.

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 WM provision in their catchment areas
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools in to full WM schools

This part of the overall proposal, which is to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary and open a brand new school, constructed to 21st Century Schools standards and with an increased capacity of 480 pupils plus Nursery provision, which will in turn incorporate a dual language provision, will work towards the achievement of these targets in this area of the County Borough.

What is the likely impact of the proposals on the school pupils?

In making the proposed changes, many things will be different for the pupils from the Pontypridd area, depending on parents' exercising their right of choice, but some things will remain the same:

- Some may have a longer or a different route to school, and some may be transported to school by bus. Some children may lose their entitlement to free transport, but others could gain entitlement;
- Being in classes with predominantly their own age group, the teacher will be better able to offer the primary pupils a wider and more varied curriculum to support all learners, including the least and most able;
- The teachers and teaching assistants may be different, however, the majority of teachers and teaching assistants should be able to transfer between the schools, if they wish to do so;
- For sixth form students there will be less, probably no travelling during the school day to access the curriculum and therefore there will be greater opportunities for more unstructured/informal interaction between students and teachers during the school day. The time saved from not travelling can also be used to focus on studying or completing course work;
- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to run school sports teams, debating team etc. The children attending the ALN Classes will also have the opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

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.

Home to School Transport Provision

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.

With regard to the proposed alternative sixth form centres for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School pupils at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd being put forward for post - 16 provision, students will receive free transport, providing they meet the qualifying criteria (2 miles walking distance from home to school/college), to the nearest post-16 establishment that offers the choice of courses that they require. If they choose a centre that is not the closest to their home address, they may of course attend but will not receive any assistance towards the cost of transportation from the Council.

Pupils resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf attending Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, will be able to select the most appropriate sixth form provision that offers the choice of courses that they require, or if they choose a Roman Catholic post 16 provision, this will be made available at St David’s College, Cardiff. In doing so they will receive free transportation, providing they meet the distance criteria to the nearest provision that meets their subject choices. Students resident in Caerphilly County Borough will need to check this issue with their local authority.

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 the Pontypridd community in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

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

For the English Medium school changes in Hawthorn and Pontypridd, and for the creation of the new Welsh Medium Primary School, all the schools involved in the proposals will close and new schools will be opened with a new governing body. Should the proposals proceed, the new 3-16 schools for Hawthorn and Pontypridd and the new Welsh Medium Primary School will need to appoint temporary governing bodies for the interim period until the new schools open. These temporary governing bodies will be responsible for establishing the schools, agreeing new staff structures and undertaking the appointment process for all the staffing posts.

The temporary governing bodies will firstly need to appoint new headteachers, who will then formulate and propose the leadership, management and staffing structures for the new schools. The staffing structure for Hawthorn and Pontypridd 3-16 schools will need to be developed for the school taking into account a number of factors, including delivering a curriculum without sixth form provision. The staffing structure for the new Welsh Medium Primary School will need to reflect the increased pupil roll.

The Council recommends that if the proposals are accepted that the temporary governing bodies of new schools “ring fence” the appointment process for all teaching and associated staff posts to staff within the existing schools in the first instance.

No changes will be required to the governing body of Cardinal Newman, but a revision to their staffing structure will be required due to the loss of the sixth form provision.

The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change, as illustrated by the recent school organisation changes in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.

What are the disadvantages of the proposals?

School reorganisation will inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty for a period of time, although experience shows that this can be kept to a minimum and the children's education does not suffer. The disadvantages of the proposals and how these risks can be managed by the Council and the schools are as follows:

Disadvantages	Risk Management
Sixth form students will be required to travel further for sixth form provision.	Sixth form students already study courses at alternative establishments as part of the Taff Ely Post 16 Consortium of schools and have to travel at the beginning, middle or at the end of the school day.
There will be increased costs of home to school transport	The increased costs of transport due to the need to transfer post-16 students to the new centres will be significantly less than the cost of continuing the inefficient post 16 provision in the two secondary schools. Additional transport provision will also need to be considered for YGG Pont Sion Norton pupils if the distance they will have to walk to the relocated school exceeds 1.5 miles.
Some parents may prefer to send their child to two or three schools rather than to one all through school. 3-16 schools are a new concept of education provision to many parents and there may be concerns.	Factors such as the appeal of a modern 21st Century School with the latest education facilities and the availability of free transport (where eligible) could be important considerations for many in making their choice. The 3-19 pilot in Lampeter has been independently evaluated and it is considered to be a success. Ysgol Llanhari is also a 3-19 school and the feedback from parents has been very positive. Other local authorities are adopting a similar approach across Wales, England and Scotland.
There will be staffing implications in that, for example there will be need for only one Headteacher. Staff will be concerned about the security of their jobs	The respective governing bodies will, as soon as possible, once the statutory procedures are completed, address the staffing issues. In practice governing bodies seek to ensure as much continuity in the staffing as possible in these situations.

Despite these disadvantages, the Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposals 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 too many schools, too many schools with small sixth forms, too many surplus places, and too many schools housed in Victorian or CLASP construction buildings that are expensive to maintain, with limited specialist and outdoor facilities, all of which result in educational standards being too low and limited financial resources not being used efficiently and effectively.

The options available to the Council to improve educational performance and ensure the provision represents value for money are as follows:

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
(i) - Retain the status quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No capital investment required by the Council; • No disruption to the pupils, parents and the staff; • No impact on home to school transport; • The schools have a strong tradition and are well supported in the local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not address the need to reduce the high number of surplus places in accordance with Welsh Government requirements; • Does not address the need to improve the school buildings to meet 21st Century School standards; • Financially unviable in the future due to the high on-going maintenance costs of the school building estate; • Post 16 funding is insufficient to support the post 16 curriculum offered in the 3 secondary schools which further drains resources that should be spent on 11-16 aged pupils; • Educational performance continues to be at best adequate in some schools.
(ii) – Federate groups of schools, maintain the school buildings but with fewer headteachers and governing bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education provision would continue on each school site; • Opportunities for sharing staff expertise and good practice; • Minimum disruption to pupils, parents and staff; • No impact on home to school transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not address the need to reduce the high number of surplus places in accordance with Welsh Government requirements; • Does not address the need to improve the school buildings to meet 21st Century School standards; • Financially unviable in the future due to the high on-going maintenance costs of the school building estate; • Post 16 funding is insufficient to support the post 16 curriculum offered in the 3 secondary schools which further drains resources that should be spent on 11-16 aged pupils; • Post 16 provision will continue to be limited in the 3 schools.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>(iii) – Further development of the Taff Ely post 16 Consortium working through greater collaboration between schools and the Further Education College, including better use of video conferencing facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education provision would continue on each school site; • No capital investment required by the Council; • No disruption to the pupils, parents and the staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetabling highly difficult- possible permutations may arise whereby a pupil might study 3 or more subjects on 3 or more sites; • Increased transportation of learners during the school day, which is difficult to manage and a poor experience for the pupils; • Post 16 funding does not pay for travel between school sites. As a result, the travel is paid for by resources allocated to 11-16 provision; • Limited personal, social and educational interaction between the pupil cohorts.
<p>(iv) - Retain the secondary school sixth forms but close one of the secondary schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes a significant number of surplus places; • Increases the size of other secondary schools and other sixth forms; • Increases the educational and financial viability of the secondary schools and the sixth form provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post 16 funding is still insufficient to support post 16 curriculum offered in the remaining secondary schools which further drains resources that should be spent on 11-16 aged pupils; • Post 16 provision will continue to be limited. • Significantly increases the home to school transport costs; • Insufficient savings generated to invest in new buildings to accommodate additional pupils with improved facilities; • Issues with high surplus places, high maintenance costs and unsuitable school buildings in the primary sector not addressed.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>(v) – Model being proposed for the Welsh medium primary provision in the area – Merge the primary schools onto existing or new sites, refurbishing existing or building new primary schools.</p> <p>This could include building new primary schools on the sites of secondary schools but the primary schools would be under the control of a separate governing body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes a significant number of surplus places; • Increases the size of some primary schools; • Increases the educational and financial viability of the primary schools. • Given there are only 4 Welsh medium secondary schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf, it is not feasible to develop a 3-16 or 3-18 Welsh medium school for Pontypridd, and this option offers the best local solution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited space in some communities to build new primary schools or to expand existing schools; • Issues with high surplus places, high maintenance costs and unsuitable school buildings in the secondary sector not addressed; • The educational and financial viability of the school sixth forms is not addressed.
<p>(vi) – (iv) & (v) above combined</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes a significant number of surplus places; • Increases the size of other primary and secondary schools and other sixth forms; • Increases the educational and financial viability of the primary schools, secondary schools and the sixth form provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The educational and financial viability of the school sixth forms is not fully addressed; • Significantly increases the home to school transport costs; • Insufficient savings generated to invest in new buildings to accommodate additional pupils with improved facilities.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>(vii) – Model being Proposed for the English medium schools –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop post 16 centres of excellence at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw with Roman Catholic faith based provision available at St David’s College, Cardiff; • Create two new 3-16 schools; • Improve the learning environment for pupils who require Welsh Medium education • Revise English Medium catchment areas to utilise surplus capacity that currently exists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes a significant number of surplus places; • Increases the size of sixth form provision and included primary schools • Retains local schools in the community; • Increases the educational and financial viability of the primary schools, secondary schools, the sixth form provision and the College; • Enables the primary and secondary pupils to share specialist facilities, such as sporting facilities; • Improves the transition between KS2 and 3; • Better enables schools to provide an appropriate curriculum to all pupils; • Financially the most cost effective approach and enables the Council to fund its proportion of the investment required; • Minimises the increase in home to school transport costs in some cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-16 schools are a new concept in Rhondda Cynon Taf, and parents will have concerns; • Many sixth form students will have further to travel to access the provision; • Amending catchment areas may not be popular with parents who have an affinity with the school that has served their area in the past; • Increases the home to school transport costs in some cases.

For the changes to the English medium provision options (i) – (vi) above have been considered by the Council and have been discounted and the preferred option, (vii), is that proposed in this consultation document.

For the changes to the Welsh medium provision options (i) – (iv) and (vi) – (vii) have been considered by the Council and have been discounted and the preferred option, (v), is that proposed in this consultation document.

Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments

As set out in the Welsh Government School Organisation Code, it is a requirement to publish Community Impact, Welsh Language Impact and Equality Impact Assessments. These have been produced as separate documents and are available on the Council’s website. The overall impact of all the proposals outlined in this document will be neutral; any facilities currently offered in the schools, such as after school and breakfast clubs will be retained in the new provisions and hopefully enhanced and extended.

The Timetable for the proposed changes

Project	Indicative Start Date	Indicative Completion Date
Hawthorn 3-16 all through school	September 2020	September 2022
Pontypridd 3-16 all through school	September 2020	September 2022
Cardinal Newman 11 – 16 School (no 6th form)	September 2021	September 2022
New Welsh Medium Community Primary School	September 2020	September 2022

Admissions Arrangements

Admissions to all schools, for pupils aged between 3 – 16, outlined in this document will be managed by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, as the Admissions Authority in accordance with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code. The Council's Admissions Policy for all maintained schools is outlined in the Council produced "Starting School" admissions booklet. Admissions to sixth forms are managed by the individual schools, with Coleg Y Cymoedd and St David's College, Cardiff managing their own post 16 admissions. All schools included in these proposals are Community schools, maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, except for Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, which is a voluntary aided school.

Admission numbers for the proposed new schools will be calculated and published once the design and planning work for the buildings is completed. It must be stressed that admission numbers will ensure that sufficient school places are made available to meet the current and forecasted demand for school places in the catchment areas of the schools included in these proposals.

Land and Buildings

If the proposals outlined in this document are implemented, there will be some redundant school sites and buildings. As this is an initial consultation process, no decisions have yet been made in respect of the future of these sites and buildings. This issue will be managed in accordance with the agreed Council Policy on Surplus Land and Buildings.

Accommodation

It must be stressed that this is a consultation process and that all design and planning work for the new school buildings is at an early stage of development. However, all works planned are included as part of the Council's 21st Century Schools proposals and any work undertaken, whether this is new build accommodation or refurbishment/remodelling of existing school buildings will be of a high quality, with flexible and sustainable learning environments fully conforming and complying with the standards outlined by Welsh Government for 21st Century Schools.

SECTION 2

The Proposed Changes to Sixth Form Provision

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:

- Develop post 16 centres of excellence based at Beddau and Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools to better meet and match the demand for school places.

To achieve this, the proposal is to:

- Close the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transfer the post-16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Close Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools.

This proposal will create a school based sixth form at Bryncelynnog of over 350 students (this will depend on student choice) and further enhance the sixth form and vocational offer at Coleg Y Cymoedd's Nantgarw Campus that already has 350 post 16 students studying traditional A Level subjects and over 1,000 post 16 students studying vocational subjects.

To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £ 26.7m across this element of the programme, an estimated breakdown is indicated below:

- £10m at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School to improve the sixth form facilities and other infrastructure;
- £12m to improve the buildings at Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school;
- £4.7m to improve the buildings at Pontypridd High School to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school.

Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School's Sixth Form admission criteria states that access to the sixth form is open to all children of any faith or religion and it is not exclusive to the Christian Faith. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff.

Background to the Proposed Post 16 Changes

Since 2009, the Council has been exploring ways to improve post 16 provision with the secondary schools, the FE College and Welsh Government, in a financial climate of decreasing post 16 funding and falling pupil numbers. In September 2011 the Council's Cabinet agreed a way forward which was accepted by the secondary schools that sought to:

- Improve the quality of provision;
- Improve the education outcomes; and
- Be financially viable.

Over the following three years, action was taken to:

- Enhance the 14-19 post 16 consortia of schools, by consolidating the consortia, from 5 to 4 from September 2012. The Welsh medium schools remained as a separate consortium, but only due to the geographical difficulties of sharing minority subjects/courses;
- All the post 16 funding, including the 14-19 Grant, was delegated to each school and/or consortium, with specific targets being set and agreed between the parties;
- Each consortium had a separate governance structure, with a consortium manager;
- The consortium governors were encouraged to determine the curriculum offer and where the curriculum is delivered;
- Ensure the quality of provision is of paramount importance. Schools in each consortium will only be able to offer sixth form provision for those subjects where the quality of teaching and learning is high;
- Specialist vocational provision was to be provided by FE Colleges.

Progress was made in delivering these actions, however with further decreasing student numbers and post 16 funding from Welsh Government, the issues of quality and financial viability of the post 16 provision remain.

As a result, despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and the Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of the students by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. Other than Coleg Y Cymoedd, none of the sixth form provisions in the Pontypridd area have more than 250 pupils, and have not done so for many years;
- The delivery of post 16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the three secondary schools considered within this proposal are projected to be over 950 by 2019. This leads to valuable education funds being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf funding amounting to £300 per pupil that was originally provided to educate 11-16 aged pupils is being redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes. This amount increases to an average of £700 per pupil in Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools and almost £800 in Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School;
- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited student interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and student interactions increase. However, travel between providers is seen by some students as a barrier to access a wider choice of courses.
- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement across the County Borough;

- The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough is well below Welsh averages and among the lowest in Wales. A step change is still required to raise the number of young people participating in education post 16 and improve the quality of learning outcomes by raising attainment, retention and progression.
- In 2017, in all 3 of the secondary schools included in this proposal, less than 60 students were entered for 2 or more A Levels or equivalent. Providing an educationally and financially viable curriculum in the three of the four schools is evidently not possible.

In 2014, the Council's Cabinet recognised that the financial position for post 16 provision had significantly worsened and, if the provision was left unchanged, the foreseeable future looked bleak. Therefore, the Council began a rationalisation of post-16 provision, starting with the post-16 provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail. In September 2018 the post 16 changes to the schools in the area were fully implemented, with three sixth forms closing, and only two of the five secondary schools in the area providing post 16 provision. These changes were made to ensure the schools and college provide a suitable and viable post 16 curriculum offer that meets the needs of the students, the local community and the needs of employers.

In the East Taf Ely area of the County Borough, the sixth form position has deteriorated since 2014. Despite two of the three schools collaborating on sixth form provision, the class sizes are too small and uneconomic, particularly when you consider that a Key Stage 5 class requires 18 pupils per teacher to break even. As a result, the small sixth form class sizes, are financially subsidised by funding allocated to the pupils in Key Stages 3 & 4.

Information on the Schools

The schools included within the proposal and the pupil numbers over the past five years are shown below. The pupil numbers are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year.

School	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	% Surplus Jan 2018
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	Secondary	11-19	1442	1034	1046	1044	1088	1126	21.9%
Cardinal Newman RC	Secondary	11-19	957	732	761	777	790	770	19.5%
Hawthorn High	Secondary	11-19	1098	856	816	755	729	736	32.9%
Pontypridd High	Secondary	11-19	1338	1003	1031	967	945	910	31.9%

The sixth form numbers are shown below.

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	196	170	153	135	147
Cardinal Newman RC	174	199	191	153	80
Hawthorn High	168	136	111	115	114
Pontypridd High	124	150	139	133	131
Total	662	655	594	536	472

Pupil projections

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the four schools, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School Capacity	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	% Surplus Jan 2023
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	1442	1146	1174	1200	1224	1236	14.3%
Cardinal Newman RC	957	802	841	884	914	913	4.6%
Hawthorn High	1098	746	742	756	754	775	29.4%
Pontypridd High	1338	863	880	884	904	936	46.6%

The sixth form projections are as follows.

School	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	152	167	174	172	178
Cardinal Newman RC	65	70	73	83	93
Hawthorn High	98	107	100	92	105
Pontypridd High	111	112	112	108	105
Total	426	456	459	455	481

Schools manage their own admissions for sixth form provision and determine the entry criteria. The Council sets the catchment areas for the sixth form provision in order to determine which students will be eligible for home to school transport. As is the case at present, students have the choice of continuing to study in their catchment sixth form or studying at Coleg Y Cymoedd that offers a wide academic and vocational curriculum. If the proposal was to be implemented in the future and students that would have ordinarily opted for their catchment sixth form school, and not opted for the FE provision, the three year forecasts from the first year of the new sixth form provision will be as follows.

School	Jan 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025
Bryncelynnog Sixth Form	388	408	428

The 11-16 forecasts for the first year of the new school provision will be as follows:

School	Jan 2023
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	1058
Cardinal Newman RC	820
Hawthorn High	670
Pontypridd High	831

Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School would be an 11-16 school and will have 80 surplus spaces. Some of the school buildings could be removed to reduce the surplus or the Archdiocese of Cardiff could use the space to develop or transfer primary school provision on the site.

Current condition of the existing schools

Property condition information on all school buildings is held by the Council, this information is regularly updated to reflect any changes or improvements to the buildings and reported to Welsh Government each year. The overall condition ratings of the school buildings are as follows:

School	Building Condition Survey Result	Suitability Survey Result
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	C+	B
Cardinal Newman RC	C-	B
Hawthorn High	C-	B
Pontypridd High	C+	B

Quality and standards

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools and further education colleges in Wales. A comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at the four secondary schools and at Coleg Y Cymoedd during their last inspections is as follows:

School	Date Inspected	Judgement – Current Performance	Judgement – Prospects for Improvement
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	February 2016	Adequate	Good
Hawthorn High	March 2014	Adequate	Good
Pontypridd High	January 2014	Adequate	Good
Coleg Y Cymoedd	November 2017	Adequate	Good

Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School was inspected in May 2018 under the revised framework, the outcome of the inspection is summarised below:

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

As a result of receiving 'adequate' ratings, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive, Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools were placed in the category of requiring monitoring by Estyn following inspection. Following Estyn follow up procedures, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive, Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools were all deemed to have made sufficient improvement and were removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring in November 2016, October 2015 and November 2016 respectively.

Coleg Y Cymoedd despite receiving an adequate grading for performance was not placed in a category requiring Estyn monitoring. St David's College, Cardiff was last inspected in 2010 under the former inspection methodology and its overall performance was judged as excellent with excellent prospects for improvement.

Since 2014, schools have been categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, (green, yellow, amber and red) with a 'green' school having the highest rating and a 'red' school the lowest. This National Schools Categorisation System introduced by the Welsh Government provides a systematic view of a school's Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4 performance as appropriate, based on publicly available data and the school's own self-evaluation in respect of leadership, learning and teaching. The aim of this system is to determine the level of support a school requires to support it to improve. The National Schools Categorisation does not take into account Post 16 provision and its respective examination outcomes.

Bryncelynnog Comprehensive, Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High Schools have been categorised as **yellow** schools. This defines them as 'effective, already doing well, know the areas needed to improve, and by identifying the right support and taking action have the potential to do even better'. Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School has been categorised as a **green** school.

FE Colleges are not subject to categorisation.

Key Stage 5 Outcomes

The table below sets out the performance of the sixth form pupils over the past four years for each of the main qualifications undertaken in KS5.

School	2014				2015			
	No on Roll	No entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels	% entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score	No on Roll	No entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels	% entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score
Bryncelynog Comprehensive	83	71	97.2	663.9	80	72	98.6	670.2
Cardinal Newman RC	40	35	91.4	804.2	87	79	96.2	832.4
Hawthorn High	71	65	89.23	758.5	60	57	98.25	772.7
Pontypridd High	40	39	87.18	820.1	66	63	95.24	856.8

School	2016				2017			
	No on Roll	No entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels	% entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score	No on Roll	No entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels	% entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score
Bryncelynog Comprehensive	63	58	100	823.8	54	53	94.3	787.5
Cardinal Newman RC	79	75	98.7	812.1	74	68	95.6	774.8
Hawthorn High	47	42	97.62	772.3	48	Not available	100	739.9
Pontypridd High	52	51	100	928.4	57	Not available	100	820.9

The Level Three Threshold is achieved by pupils through passing the equivalent of two or more A Levels and this includes BTEC qualifications.

Of those sixth form students who studied A Levels, the examination performance over the past three years is set out below: Source - All Wales Core Data Sets

School	% A* to E grades at A Level			% A* to C grades at A Level			% A* and A grades at A Level		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Hawthorn High	98.2	97.6	100	59.6	61.9	41.7	1.8	0	2.1
Pontypridd High	95.2	100	100	68.3	64.7	42.6	3.2	5.9	5.6
Cardinal Newman	96.2	98.7	95.6	73.4	68	58.8	3.8	2.7	4.4
Bryncelynnog	98.6	100	94.3	34.7	67.2	52.8	5.6	8.8	18.9
Highest performing RCT	100	100	100	74.2	89.5	76.9	5.6	9.2	18.9
Lowest performing RCT	89.2	92.2	86	27	40.2	16.3	0	0	0
RCT average	97	97	96.3	57.9	65.2	45.1	3.1	4	5.5
Welsh average	97	98	97.1	68.1	70.6	54.7	7.9	6.7	10.5

The tables above do not contain information in respect of Coleg Y Cymoedd or St David's College, Cardiff as the current arrangements for measuring performance in sixth forms and in further education colleges are entirely separate. They are derived from different data systems, which means that Welsh Government, Estyn, or individual organisations are unable to measure outcomes in a meaningful way across learning settings. As a result, learners and parents do not have access to transparent information to inform their choices. Welsh Government recognises this and in January 2018 committed to developing a set of consistent measures for further education institutions and sixth forms to enable them to publish headline and provider level information on an annual basis.

Financial Information

Sixth forms and all post 16 provision are funded directly from Welsh Government based on the mix and type of qualifications being studied by each student. The more subjects a student studies the greater the funding. For a school to ensure that its sixth form funding covers the costs of delivering the respective subject, it requires an average of 18 students per the course provided.

If you consider that most schools provide greater than 12 A Level courses, most students would be expected to enter 2 A Levels, and a minimum number of students in each subject should be at least 18, you would need at least 90 students in each year group. All the schools were significantly below this figure and it is evident that class sizes are very small, and inefficient.

The table below shows that there are insufficient students opting for post 16 provision in each school.

School	Post 16 students on roll (September)			Number of A Level courses offered			Number of courses with 5 or fewer students		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Bryncelynnog	162	142	150	18	20	16	8	9	8
Cardinal Newman	195	154	78	24	20	22	13	8	11
Hawthorn High	119	118	123	17	19	19	10	13	14
Pontypridd High	141	134	135	20	23	20	9	15	11

The table also shows that student numbers are falling with students choosing alternative provision at Coleg Y Cymoedd or one of the other neighbouring FE colleges which provide a wider post 16 offer and by having greater numbers, offer a different student experience. This in turn has had a significant impact on the finances of three of the four schools as illustrated in the table below.

School	Average Class Sizes, A Level courses (rounded to nearest whole number)			Cross-phase subsidisation per 6th form pupil	Current budget deficit	Projected budget deficit
	2015	2016	2017	April 2017	April 2018	April 2019
Hawthorn High	5	5	4	£680	£400k	£415k
Pontypridd High	7	6	6	£790	£520k	£518k
Cardinal Newman	6	9	7	£799	£324k	£707k
Bryncelynnog	8	8	6	£776	£215k surplus	£104k surplus

If the proposal was to proceed, the post 16 funding would be removed from Cardinal Newman RC, Hawthorn and Pontypridd secondary schools. Revised funding would be provided to the sixth form in Bryncelynnog and Coleg Y Cymoedd or any other post 16 provider according to the Programmes of Study being undertaken by the students.

Proposed Changes to the Catchment Areas

Secondary schools are responsible for admissions to their sixth forms and can accept students from across the County Borough. However, the Council applies notional catchment areas for post 16 provision for the purpose of managing home to school transport. Students that attend sixth form outside their catchment area are not eligible for home to school transport unless the Programme of Study of their choice is not available in the catchment school. For example, some students travel to Bridgend College to study Agricultural Studies which is not available locally and the Council provides suitable transport.

If these proposals are agreed, we would amend the catchment areas of both Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools for post 16 provision, to place these areas in the sixth form catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau. Bryncelynnog is located just over 5 miles from Hawthorn High and 6 miles from Pontypridd High. The post - 16 facilities of Bryncelynnog would be improved and upgraded as part of these proposals.

Students from Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School will have the option of attending another school's sixth form provision of their choice, or the local college, Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw, for their post 16 education. Pupils who wish to continue their post 16 education through the Catholic faith could choose to attend St David's 6th Form College, Cardiff. The Council will provide free transportation to the nearest provision that offers the chosen selection of courses for RCT-resident students, providing that they meet the initial qualifying distance criteria of residing more than 2 miles from their provision of choice.

It is proposed that the 11-16 catchment areas will also change. The changes all directly relate to the new 3-16 School at Hawthorn which will:

- Include the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School, Tonteg (which is currently in the catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive).
- Exclude the Graig area of Pontypridd that is in the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School, which will be included in the catchment area of the new Pontypridd 11-16 school. Currently 91% of the 11-16 aged pupils in this area choose to go to Pontypridd High School;
- Exclude the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School, which will be included in the catchment area of the new Pontypridd 11-16 school. Currently 54% of the 11-16 aged pupils in the area choose to go to Hawthorn High School and 46% choose Pontypridd High School. With surplus places in both new 3-16 schools for the foreseeable future, the choice of both schools will remain for pupils and parents.

These adjustments are being made to the catchment areas of pupils aged 11-16 to match the demand for places with the available supply across the secondary school provision in East Taf Ely. The additional demand for places is driven by housing development in the south east of the County Borough.

The timetable for the Sixth Form changes and the management of the transition

In September 2022 it is proposed that the sixth forms of Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School will close. Prior to September 2022, the Council will ensure that the Year 12 students, who will be most affected by the change, will be undertaking Programmes of Study that will be continued in the new sixth forms. This approach has been adopted by the Council recently in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail, where three sixth forms closed and two sixth forms extended.

SECTION 3

The proposed changes to primary and secondary school provision in Hawthorn

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:

- Close Hawthorn High School sixth form and transfer the post-16 provision to either Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw, dependent on student choice. The catchment area school for sixth form provision will be Bryncelynnog;
- Close Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the adjoining sites of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. In respect of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School, which is a dual language provision, only the pupils that are educated through the medium of English will transfer to the 3 – 16 school; those pupils that are educated through the medium of Welsh will transfer the new Welsh Medium Primary school that will be constructed on the current Heol y Celyn site. Details of this particular proposal can be found in Section 5 of this document;
- Provide a 1,260 capacity 3-16 School for Hawthorn, for 540 pupils aged 3-11 (including Nursery provision) and 720 pupils aged 11-16; the local authority designated ALN class will also be accommodated in the new school.

To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £12m to improve the buildings at Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school.

The investment will also include a review of the safe routes to school, and improvements to walkways, road crossings and road speed management measures will be made to ensure the required safety standards are met. This is the approach we have implemented in other communities in earlier school reorganisation proposals with significant improvements being made to safe routes to schools.

What are the reasons for the proposed changes?

Across Wales there is a recognition that whilst educational standards have improved, when compared internationally they are still too low and need to be improved and quickly. In this environment of rapid change and increasing pressures on schools and local authorities to improve learning standards, the sustainability and performance of the present educational provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf is being challenged and reviewed.

The Welsh Government sets the overall policy and legislative framework for school organisation however, local authorities have a responsibility for the planning and management of school places and must secure efficient and effective provision so as to focus resources on improving educational outcomes for young people.

The Council has been considering the way forward for education in the County Borough and in Hawthorn for some time and the reasons for change are both educational and financial:

- Hawthorn High has 362 (32.9%) surplus places and this is not forecast to change significantly over the next 5 years;
- The costs of providing the sixth form provision in Hawthorn High are very high, with an average of only 9.25 pupils per class (Post 16 - Level 3 courses), including those classes shared with other schools;
- The small sixth form classes are partially funded by the financial resources which were intended and should be made available to pupils in Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old) and Key Stage 4 (14-16 years old). This has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils;

- A further consequence of the financially inefficient sixth form is that Hawthorn High School has a financial deficit in excess of £400,000;
- Hawthorn Primary School is currently operating almost at full capacity and has very few surplus places, there is no opportunity to expand the accommodation on its existing site. This proposal will allow the use of surplus accommodation in the Secondary school that is located next door to the Primary to cater for the demand in Primary age places;
- Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School has 72 surplus places, equating to 18.5% of its total capacity. It must also be noted that 97 children resident in the Heol-Y-Celyn catchment currently attend Hawthorn Primary School due to parental choice; this large number of out-catchment pupils represents almost 40% of the total pupil population of Hawthorn Primary and demonstrates that parents in this area are already choosing to send their children to Hawthorn instead of their designated catchment school;
- The two buildings that comprise Heol-Y-Celyn Primary are 1960's CLASP constructions, which consist of steel frames, concrete sectional walls and flat felt roofs. Both buildings are in a relatively poor condition overall and have reached the end of their useful life.

Background to the proposal

Information on the Schools

The schools included within the proposal and the pupil numbers over the past four years are shown below. The pupil numbers are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (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. The data for Heol-Y-Celyn is that for the English Medium element of the school only, that will transfer to this 3 – 16 school; the Welsh medium pupils will transfer to the new proposed Welsh Medium Primary school. Total capacity of the school is 388 pupils, the current percentage 'split' of pupils attending this school is 69% English: 31% Welsh (218 English medium pupils and 98 Welsh), capacity has been split using the same percentages.

School	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	% Surplus Jan 2018
Hawthorn Primary	Primary	3 - 11	240	221	223	238	240	224	6.6
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary (English Dept)	Primary	3 - 11	268	183	187	184	200	218	18.5
Hawthorn High	Secondary	11 - 19	1098	856	816	755	729	736	32.9

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending):

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Hawthorn Primary	28	30	36	31	23
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary (English Dept)	30	34	42	46	35

Pupil projections

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the three schools, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes and average birth rates. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	% surplus in Jan 2023
Hawthorn Primary	240	215	206	200	198	194	19.2
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	268	226	238	254	259	262	2.2
Hawthorn High							
11-19 – No.	1098	746	742	756	754	775	29.4
11-16 – No.	983	648	635	656	662	670	31.8

If the proposal was to be implemented in the future and parents/carers choose to transfer their children to the new Hawthorn 3-16 School the forecast for the first year for the new school will be as follows:

School 3-16	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2022	Surplus in Jan 2022
Primary 3-11	480	430	50
Secondary 11-16	720	636	84
Total	1200	1066	134

Proposed Primary Education provision

The plans for the new 3-16 school are at RIBA stage 0, site feasibility studies have been completed and detailed briefs will be worked up in collaboration with the pupils, Governing Body and staff of the schools. It is anticipated that the early years and Foundation Phase pupils will be accommodated in the existing primary school, with Key Stage 2 pupils being accommodated, with Key Stage 3 pupils in the adjacent classroom extension block, which will be refurbished and remodelled together with separate and segregated outdoor play facilities. The Key Stage 3 and 4 sections of the school will be remodelled and refurbished to provide modern 21st Century classrooms, which will future proof the learning environment for the new curriculum for Wales, as described on pages 8 to 9 of this document.

The dedicated ALN provision (KS3) currently accommodated at Hawthorn High School shall transfer to the new school, with consideration being given to ensure flexibility of accommodation, to allow possible expansion of this provision in the future if there is recognised demand. The Council is currently undertaking a separate consultation exercise on the proposed closure of the two ALN classes at Heol Y Celyn Primary, due to a fall in the number of pupils attending the two classes – of the 20 places available at the school, only 1 pupil is currently in attendance. If these proposals are agreed, there will be no dedicated ALN provision at the new school for pupils of either Foundation Phase, or KS2 age.

The primary age pupils will also have supervised and timetabled access to share the specialist resources and facilities available in the secondary school, including the astro turf pitch, new sports hall, playing fields, swimming pool, drama facilities, and science and technology areas.

Current condition of the existing schools

Property condition information on all school buildings is held by the Council, this information is regularly updated to reflect any changes or improvements to the buildings and reported to Welsh Government each year. The overall condition ratings of the school buildings are as follows:

School	Building Condition Survey Result	Suitability Survey Result
Hawthorn Primary	B	A
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	B	B
Hawthorn High	C-	B

Quality and standards

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools in Wales, a comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at the three schools during their last inspections is as follows.

School	Date Inspected	Judgement – Current Performance	Judgement – Prospects for Improvement
Hawthorn Primary	January 2012	Adequate	Good
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	June 2014	Adequate	Adequate
Hawthorn High	March 2014	Adequate	Good

As a result of receiving 'adequate' ratings, all three schools were placed in the category of requiring monitoring by Estyn following inspection. Following further Estyn inspection, Hawthorn Primary School and Hawthorn High School were both deemed to have made sufficient improvement and were removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring in April 2013 and October 2015 respectively.

Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School was re-inspected in November 2015 and found not to have sufficiently improved; it was, as a consequence, placed by Estyn in the category of requiring significant improvement. Following further inspection in January 2017, the school was deemed to have made sufficient progress and was duly removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring.

Since 2014, schools have been categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, (green, yellow, amber and red) with a 'green' school having the highest rating and a 'red' school the lowest. This National Schools Categorisation System introduced by the Welsh Government provides a systematic view of a school's performance, based on publicly available data and the school's own self-evaluation in respect of leadership, learning and teaching. The aim of this system is to determine the level of support a school requires to support it to improve.

Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School are both currently categorised as **yellow** schools. This defines them as 'effective, already doing well, know the areas needed to improve, and by identifying the right support and taking action have the potential to do even better'.

Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School is also currently categorised as a **yellow** school, having previously been red and then amber.

Information and data relating to YGG Pont Sion Norton can be found in Section 5 of this document.

Primary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of the two primary schools for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. Data for Heol-Y-Celyn is for pupils attending the English department only:

Foundation Phase Outcomes						
	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
Subjects	Hawthorn Primary	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	Hawthorn Primary	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	Hawthorn Primary	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary
Foundation Phase Indicator	81.25 (3)	88.46 (1)	84.85 (3)	78.26 (3)	80.65 (3)	72.73 (4)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100 (1)	88.46 (4)	100 (1)	95.65 (2)	87.1 (3)	81.82 (4)
Language literacy and communication skills English	81.25 (4)	92.31 (1)	87.88 (2)	78.26 (4)	80.65 (3)	75.76 (4)
Mathematical development	81.25 (4)	88.46 (2)	90.91 (2)	82.61 (3)	80.65 (3)	75.76 (4)

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	Hawthorn Primary	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	Hawthorn Primary	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	Hawthorn Primary	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary
English	88.24 (3)	76.67(4)	85.71 (4)	78.57 (4)	92.11 (1)	76.47 (4)
Maths	85.29 (3)	80 (3)	88.57 (3)	85.71 (3)	92.11 (2)	76.47 (4)
Science	85.29 (4)	80 (3)	88.57 (3)	85.71 (3)	89.47 (2)	76.47 (4)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	82.35 (3)	76.67 (3)	80 (4)	78.57 (3)	89.47 (2)	76.47 (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.

Secondary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of Hawthorn High School for the key measures of educational performance at Key Stages 3 & 4 over the past four years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals:

Hawthorn High	Key Stage Three Outcomes			
Subjects	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
English	83.7 (2)	86.81 (2)	86.96 (3)	94.33 (1)
Maths	89.6 (1)	91.67 (1)	88.7 (3)	98.58 (1)
Science	96.3 (1)	93.06 (2)	93.04 (2)	96.45 (1)
Welsh (second language)	76.3 (3)	79.17 (2)	85.22 (2)	92.2 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	80.0 (1)	84.72 (1)	82.61 (3)	92.91 (1)

The figures in brackets in the table above compare the school 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.

Hawthorn High	Key Stage Four Outcomes			
Subjects	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
Level 1 Threshold	95.09 (3)	96.58 (3)	100 (1)	94 (3)
Level 2 Threshold	92.64 (1)	93.84 (1)	97.06 (1)	65.4 (1)
Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh & Maths	40.49 (4)	49.32 (3)	61.76 (1)	45.1 (2)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	36.81 (4)	41.1 (4)	55.88 (2)	42.9 (3)
Capped Average Points Score	348.12 (2)	362.39 (1)	373.15 (1)	Not available
Average Wider Points Score	674.57	726.21	693.79	Not available

The figures in brackets in the table above compare the school 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 three schools 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
Hawthorn Primary	96.14%	1	95.96%	1	95.14%	No primary benchmark
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	93.99%	2	93.04%	4	92.66%	No primary benchmark
Hawthorn High	93.02%	3	92.33%	4	93.32%	3

Figures for Heol-Y-Celyn are for the whole school

Financial Information

A move from a position of 'three schools - three budgets', to a single school with a single budget does result in a number of budgets being removed, or reduced, for example, there will only be one budget for a headteacher not three, but conversely the new single school is able to make significant savings from which it benefits. Although it is not possible to be precise about figures related to savings, as much would depend on future decisions of the Governing Body of the new Hawthorn 3-16 School, a summary of the known budgetary impacts is set out below:

	Hawthorn Primary	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	Hawthorn High (excluding sixth form budgets)	New Hawthorn 3-16 School	Revenue Savings
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Annual Revenue Budget based on 2018/19 budget	741	925	3,125	4,614	177

** the sixth form budgets are set by Welsh Government based on Programmes of Study and are outside the control of the Council. Therefore, only those budgets within the Council's responsibility have been included.*

Savings that do arise initially benefit the new school, as they will enable the school building improvements to be made, through use of Prudential Code Borrowing, and then schools as a whole will benefit through redistribution of the savings across the County Borough.

An investment of £12m will be made to the existing Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary sites and buildings, to create a single site and to improve the facilities for all pupils attending the 3 – 16 school to 21st Century Schools standard.

Catchment Area of the New Hawthorn 3-16 School

The catchment area of the New Hawthorn 3-16 School will be as follows:

- Admission for 3-11 pupils – the combined existing catchment areas of Hawthorn Primary and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary (English Medium)
- Admission for 11-16 pupils – the existing Hawthorn High catchment area to:
 - Include the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School, Tonteg (which is currently in the catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive).
 - Exclude the Graig area of Pontypridd that is in the catchment area of Maesycloed Primary School, which will be included in the catchment area of the new Pontypridd 11-16 school;
 - Exclude the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School, which will be included in the catchment area of the new Pontypridd 11-16 school.

These adjustments are being made to the catchment areas of pupils aged 11-16 to match the demand for places with the available supply across the secondary school provision in East Taf Ely. The additional demand for places is driven by housing development in the south east 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:

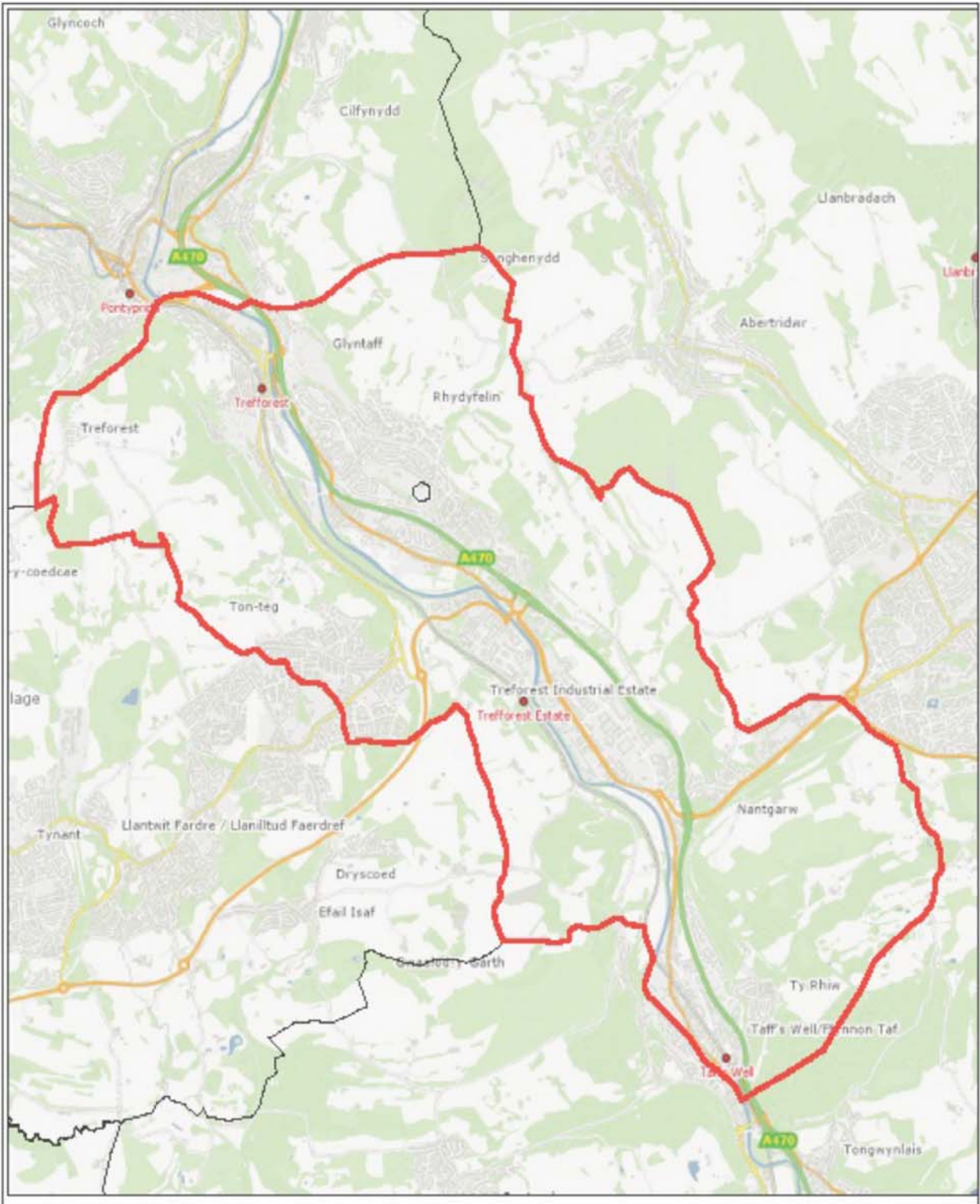
- Category 1 – 'Looked after' children (children in public care) and previously 'looked after' children.
- Category 2 – Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, who will continue to attend that school on the expected 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.

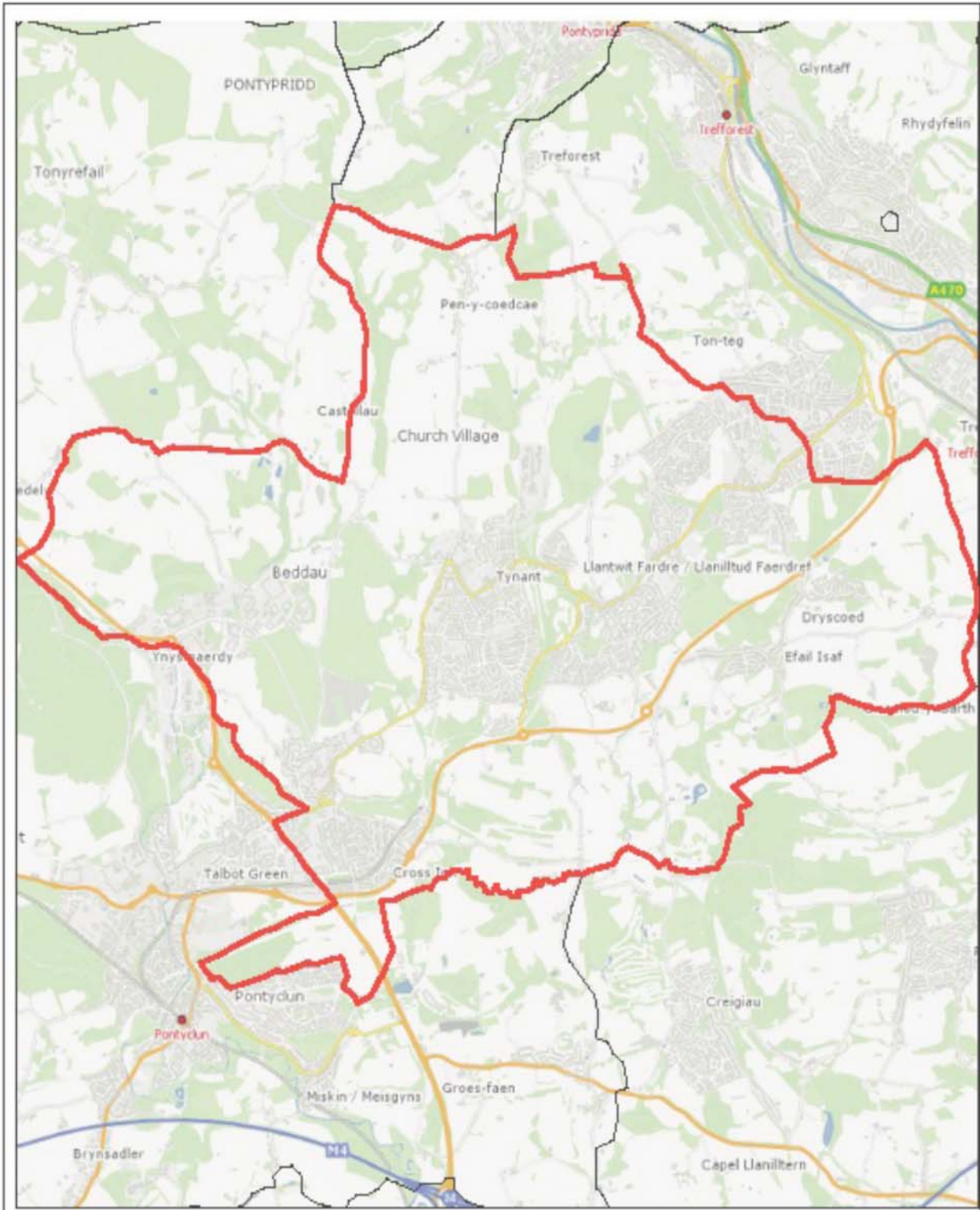
Children will be admitted up to the published Admission Number in the order of priority as outlined above. If within any one of the priority categories listed all of the applicants cannot be offered a place, preference will be given to children living nearest to the school. Distance will be measured 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 Hawthorn catchment area, as detailed on the map enclosed in this document and who has an older sibling still attending Hawthorn High in the July prior to the opening of the new school, i.e. in September 2022 will have their application considered as if they still resided in the Hawthorn 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 Years 7 to 11 in July 2022, any attending the sixth form, namely Years 12 and 13 will not be eligible (as they can be dual registered in more than one school). In the case of Gwauncelyn pupils, they will receive the same protection regarding being resident in the Bryncelynnog catchment if they have elder siblings attending that school on the same dates detailed above.

Pupils aged over 16 will transfer to the catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School for sixth form provision. They may of course attend Coleg y Cymoedd, or another school sixth form centre of their choice, but free transportation will only be provided to either Bryncelynnog, or Coleg Y Cymoedd, or the nearest centre that offers the selection of subject choices that they choose, providing that they reside more than 2 miles from this provision.



	Drawing Title	Date	Scale
	Proposed Hawthorn High		
	Location	e: 000000, n: 000000	
	<small>(C) Crown copyright. All rights reserved LA 100023458. 2006 (C) Hamffrâs y Corc. Cefnir pob hawl LA 100023458. 2006</small>		



Drawing Title
Proposed Bryncelynog

Date	Scale
Location e: 000000, n: 000000	
<small>(C) Crown copyright. All rights reserved LA 100023458. 2006</small>	
<small>(C) Hwffordd y Gorn. Cedwir pob hawl LA 100023458. 2006</small>	

SECTION 4

The proposed changes to primary and secondary school provision in Pontypridd

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:

- Close Pontypridd High School sixth form and transfer the post-16 provision to either Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw, dependent on student choice;
- Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Provide a 1,200 capacity 3-16 School for Pontypridd, for 210 pupils aged 3-11 (including Nursery provision) and 990 pupils aged 11-16.

To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £4.7m to improve the buildings at Pontypridd High to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school. The investment will also include a review of the safe routes to school, and improvements to walkways, road crossings and road speed management measures will be made to ensure the required safety standards are met. This is the approach we have implemented in other communities in earlier school reorganisation proposals with significant improvements being made to safe routes to schools.

What are the reasons for the proposed changes?

Across Wales there is a recognition that whilst educational standards have improved, when compared internationally they are still too low and need to be improved and quickly. In this environment of rapid change and increasing pressures on schools and local authorities to improve learning standards, the sustainability and performance of the present educational provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf is being challenged and reviewed.

The Welsh Government sets the overall policy and legislative framework for school organisation however, local authorities have a responsibility for the planning and management of school places and must secure efficient and effective provision so as to focus resources on improving educational outcomes for young people.

The Council has been considering the way forward for education in the County Borough and in Pontypridd for some time and the reasons for change are both educational and financial:

- Pontypridd High has 428 (31.9%) surplus places and this is not forecast to change significantly over the next 5 years;
- The costs of providing the sixth form provision in Pontypridd High are very high, with an average of only 11 pupils per class (Post 16 - Level 3 courses), including those classes shared with other schools;
- The small sixth form classes are partially funded by the financial resources which were intended and should be made available to pupils in Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old) and Key Stage 4 (14-16 years old). This has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils;
- A further consequence of the financially inefficient sixth form is that Pontypridd High has a financial deficit of almost £520,000;

- Cilfynydd Primary School is a relatively small Primary school (its total capacity is 188 pupils), that currently has just 136 pupils on roll, meaning that almost 28% of its capacity is surplus. A relatively large number (30) of pupils' resident within the Cilfynydd catchment choose to attend Coedpenmaen Primary School, which is 1.7 miles away. This represents over 10% of the total pupil roll of Coedpenmaen. The school is accommodated in three separate Victorian buildings on a steeply sloping site which is just a few hundred metres walk away from Pontypridd High School, via a footbridge over the A470 trunk road. The driving distance by car, which is considerably longer than the safe walking route, is just 0.9 of a mile.

Background to the proposal

Information on the Schools

The schools included within the proposal and the pupil numbers over the past four years are shown below. The pupil numbers are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (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	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	% Surplus Jan 2018
Cilfynydd Primary	Primary	3 - 11	188	120	118	128	126	136	27.6
Pontypridd High	Secondary	11 - 19	1338	1003	1031	967	945	910	31.9

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending):

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Cilfynydd Primary	32	23	27	20	21

Pupil projections

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the two schools, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes and average birth rates. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	% surplus in Jan 2023
Cilfynydd Primary	188	143	142	141	136	124	34.0
Pontypridd High							
11-19 – No.	1338	863	880	884	904	936	46.6
11-16 – No.	1205	752	768	772	796	831	31.0

If the proposal was to be implemented in the future and parents/carers choose to transfer their children to the new Pontypridd 3-16 School the forecast for the first year for the new school will be as follows:

School 3-16	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2022	Surplus in Jan 2022
Primary 3-11	180	125	55
Secondary 11-16	990	879	111
Total	1170	1004	166

Proposed Primary Education provision

The plans for the new 3-16 school are at RIBA stage 0, site feasibility studies have been completed and detailed briefs will be worked up in collaboration with the pupils, Governing Body and staff of the schools. It is anticipated that the primary aged pupils will be accommodated in the Year 7/8 (Lower School) block which will be refurbished and remodelled together with separate and segregated outdoor play facilities. A secure soft play area for early year's children will be created at the front of the building. A new environmental outdoor classroom will also be created.

External play areas across the school site will be upgraded and improved, to also include the installation of a 3G pitch. Works to reconfigure the existing car park, to provide a dedicated pick up/drop off area for parents will also be undertaken.

The dedicated ALN class already in operation at Pontypridd High will transfer to the new school, with consideration being given to ensure flexibility of accommodation, to allow possible expansion of this provision in the future if there is recognised demand.

The primary age pupils will also have supervised and timetabled access to share the specialist resources and facilities available in the secondary school, including the new 3G pitch, sports hall, playing fields, tennis courts, music and drama facilities, and science and technology areas.

Current condition of the existing schools

Property condition information on all school buildings is held by the Council, this information is regularly updated to reflect any changes or improvements to the buildings and reported to Welsh Government each year. The overall condition ratings of the school buildings are as follows:

School	Building Condition Survey Result	Suitability Survey Result
Cilfynydd Primary	C	B
Pontypridd High	C+	B

Quality and standards

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools in Wales, a comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at both schools during their last inspections is as follows.

School	Date Inspected	Judgement – Current Performance	Judgement – Prospects for Improvement
Cilfynydd Primary	May 2014	Adequate	Adequate
Pontypridd High	January 2014	Adequate	Good

As a result of receiving 'adequate' ratings, both schools were placed in the category of requiring monitoring by Estyn following inspection. Following further Estyn inspection, both schools were both deemed to have made sufficient improvement and were removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring in July 2015 and November 2016 respectively.

Since 2014, schools have been categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, (green, yellow, amber and red) with a 'green' school having the highest rating and a 'red' school the lowest. This National Schools Categorisation System introduced by the Welsh Government provides a systematic view of a school's performance, based on publicly available data and the school's own self-evaluation in respect of leadership, learning and teaching. The aim of this system is to determine the level of support a school requires to support it to improve.

Pontypridd High School is currently categorised as a **yellow** school. This defines them as 'effective, already doing well, know the areas needed to improve, and by identifying the right support and taking action have the potential to do even better'. Cilfynydd Primary became a **green** school for the first time in 2018; this defines them as 'highly effective and has a track record of sustaining a high level of outcomes, has the capacity to lead and contribute to supporting other schools'.

Primary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of Cilfynydd 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 free school meals:

Cilfynydd Primary	Foundation Phase Outcomes		
Subjects	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
Foundation Phase Indicator	76.19 (4)	90.48 (1)	83.33 (3)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100 (1)	100 (1)	94.44 (3)
Language literacy and communication skills English	76.19 (4)	90.48 (2)	83.33 (3)
Mathematical development	80.95 (4)	100 (1)	83.33 (4)

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.

Cilfynydd Primary	Key Stage Two Outcomes		
Subjects	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
English	86.67 (3)	81.82 (4)	94.44 (1)
Maths	86.67 (3)	81.82 (4)	94.44 (2)
Science	86.67 (3)	81.82 (4)	100 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	86.67 (2)	81.82 (4)	88.89 (2)

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.

Secondary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of Pontypridd High School for the key measures of educational performance at Key Stages 3 & 4 over the past four years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals:

Pontypridd High	Key Stage Three Outcomes			
Subjects	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
English	82.94 (3)	82.42 (3)	88.05 (2)	87.27 (4)
Maths	89.41 (1)	86.81 (2)	91.19 (1)	90.30 (3)
Science	90.59 (2)	85.71 (4)	94.34 (2)	93.94 (3)
Welsh (second language)	68.82 (4)	77.47(3)	73.58 (4)	75.76 (4)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	78.24 (2)	76.37 (4)	84.91 (2)	85.45 (3)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school 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.

Pontypridd High	Key Stage Four Outcomes			
Subjects	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
Level 1 Threshold	90.48 (4)	98.37 (2)	100 (1)	95.5 (4)
Level 2 Threshold	78.57 (3)	92.93 (1)	98.24 (1)	60.8 (4)
Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh & Maths	52.38 (1)	53.26 (2)	61.76 (1)	51.1 (3)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	48.21 (2)	50 (2)	61.18 (1)	48.9 (3)
Capped Average Points Score	329.69 (3)	364.40 (1)	375.92 (2)	Not available
Average Wider Points Score		584.78	596.24	Not available

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school 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 two schools 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
Cilfynydd Primary	93.81%	4	93.21%	4	94.44%	No benchmark
Pontypridd High	93.16%	2	93.60%	2	94.07%	3

Financial Information

A move from a position of 'two schools - two budgets', to a single school with a single budget does result in a number of budgets being removed, or reduced, for example, there will only be one budget for a headteacher not two, but conversely the new single school is able to make significant savings from which it benefits. Although it is not possible to be precise about figures related to savings, as much would depend on future decisions of the Governing Body of the new Pontypridd 3-16 School, a summary of the known budgetary impacts is set out below:

	Cilfynydd Primary	Pontypridd High (excluding sixth form budgets)	New Pontypridd 3-16 School	Revenue Savings
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Annual Revenue Budget based on 2018/19 budget	550	3541	4051	40

** the sixth form budgets are set by Welsh Government based on Programmes of Study and are outside the control of the Council. Therefore, only those budgets within the Council's responsibility have been included.*

Savings that do arise initially benefit the new school, as they will enable the school building improvements to be made, through use of Prudential Code Borrowing, and then schools as a whole will benefit through redistribution of the savings across the County Borough.

An investment of £4.7m will be made to the existing Pontypridd High site and buildings to accommodate the primary aged pupils in 21st Century facilities and to improve the 11-16 facilities at the School.

Any capital receipts from the future sale of vacated school sites will be used by the Council to invest in capital projects across the County Borough.

Catchment Area of the New Pontypridd 3-16 School

The catchment area of the New Pontypridd 3-16 School will be as follows:

- Admission for 3-11 pupils – the existing catchment area of Cilfynydd Primary School.
- Admission for 11-16 pupils – the existing Pontypridd High School catchment area, with the addition of the following areas that are currently part of the catchment area of Hawthorn High School:
 - The Graig area of Pontypridd, that is currently in the catchment area of Maesycloed Primary School;
 - The catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School.

The criteria for admission to schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf, in the case of oversubscription is outlined in detail on page 44 of this document. As no areas are being removed from this catchment area there is no requirement to put in place any protection for siblings of existing pupils, although the protection to be put in place for those pupils who were formerly in the Hawthorn catchment, but will transfer to the Pontypridd High catchment as a result of these proposals should be noted.

Pupils aged over 16 will transfer to the catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School for sixth form provision. They may of course attend Coleg y Cymoedd, or another school sixth form centre of their choice, but free transportation will only be provided to either Bryncelynnog, or Coleg Y Cymoedd or the nearest centre that offers the selection of subject choices that they choose, providing that they reside more than 2 miles from this provision.

SECTION 5

The closure of YGG, Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh Medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School, and the creation of a new, Welsh Medium Community Primary school to replace both provisions.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:

- Improve and increase Welsh medium provision by building a new school that will replace the provision of YGG, Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh Medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School (currently a dual language school).

To achieve this, the proposal is to construct a new, purpose built school building that will be constructed on the current site of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd. The planned investment in this new school is £10.7 million. YGG Pont Sion Norton is a Welsh Medium Community Primary School located near Cilfynydd, Pontypridd, in poor condition buildings that are difficult to access. Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School is a dual language school and it is proposed that the pupils educated through the medium of Welsh in this school shall transfer to the new school, along with the pupils attending YGG, Pont Sion Norton; Heol-Y-Celyn Primary will subsequently close and the pupils educated through the medium of English will transfer to the new proposed 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn, details of this proposal are outlined earlier in Section 3 of this document.

What are the reasons for the proposed changes?

YGG Pont Sion Norton is a Welsh Medium Community School located at the rear of Pont Sion Norton Road, Pontypridd. The school site consists of three separate traditional stone Victorian buildings with slate roofs, built on a steeply sloping site, constructed in 1893. The school is built on a steep hillside, all of the external play areas are sloping which makes playing of ball games, for example, extremely difficult; the external areas are all tarmac yards and the school does not have access to any grassed playing fields or garden areas.

Access to the school site is via flights of stone steps and the school does not have the necessary facilities to enable any persons who use wheelchairs to access the school. There is no dedicated car parking on the site; staff and visitors have to park in a lane that serves the rear of the residential properties in Pont Sion Norton Road. School buses are unable to drive up to the school site and have to pick up and drop off pupils on the busy main road below the school.

The school has received considerable investment in recent years to repair and improve the learning environment but is still only currently categorised as a grade C according to the Welsh Government's Property Condition data in respect of building condition.

The school is currently operating at 96% of its published capacity and pupil numbers are not forecast to reduce in the next few years. There is no scope to extend the existing school buildings should demand for Welsh Medium places rise and the nature of the site would make provision of temporary accommodation very difficult to achieve. Of more concern is the inaccessibility of the school to children and adults who may have mobility problems, it is simply not possible to undertake any reasonable adjustments to improve access at the current site. Even with further major capital investment at this school it would not be possible to create a 21st Century learning environment for all children.

If the proposal to close, and relocate the provision of YGG Pont Sion Norton to the current Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School site in a new building is agreed, then the current YGG Pont Sion Norton school site will become surplus to requirements.

Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools YGG Pont Sion Norton is graded a C 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 £136,000.

The new school building will create a teaching and learning environment that will be fit for the purpose to provide education in the 21st Century, as opposed to a building that was constructed for 19th Century requirements. The new proposed site is flat and the building will be fully accessible to all, meeting all of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The new site will also incorporate extensive outdoor play facilities that are lacking at the current location. It will also include those pupils currently educated through the medium of Welsh at Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School, which is currently a dual language school. The new school will be a larger, and thus more educationally and financially viable Welsh Medium school where all pupils will receive their education fully immersed in the Welsh language.

Background to the proposal

Information on the Schools

The pupil numbers in YGG Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh Language Department of Heol-Y-Celyn 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. The capacity of the Welsh Department of Heol-Y-Celyn is calculated as 31% of the total, this being the same percentage of the total number of pupils that attend the Welsh Department of the school.

School	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	% Surplus Jan 2018
YGG Pont Sion Norton	Primary	3 - 11	267	222	231	244	250	256	4.1
Heol-Y-Celyn Welsh medium pupils	Primary	3 - 11	120	125	111	111	96	98	18.3

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending)

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
YGG Pont Sion Norton	36	43	37	43	39
Heol-Y-Celyn Welsh medium pupils	26	22	15	21	11

Pupil projections

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the school, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes and average birth rates. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	% surplus in Jan 2023
YGG Pont Sion Norton	267	253	247	239	235	226	15.4
Heol-Y-Celyn Welsh medium pupils	120	95	87	80	81	73	39.1

Proposed new school site and building

Plans for the new school on the Heol-Y-Celyn school site are still at a formative stage, but it is planned that the accommodation will be in a new building on the site at Holly Street, Rhydyfelin, with separate outdoor play facilities. It will have at least 16 classrooms of approximately 60 square metres, able to accommodate 30 pupils per class, plus a Nursery unit with facilities to cater for up to 60 pupils. The proposed capacity of the new school will be 480 plus 60 Nursery places. The expected cost of the new building will be £10.7 m.

The school will be constructed to cater for the pupils currently attending YGG Pont Sion Norton and the pupils educated through the medium of Welsh at Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School.

Quality and standards

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools in Wales. A comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at the three schools detailed above during their last inspections is as follows.

School	Date Inspected	Judgement – Current Performance	Judgement – Prospects for Improvement
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	September 2014	Adequate	Good
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	June 2014	Adequate	Adequate

As a result of receiving one 'adequate' rating, YGG Pont Sion Norton was placed in the category of requiring monitoring by Estyn following inspection. Following further Estyn inspection, the school was deemed to have made sufficient improvement and was removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring in April, 2016.

Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School was re-inspected in November 2015 and found not to have sufficiently improved; it was, as a consequence, placed by Estyn in the category of requiring significant improvement. Following further inspection in January 2017, the school was deemed to have made sufficient progress and was duly removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring.

Since 2014, schools have been categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, (green, yellow, amber and red) with a 'green' school having the highest rating and a 'red' school the lowest. This National Schools Categorisation System introduced by the Welsh Government provides a systematic view of a school's performance, based on publicly available data and the school's own self-evaluation in respect of leadership, learning and teaching. The aim of this system is to determine the level of support a school requires to support it to improve.

YGG Pont Sion Norton is currently categorised as a yellow school. This defines it as 'effective, already doing well, know the areas needed to improve, and by identifying the right support and taking action have the potential to do even better'.

Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School is also currently categorised as a yellow school, having previously been red and then amber.

Primary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. Data for Heol-Y-Celyn is for the Welsh Department only:

Foundation Phase Outcomes						
	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
Subjects	YGG Pont Sion Norton	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	YGG Pont Sion Norton	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	YGG Pont Sion Norton	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary
Foundation Phase Indicator	87.8 (3)	94.44 (1)	80.56 (4)	81.25 (3)	94.44 (2)	80 (3)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	93.9 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	93.75 (2)	100 (1)	90 (4)
Language literacy and communication skills English	95.9 (2)	100 (1)	88.89 (3)	87.5 (2)	100 (1)	80 (3)
Mathematical development	93.9 (2)	94.44 (1)	86.11 (4)	93.75 (1)	94.44 (2)	80 (4)

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	YGG Pont Sion Norton	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	YGG Pont Sion Norton	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	YGG Pont Sion Norton	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary
English	96.55 (1)	75 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)	92 (4)	92.31 (2)
Maths	100 (1)	83.33 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)	92 (4)	92.31 (2)
Science	96.55 (2)	66.67 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)	88 (4)	92.31 (2)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	93.1 (2)	66.67 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)	84 (4)	92.31 (2)

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 two schools 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
YGG Pont Sion Norton	95.2%	2	94.35%	4	94.5%	No benchmark
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary	93.99%	2	93.04%	4	92.66%	No benchmark

Financial Information

There will be no savings made as a result of this proposal, as a new school will be created to replace the ones that are closing. The formula budget allocated to the school will reflect the increased floor area of the new building, the area of the grounds and the increased number of pupils on roll.

There may be some additional transport costs for pupils as a result of the relocation and because of the catchment changes also. These will not be known until these proposals are finalised and we become aware of the demographic changes to the pupils attending the school. All pupils resident within the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton catchment area will qualify for free home to school transport to the new school site as it is more than 1.5 miles from their home addresses.

Catchment area of the new school

The catchment area of the new school will comprise that of the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton, together with that of the current Welsh Medium stream of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School.

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
21st Century Schools Team
Ty Trevithick
Abercynon
CF45 4UQ

or email schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

The Proposals

Proposal 1: Removal of the sixth forms of Hawthorn High, Pontypridd High and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive, with post 16 students attending an alternative school or college that offers the choice of courses they require.

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

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Proposal 2: Create a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Hawthorn

2 Do you agree with proposal 2? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Proposal 3: Create a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Pontypridd

3 Do you agree with proposal 3? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Proposal 4: Close YGG Pont Sion Norton and relocate its pupils to a new Welsh Medium Primary School, to be constructed on the current site of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School (which will close as part of Proposal 2). Welsh Medium pupils attending Heol y Celyn will also transfer to the new school.

4 Do you agree with proposal 4? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Proposal 5: Amendment of the catchment areas of Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High Schools and the 6th form catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, as outlined in this document.

5 Do you agree with proposal 5? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice



Appendix 2

- Community Impact Assessments x4
- Equality Impact Assessment
- Welsh Language Impact Assessment

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Proposal to create a Sixth Form 'Centre of Excellence' at Bryncelynnog, utilise post 16 provision at Coleg y Cymoedd and St David's College, Cardiff, and to remove sixth form provision at Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive, Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which will be implemented with effect from 1st November 2018

This proposal is being consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Hawthorn and Pontypridd areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

The reasons for consideration of this particular proposal are fully outlined in the consultation document that has been widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposal and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

It must be noted that we are not closing any secondary school provision as a consequence of this particular proposal. The three schools that may lose 6th form provision will remain in situ, albeit with changes made to the age range of pupils they wish to admit (amended from 11 – 19 years to 3 – 16 years or 11 – 16 in the case of Cardinal Newman). Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School will have additional accommodation and facilities provided. Separate Community Impact Assessments have been prepared in respect of all other proposals being consulted upon at the current time.

Taking into account the information provided above, it is considered that the 6th form element of our Hawthorn and Pontypridd School Reorganisation Proposals will have a neutral effect on the communities they serve. All facilities and services provided by these schools to their communities will remain in place. It is for this reason that a more detailed Community Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this proposal, as it is not deemed to be applicable or appropriate in the circumstances.

The only potential impact will be on the pupils who may require 6th form education in the future, in that they may have to travel longer distances to access this provision. There are far too many different 'permutations' to outline the distances involved for individual pupils in this report.

Transportation for pupils will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of the post-16 provision to their new locations. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

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Proposal to close Hawthorn Primary, Heol y Celyn Primary and Hawthorn High Schools and to create a new 3 – 16 school on the adjacent sites of the current Hawthorn Primary and Hawthorn High Schools

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which will be implemented with effect from 1st November 2018.

This proposal is being consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who reside within the catchment areas of those schools are as follows:

- Hawthorn Primary – 46%
- Heol y Celyn Primary – 75%
- Hawthorn High – 85%

A significant percentage (40%) of the children attending Hawthorn Primary School, or 97 children in total actually reside in the adjacent catchment area of Heol y Celyn Primary; some actually live in the same street that Heol y Celyn is situated in. We do not consider therefore that transferring the English Medium stream of Heol y Celyn to the new 3 -16 provision at Hawthorn will have an adverse effect on either the children or the local community, as many parents are already exercising their right to choose this school for their children.

The two Primary schools offer breakfast clubs to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new 3 - 16 school if these proposals are agreed.

Neither of the two Primary schools are used outside of school hours by community organisations; any usage made is by school based groups such as the PTA. Both offer after school clubs to their pupils, Heol y Celyn has football, netball and gymnastics clubs on three evenings a week and Hawthorn has various clubs running on three evenings a week.

The Secondary school runs a full programme of extra-curricular activities after school each day. The full facilities of the current Secondary school will be available for the younger children to use, under supervision, so the programme of after school activities available to them can in fact be enhanced and extended.

There is a swimming pool on the High school site that is also open to the public; the organisation and running of this facility will not change as a result of these proposals.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to both Primary and Secondary aged pupils resident in the Hawthorn area , to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will differ for the Primary and Secondary departments of the new proposed 3 – 16 School). 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.

The catchment area for Primary aged pupils who may attend the new 3 – 16 school will be that of the current Hawthorn Primary and the English medium stream of Heol y Celyn, combined. The distance between the Heol y Celyn site and the site of the new school is just 1 mile; this is the driving distance, the walking distance is shorter. Hawthorn Primary School is located immediately adjacent to the Hawthorn High School site and the distance between them is just a few metres.

No address within the extended Primary age catchment area will qualify for free home to school transport on the grounds of distance, as the furthest addresses from the new school site are all within the qualifying distance, which is 1.5 miles for Primary aged pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The furthest address on the eastern side of the catchment area is 0.9 miles; on the upper western side of the catchment area it is 1.2 miles. It is not considered that these distances will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at the new 3 - 16 School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. Having all Primary aged pupils in the Hawthorn area in one school, along with their elder siblings who may attend the Secondary department is considered to be of benefit to parents in future, as their children's school provision will be located on one site, as opposed to being a mile apart as it is at present

The catchment area of the Secondary section of the new school will remain as it is for the existing Hawthorn High School, with the addition of the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School, Tonteg, and the omission of the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School, Pontypridd. The Graig area of Pontypridd will also be omitted. Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new 3 - 16 School. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

Proposal to close YGG, Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary School (dual language) and to open a new, enlarged Welsh Medium Community Primary School on the former Heol y Celyn site.

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which will be implemented with effect from 1st November 2018.

This proposal is being consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who reside within the catchment areas of those schools are as follows:

- YGG Pont Sion Norton – 91%
- Heol y Celyn (Welsh Unit only) – 88%

A relatively large number of children (30) who reside in the Heol y Celyn catchment area choose to attend other Welsh Medium schools in the area, including YGG Pont Sion Norton and YGG Evan James. These pupils may possibly choose to return to their catchment school if a new, full Welsh Medium school is constructed on the Heol y Celyn site.

Both schools offer breakfast club to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new Welsh Medium Primary school if these proposals are agreed.

Heol y Celyn Primary is not used outside of school hours by community organisations; any usage made is by school based groups such as the PTA. The school offers after school clubs to its pupils on three evenings each week.

YGG Pont Sion Norton hosts Welsh for Adults classes on one evening a week, organised by the University of South Wales. Menter Iaith also host their 'Clwb Carco' after school provision for pupils on two evenings each week, in addition the school itself offers their own after school clubs on two evenings each week.

The new school will be strongly encouraged to continue with the after school and adult education provision currently offered, with opportunity to expand and extend this if there is recognised demand.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to pupils who require a Welsh Medium education in the Pontypridd area. In addition to improving provision, it is hoped that a new school with 21st Century Schools facilities will encourage parents to choose a Welsh Medium education for their children, thus assisting the Council in achieving one of the key aims outlined in its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). 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.

The catchment area of the new school will encompass that of the existing two schools. The relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton to the Heol y Celyn site will mean that all pupils resident within this school's current catchment area will qualify for, and receive free home to school transport, as they will reside more than 1.5 miles from the new school. No child resident in the Heol y Celyn part of the catchment will qualify as none will reside more than 1 mile from the school. It is not considered that distance to school will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre and after school provision that will be offered in the new school; the maximum length of time any child will have to take to travel to the school will be 20 minutes.

Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new site. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

Proposal to close Cilfynydd Primary and Pontypridd High Schools and to create a new 3 – 16 school on site of the current Pontypridd High School

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which will be implemented with effect from 1st November 2018.

This proposal is being consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who reside within the catchment areas of those schools are as follows:

- Cilfynydd Primary – 90%
- Pontypridd High – 68%

A relatively large number of children (30) who reside in the Cilfynydd catchment area choose to attend Coedpenmaen Primary School, which is approx. 1 mile from Cilfynydd Primary. This number of children represents 27% of the total number of statutory age children who currently attend Cilfynydd Primary.

Cilfynydd Primary School offers breakfast club to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new 3 - 16 school if these proposals are agreed.

Cilfynydd Primary is not used outside of school hours by community organisations; any usage made is by school based groups such as the PTA. The school offers after school clubs to its pupils on two evenings each week.

The Secondary school runs a full programme of extra-curricular activities after school each day. The full facilities of the current Secondary school will be available for the younger children to use, under supervision, so the programme of after school activities available to them can in fact be enhanced and extended.

There is a sports hall on the High school site that is widely used by community groups outside of school hours; the organisation and running of this facility will not change as a result of these proposals.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to both Primary and Secondary aged pupils resident in the Pontypridd area , to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will differ for the Primary and Secondary departments of the new proposed 3 – 16 School). 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.

The distance between the existing school and new school sites for Primary aged pupils who may attend the new 3 – 16 school is just 0.9 of a mile; this is the driving distance, the walking distance is much shorter, via a footbridge over the A470 trunk road.

No address within the Primary age catchment area will qualify for free home to school transport on the grounds of distance, as the furthest addresses from the new school site are all within the qualifying distance, which is 1.5 miles for Primary aged pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The furthest address on the eastern side of the Cilfynydd catchment area to the site of Pontypridd High (Albion Court) is 1.4 miles by car and 1.1 miles on foot. It is not considered this distance will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at the new 3 - 16 School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. Having all Primary aged pupils in the Cilfynydd area of Pontypridd in one school, along with their elder siblings who may attend the Secondary department is considered to be of benefit to parents in future, as their children's school provision will be located on one site, as opposed to being almost a mile apart as it is at present

The catchment area of the Secondary section of the new school will remain as it is for the existing Pontypridd High School, with the addition of the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School. The Graig area of Pontypridd will also be included. Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new 3 - 16 School. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Directorate: Education

Service Area: 21st Century Schools

Responsible officer: Julie Hadley

Date: 22nd November 2018

1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project: Reorganisation of School Provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas

The Project is to:

- Develop post 16 centres of excellence based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw.
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by closing Heol y Celyn Primary School, which is a dual language school, and YGG Pont Sion Norton; Welsh Medium pupils attending both schools will transfer a new, full Welsh Medium school, that will be constructed on the former site of Heol y Celyn;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools to better meet and match the demand for school places;
- Improve the learning environments for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £37.4m in building new or refurbishing/remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21st Century learning environment.

To achieve this, the proposal is to:

- Close the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transfer the post-16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Close Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol-Y-Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol-Y-Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn, see above);
- Amend the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained Secondary schools by:
 - Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd (that is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School) to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently part of the Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School catchment).

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, is planning to invest £37.4m in new or refurbished/remodelled school buildings and facilities.

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?

In recent years, Estyn has sharpened its approach to inspection of schools and local authorities and has raised the bar in respect of what it considers to be good and excellent provision. Furthermore, Estyn has taken a very hard line on local authorities in Wales that have weaknesses in key areas such as corporate governance, educational standards, attendance levels, surplus places and safeguarding.

Following the last formal inspection of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Education Service in 2012, Estyn also highlighted that the Council had the highest number of surplus places in Wales and that action had to be taken to address this issue. This was followed up by a letter from the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills in November 2012 that instructed the Council to take action in respect of surplus places or the Welsh Government would take responsibility for removing the surplus places.

The Elected Members accepted Estyn's recommendations and have been continually reviewing school provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf ever since. The criteria that has been used for selecting schools for review is one or more of the following:

- Surplus places in excess of 25% of published capacity;
- Buildings that are beyond economic repair/not fit for purpose;
- Financially unviable (usually due to a sharp fall in pupil numbers);
- Schools considered to be 'small' schools, i.e. schools with 90 or fewer pupils;
- Separate infant and junior schools in close proximity;
- 'Paired' schools, i.e. where children progress from one of the schools to the other;
- Mixed aged classes where there are more than two age groups in one class;
- Schools considered to be at risk, based on their academic Key Stage data and the quality of the leadership, of meeting Estyn's criteria as a school in need of significant improvement or special measures.

The 3 primary schools and 2 secondary schools included within these proposals have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- 4 of the 5 schools have surplus places in excess of 25%;
- The combined maintenance backlog of the 5 schools is £4,352,000 which equates to £1,804 per pupil;
- The educational performance and pupil attendance of the 2 LA maintained secondary schools at Key Stage 4 is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales;

In addition Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools combined have small sixth forms of less than 250 pupils (the national recommended minimum number for an efficient and effective sixth form), and with relatively poor educational performance. Please refer to the data contained in sections 2 and 3 of this document for the evidence to support this statement.

Pupil numbers attending the sixth form at Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School have also fallen dramatically in the last three years; in September 2015 there were 195 pupils in the sixth form, this fell to just 80 in January 2018, a reduction of 60%. Having such small post 16 numbers has a significant impact on the post 16 provision available and on the wider sixth form experience for the students. Numbers are forecast to fall even further in September 2018. This reduction in pupil numbers and consequent reduction in post 16 funding from the Welsh Government has meant that the Cardinal Newman School budget is predicted to fall into a deficit balance of over £700k.

The opportunity exists to reconfigure the primary and secondary schools, including post-16 provision to create educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities. These proposals seek to achieve this.

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 creating larger sixth forms and 3-16 schools will:

- **Improve educational outcomes;**
 - Create larger school departments or faculties that will promote the sharing of skills and expertise across more viable teams;
 - Provide teaching and support staff with more opportunity to develop professionally;
 - Enable greater opportunities for staff to move between key stages and further develop expertise;
 - Provide a more appropriate skills-based curriculum and wider extra-curricular opportunities which should improve attendance and educational outcomes;
 - Reduce the anxiety caused by transition

- **Improve educational provision;**

- Provide the conditions that will enable a broader and more diverse curriculum to be developed to better meet the needs of the school's young people and in ways that will be viable and sustainable over the longer term;
- Improve the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils;
- Enable greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;
- Allow for the potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to a larger school;
- Broaden the range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities and develop them in ways that are sustainable over the longer term;
- Deliver the future capital investment benefits that would arise from the modernisation of a small number of institutions rather than many;
- Create schools of a sustainable size for their catchment area by removing surplus capacity, providing greater educational and financial stability;
- Release resources that will be reinvested in improving the buildings and in improving standards of teaching and learning, which otherwise would not have been available;
- Enable schools to build better relationships with parents and carers.

- **Improve leadership and management;**

- Provides the opportunity for the headteacher to distribute key leadership tasks such as child protection, literacy, numeracy, special educational needs etc to a greater number of staff. Often in a small Primary school, the headteacher takes responsibility for the vast majority of these tasks;
- Creates leadership opportunities for other staff, and for others to specialise in key areas, which will enhance educational provision and outcomes and improve succession planning;
- Allow teaching and support staff access to a wider range of responsibilities:
 - Improved career prospects;
 - Improved curriculum co-ordination;
 - The opportunity to teach across a wider age range;

- An increased range of expertise;
- Improved opportunities for staff interaction /co-ordination.

These benefits apply equally to the mainstream and the pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in the schools. This argument is supported by Estyn in its report “School Size and Educational Effectiveness” (Dec 2013), which stated:

- *“Pupils’ standards are good or better in a higher proportion of large primary schools than small and medium-sized primary schools. This may be because large schools tend to have more expertise and capacity to address the needs of more vulnerable pupils and the more able and talented pupils.”*
- *“Examination results for large secondary schools are better than those for small and medium-sized secondary schools for nearly all measures”;*
- *“In general, curriculum provision is broader and better balanced in large secondary schools. Nearly all large secondary schools provide good or better learning experiences for their pupils. Large secondary schools are able to offer a wider range of options due to economies of scale”.*

What is the educational case for creating larger sixth forms?

Over the past few years secondary schools have sought to collaborate to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009 and to offer a good quality post 16 learning experience to their pupils. Despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and the Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of the students by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. A viable sixth form, both educationally and financially should, ideally, have at least 250 students; In January 2018 (source : PLASC return), Hawthorn High had 114 sixth form students attending and Pontypridd High 131, just 245 in total between the two schools. Bryncelynog Comprehensive had 147 sixth form students at the same point in time. Numbers at Cardinal Newman have fallen from 195 in 2015 to just 80 in January 2018, a fall of almost 60%.

- The delivery of post-16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the County Borough are projected to be almost 3,500 by 2022 and over 775 in the Pontypridd area alone. This leads to valuable education funds being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf, funds amounting to over £600 per pupil that were originally provided to educate 11-16 pupils are redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes. This amount increases to an average of over £600 per pupil across both Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools; at Cardinal Newman this figure is almost £800.
- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited student interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Across the four secondary schools, 44 post-16 courses were delivered in 2017 with less than 5 pupils per course. This poor learning experience for students is impacting on the numbers of students continuing their post 16 education in the four schools. The percentage of students opting, to stay on in their respective school, for a sixth form education in September 2017, was very low, being 31% in Cardinal Newman, 36% in Pontypridd HS, 46% in Hawthorn and 51% in Bryncelynog. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and student interactions increase. However, travel between providers is seen by some students as a barrier to access a wider choice of courses.
- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement for the County Borough;
- The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 4 (in relation to the Average Capped Wider Points Score) and Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough are below Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in Wales. A step change is still required to raise the number of young people participating in education post 16 and improve the quality of learning outcomes by raising attainment, retention and progression.

Creating a larger sixth form at Bryncelynog, together with the existing comprehensive post 16 provision at Coleg y Cymoedd creates the capacity and economies of scale to be able to improve:

- **Standards and Achievement** – raising standards of success and achievement and increasing progression to Higher Education and employment.

- **Choice** – improving the breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for all young people to choose learning pathways that best enable them to mix and match vocational, academic and occupational qualifications and experience.
- **Participation** – increasing participation and attendance rates.
- **Equality** – to ensure every sixth form student in the Pontypridd area is able to access the curriculum of choice.
- **Ability to respond to future learners, community and business needs** – Re-skilling and up-skilling the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf as the commercial environment changes, to allow people to compete effectively in the job market.
- **Financial viability and effectiveness** – providing a cost effective and efficient model for delivery, removing unnecessary duplication, aligning capacity with demand (in light of demographic change), generating economies of scale and expanding economies of scope. This will result in the removal of surplus places, the reduction in the number of small sixth form classes, and the duplication of provision between providers.

What is the educational case for creating 3-16 schools?

The great strength of all-through education is the continuity of educational experience which negates the transition “dips” in pupil performance. A 3-16 school provides the opportunity to provide a “bridge” between key stages in order to create a seamless transition for pupils in terms of curriculum planning, learning and teaching. It can allow for a significant sharing of subject expertise and primary pedagogy in particular across key stages 2 and 3.

In 2012, the Council established a new 3-19 school at Ysgol Llanhari and to date the school is making excellent progress, with pupil attainment and development outcomes improving year on year. The cross phase learning and communication with staff is having a positive effect on pupils.

The all through school eases the transition process between the key stages and staff and teachers know the children well as they progress through the year groups and this enables them to assist pupils where additional support is required.

The School has strong leadership, which creates a vision that resonates with all phases, all staff are fully engaged and the school benefits from ‘coherence and continuity’ which assists pupils learning progression.

Another important benefit of all-age schooling is being able to achieve greater effectiveness through the sharing of resources, and being able to target these resources, whether financial, physical or human, at key areas of school improvement. Some reported benefits include:

- Provision of specialist teaching in KS2 or extending literacy and numeracy programmes into KS3;
- Access for primary phase pupils to the facilities of secondary phase;
- Providing scope for acceleration programmes for more able and talented pupils;
- Joint Professional Development;
- Directing resources at early intervention;
- Planning a joint curriculum;
- Sharing equipment, hardware and accommodation;
- Increasing the range and capacity for extra-curricular/after school learning;
- Creating common administrative appointments.

What will be the impact on the other “partner” primary schools in the community?

Other partner/associated primary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal. Pupil transition is important and the Council, through its 21st Century Band A programme has instigated some innovative programmes to ensure the quality of integration at Year 7 was seamless regardless of where they have received their primary experience. No pupil will be disadvantaged when they join the new school at Year 7.

What is the likely impact of the proposals on school pupils?

In making the proposed changes, many things will be different for the pupils from the Pontypridd area, depending on parents’ exercising their right of choice, but some things will remain the same:

- Some may have a longer or a different route to school, and some may be transported to school by bus. Some children may lose their entitlement to free transport, but others could gain entitlement;
- Being in classes with predominantly their own age group, the teacher will be better able to offer the primary pupils a wider and more varied curriculum to support all learners, including the least and most able;

- The teachers and teaching assistants may be different, however, the majority of teachers and teaching assistants should be able to transfer between the schools, if they wish to do so;
- For sixth form students there will be less, probably no travelling during the school day to access the curriculum and therefore there will be greater opportunities for more unstructured/informal interaction between students and teachers during the school day. The time saved from not travelling can also be used to focus on studying or completing course work;
- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to run school sports teams, debating team etc. The children attending the ALN Classes will also have the opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

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 approx 5,500 pupils attending schools in the area under consideration (Pontypridd and Hawthorn), **none** are indicated as being Gypsy or Traveller children; 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.

Pupils who currently attend Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive Sixth Form will be able to continue their post – 16 education through the Catholic faith, if they choose to do so, at St David’s College, Cardiff. Any pupils resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf who choose this College on faith grounds will receive free transportation to this establishment. Pupils resident outside of RCT will need to check their entitlement with their home local authority.

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.

With regard to the proposed alternative sixth form centres for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School pupils at Bryncelynog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd being put forward for post - 16 provision, students will receive free transport, providing they meet the qualifying criteria (2 miles walking distance from home to school/college), to the nearest post-16 establishment that offers the choice of courses that they require. If they choose a centre that is not the closest to their home address, they may of course attend but will not receive any assistance towards the cost of transportation from the Council.

Pupils resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf attending Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, will be able to select the most appropriate sixth form provision that offers the choice of courses that they require or if they choose a Roman Catholic post 16 provision this will be made available at St David's College, Cardiff. In doing so they will receive free transportation, providing they meet the distance criteria to the nearest provision that meets their subject choices. Students resident in Caerphilly County Borough will need to check this issue with their local authority.

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 the communities of the Pontypridd and Hawthorn in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

All of the Primary schools under consideration as part of these proposals have breakfast club provisions, which are not only considered to be of benefit to the pupils but can greatly assist working parents as well. These clubs will continue if the new 'all through' 3 - 16 schools are created. Many schools also offer some after school provision which has the same benefits as the breakfast clubs; it is hoped that transferring Primary aged pupils to school sites that have improved facilities will allow for the expansion of this provision.

Benefits of a new school building for YGG, Pont Sion Norton

To comply with Welsh Government guidance and its initiative to create a million Welsh speakers by 2050, which includes an expectation on local authorities to promote Welsh Medium education, the Council is reviewing its Welsh Medium school provision, to ensure that evidenced demand for places is met and that wherever possible, provision is expanded and improved to encourage parents to select a Welsh Medium education for their children. The proposal to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and construct a brand new, purpose built school, with additional pupil capacity is one of the schemes being planned to assist in achieving this aim.

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 WM provision in their catchment areas
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools in to full WM schools

This part of the overall proposal, which is to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and build a brand new school, constructed to 21st Century Schools standards and with an increased capacity of 360 pupils plus Nursery provision, will work towards achieving these targets in this area of the County Borough.

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

As previously stated, all schools involved in the proposal in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn area will close and new schools will be opened with a new governing body, these include the new welsh medium primary school, and both 3-16 schools. Should the proposal proceed, all the proposed new schools will need to appoint temporary governing bodies for the interim period until the new schools open. These temporary governing bodies will be responsible for establishing the school, agreeing new staff structures and undertaking the appointment process for all the staffing posts.

The temporary governing bodies will firstly need to appoint new headteachers, who will then formulate and propose the leadership, management and staffing structures for the new schools. The staffing structure for the Hawthorn and Pontypridd 3-16 schools will need to be developed for the school taking into account a number of factors, including delivering a curriculum without sixth form provision.

The Council recommends that if the proposal is accepted that the temporary governing bodies of new schools “ring fence” the appointment process for all teaching and associated staff posts to staff within the existing schools in the first instance.

No changes will be required to the governing body of Cardinal Newman, but a revision to their staffing structure will be required due to the loss of the sixth form provision.

The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change, as illustrated by the recent school organisation changes in the Rhondda and Aberdare.

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

Members of the public School Staff Other Please state: children aged 3-19 years in the communities of Pontypridd and Hawthorn, parents and carers of the children.

4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation: All 3

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)	Yes	Yes		<p>Improved learning facilities and environments for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that all the children in the larger Primary education provisions feel safe and secure, • make the learning environments comfortable and attractive for all children and young people who access them. • Primary pupils being able to access specialist facilities at their own school site, Secondary pupils being able to access work experience and assist the learning of their younger counterparts. • access services to improve the lives of children and their families. • improved facilities will enable the pupils to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities. • improved transition between the Primary and Secondary school sectors • promotion of more independent learning for post-16 pupils to better prepare them for higher education and employment, reduction in number of young people who become NEET. • Larger sixth forms will reduce the need for consortia arrangements and travelling between sites; time can be better spent learning than travelling.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The changing curriculum, life long learning opportunities and use of ICT will provide the opportunity to enable all learners to reach their potential. More choice of learning pathways at post-16, more subject options which will improve the higher education and employment prospects of all learners Increased travel distances for some primary school pupils and some sixth form pupils
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			New build and refurbished school facilities will be fully compliant with all disability legislation and will be accessible to all users; refurbished and remodelled premises will have reasonable adjustments undertaken to make them as compliant as it is possible to do.
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief		Yes		Pupils attending the sixth form provision at Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive school will have to travel to St David's College,

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				Cardiff, if they wish to receive post 16 education through the Catholic faith. To mitigate this potentially negative impact, free transportation will be provided for pupils resident in RCT; pupils who reside in other County Boroughs will need to check their entitlement with their home local authority.
Sexual Orientation			Yes	
Welsh Language	Yes			A new Welsh Medium school, built to 21 st Century Schools standards, with additional capacity provided to allow more choice for parents as to which language medium they can choose for their children.
Carers			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

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 that could be identified is that some Primary Schools pupils will have to travel longer distances to schools, likewise sixth form pupils may have longer journeys to the new post-16 provisions. In the case of the Primary pupils it is highly unlikely that any child will have further than 1.5 miles to travel to their new school; this is the distance at which RCTCBC currently provides home to school transport, which is more generous than that provided for by legislation, i.e. 2 miles. It is the full responsibility of parents to transport their children to school where they do not qualify for free provision, they also have to determine and provide appropriate supervision for children and decide the mode of transport to be used. Free provision will be made available where pupils meet the qualifying criteria.

No sixth form pupil will have to undertake any journey, whether by public or private transportation that will take longer than 40 minutes to undertake, which is within the Council's target of ensuring that secondary aged learners do not have journey times exceeding 60 minutes. This would include those pupils who wish to continue their post 16 education through the Catholic faith, at St David's College, Cardiff. Full assessments of all available walking routes will be undertaken to ensure that they meet all safety criteria and standards laid down in the Learner Travel Measure 2014. Appropriate improvements will be made where identified.

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 being held.

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Hawthorn School High	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday, 12 th November 2018, 3.30 pm	Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd School High	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday 12 th November 2018, 3.30 pm	Pontypridd High School
Heol-Y-Celyn School Primary	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 4 pm	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn School Primary	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 4 pm	Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary	Governors and	Monday, 19 th November	Cilfynydd Primary

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
School	Staff Meeting	2018, 4pm	School
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	Governors and Staff Meeting	Tuesday, 20 th November 2018, 4pm	YGG, Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22 nd November 2018, 3.30pm	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22 nd November 2018, 3.30pm	Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Hawthorn High School	School Council	Monday, 12 th November 2018, 2 pm	Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High School	School Council	Monday, 12 th November 2018, 2 pm	Pontypridd High School
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 2.30pm	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 2.30pm	Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary School	School Council	Monday, 19 th November 2018, 2.30 pm	Cilfynydd Primary School
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	School Council	Tuesday, 20 th November 2018, 2.30 pm	YGG, Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	School Council	Thursday, 22 nd November 2018, 2 pm	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC	School Council	Thursday, 22 nd	Cardinal Newman RC

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Comprehensive School		November 2018, 2 pm	Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	Parents and public drop in session	Tuesday, 15 th January 2019, 3 – 6 pm	Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Parents and public drop in session	Wednesday, 16 th January 2019, 3 – 6pm	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary Welsh Department – both schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 17 th January 2019, 4 – 6pm	Rhydyfelin Children’s Centre (tbc)
Hawthorn High, Hawthorn Primary and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary– all three schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday, 22 nd January 2019, 3 – 6 pm	Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High and Cilfynydd Primary – both schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 24 th January 2019, 3 – 6 pm	Pontypridd High School

Interested parties are 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

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 team will be fully engaged in supporting all head teachers, school staff and the governing bodies of all schools involved during the first year or so, or for however long they require such support. Support with staff recruitment and for the temporary governing bodies, including a clerking service will be provided by the HR Division and the Governor Support service.

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 finalise the plans for school building construction and repair/refurbishment of existing buildings	Director of Corporate Estates	By September 2020		
To undertake any highways works that are identified as required to improve walking routes and to make arrangements for any transport provision that may be identified.	Director of Highways and Transportation	By September 2022		

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@rctcbc.gov.uk

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies Date: 15/10/18
Job Title: Director of Education

Proposals to Reorganise School Provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn Areas

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Annex C of the 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 not only improve and enhance the learning environment but also increase Welsh Medium pupil capacity. We are proposing to close the Welsh Medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School, which is a dual language school and YGG Pont Sion Norton; Welsh Medium pupils attending both schools will transfer to a new, full Welsh Medium school, that will be constructed on the former site of Heol y Celyn, in a new building that will be constructed to 21st Century School standards. This will of course be subject to parental preference.

Our proposals in respect of the Hawthorn area involve the closure of Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn Primary School, and the creation of a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school on the sites of Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary, which are immediately adjacent to each other. The pupils from these schools, together with the pupils from the English Medium stream of Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school, subject to parental preference.

The vacated Heol y Celyn site will be cleared and a new Welsh Medium Community Primary school will be constructed in its place. This new building will be constructed to 21st Century Schools standards and will be a much improved provision compared with the two current school buildings. Information on current building condition and suitability is contained within the consultation document. The capacity of the new school building will be 480 pupils, plus 60 Nursery places, which represents an increase over the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton combined with the Welsh stream of Heol y Celyn of almost 100 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.

Any services provided by both YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn outside of school hours, such as breakfast clubs, after school clubs and other community facilities will continue in the new building. Any links with outside organisations such as the Urdd, Menter Iaith etc will be maintained and hopefully strengthened and expanded. The new school building will have a community room facility and the headteacher will be encouraged to consider using this facility to increase participation in the Welsh Language, such as offering opportunities to parents and other community members to learn Welsh.

Information on the standards of provision at both of the existing schools is again contained within the consultation document. It must be stressed that YGG Pont Sion Norton is a well-established, successful school and whereas this proposal involves its closure, its provision will in fact be relocated to a brand new building to be constructed less than 2 miles away from its current site. We would therefore expect this new school to closely replicate and, hopefully improve upon the current provision and high standards currently available at YGG, Pont Sion Norton.

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. One of the ways highlighted to work towards achieving this is to consider making our three dual language schools, of which Heol y Celyn is one, in to full Welsh Medium provisions. We consider that this proposal will achieve this aim and in addition, the extra pupil capacity in a new, state of the art building will hopefully encourage more parents to choose a Welsh Medium education for their children.

Appendix 3

Notes of consultation meetings

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**Notes of a meeting held with the school council
at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School**

22nd November 2018 at 2 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision
in the Pontypridd area**

Present:

Esther Thomas, Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services,
Lisa Howell, 21st Century Team Officer
Martin Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Team
Gavin Tranter, Governor Support Service Officer
47 pupils present

Esther Thomas (ET) 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.

Q. Would Key Stage 3 and 4 be affected?

A. Pupils who are in Gwauncelyn Primary School would go to Hawthorn High School instead of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School. That will change the composition of the pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. There are also proposals to build more houses in this area. In the consultation document there are maps which show you the catchment areas of these schools.

Q. Will the works be noisy?

A. There will be minimal noise disruption and work won't go ahead while exams are being sat. The Council and the contractors are experienced in minimising all disruption and risk.

Q. What will be the benefits to Key Stage 3 and 4?

A. You will be able to work in the specialist rooms and we will be looking at the whole site when deciding upon key areas for the improvement works so that all pupils benefit.

A. The works proposed to be undertaken won't only benefit years 12/13. There could be new science laboratories and DT facilities etc. that will be used by everyone. The Council has already invested over a million pounds in the 3G pitch and the running track to benefit all pupils and the community.

A. You will also have some curriculum opportunities as the school would have the opportunity to introduce some new subjects at GCSE level.

A. A school receives more funding if it has more pupils. They can therefore employ more staff to possibly introduce additional new subjects.

Q. *How will this affect transport?*

A. Anyone who has to travel over two miles will still be entitled to free transport.

Q. *Will this affect the school uniform and price?*

A. That would be up to the governors.

A. In Treorchy, we have increased their sixth form but as they are the same school in terms of governance, the school name, badge and uniform is still the same. If things were to change it would be a decision for the school and I'm sure they would consult with you.

Q. *Where will the sixth form be?*

A. We are still looking at this as it is still very early in the process. These proposals are still under consultation and therefore still under discussion. You may see some of our technical advisors undertaking surveys over the next few weeks to decide how we best use this site. The budget that we have is based on the work we have conducted in Treorchy. The exact details of the works are still to be established.

Q. *What subjects will be offered and how competitive will we be in comparison to colleges?*

A. Hopefully more staff would mean more subjects but this is a decision for the school. The school would work closely with businesses and skills shortage areas to bridge any gaps and create a sixth form that is the best stepping stone for your futures.

A. There are two levels here. The choice of subjects is down to the schools and governors and they would consult with pupils. There is also a trend moving towards applied sciences at present and schools need to keep up with this. The new performance indicators will soon be the same as the college and we can then undertake direct comparisons.

Q. *Will teaching staff be stretched?*

A. Some will want to be stretched to be able to teach sixth form classes. There will be others who prefer to teach Key Stages 3 and 4. You have good results here now and you clearly have the teachers deliver this. In terms of the numbers of pupils per teacher, there are currently small classes of pupils which are not viable at the moment. For your A-levels you need interaction to prompt more independent learning and finding a balance for this is needed.

A. The quality of your teachers will probably get even better if there is a large sixth form to teach. You will have more pupils and more opportunities for performing arts or sports too.

Q. Will there be a curriculum change?

A. There will possibly be more choice, however, that is a decision for governors. We are anticipating that there will be more choice.

Q. Where is the £10m being spent?

A. It won't just be spent on the sixth form. We are looking at the whole site. We haven't got plans yet because we cannot undertake extensive surveys at present as the proposal needs to be considered by Cabinet. Should the proposals proceed, we will share the proposals with the school and we would welcome your opinions.

Q. Where is the £10m being spent specifically?

A. We have £168m funding. We can move some of this around if needed and use the wider envelope as much as possible to make the best use of the sites. We cannot be that specific at this point in time until the architects assess the site.

Q. How much bigger will the site be?

A. The site will be the same size but we may have to relocate areas within the site.

A. There may be some extensions etc. but within the current site boundary.

Q. What facilities or courses will be offered to attract additional sixth formers to our school?

A. That will depend on what the school can offer and the staff that are here.

A. In terms of facilities we usually provide sixth form areas such as ICT suites, informal coffee shop areas, a library etc. We will be asking for your input.

Q. How many students are estimated to attend?

A. There will be an estimated 450 sixth form pupils based on the data we have currently. There is a lot of information in the consultation document explaining how that figure was reached. There are also other options and some pupils may decide to attend Coleg Y Cymoedd.

Q. Will this building be built and then become too small by 2022?

A. No, but with further houses that are being built, we may, in the future need to build another school in the area. This will be monitored and managed by the Local Authority.

Q. Will registering for the sixth form be more selective?

A. No if you have the appropriate qualifications for Key Stage 4. Any changes to this would be brought forward by the school and governing body.

- Q. *Would this affect age 7-11's education whilst the building works are being carried out?***
- A. Part of the site will be a construction site and there may be some mess and noise in the areas of construction works. However, we work very closely with the contractors and they work closely with the school to ensure that they aren't undertaking loud work during exam periods etc. They are experienced contractors and they do all they can to liaise with the school regarding the works being undertaken. There will be safety barriers between the school areas and construction areas. We ensure that the teaching of pupils is not impacted upon, as your learning, health and safety is our paramount concern. Construction works have not impacted upon any of the results of the schools we have completed to date. The contractors also provide opportunities for pupils – for example, sometimes they teach engineering courses or tradesmanship.
- Q. *Will students still visit other schools?***
- A. We will try to minimise this as much as we can. There still may be some movement but we want to try and minimise it.
- Q. *ET asked the pupils - What don't you like about visiting other schools?***
- A. Pupil - The timings - sometimes I don't get a lunch break and have to eat on the bus, or it takes me ages to get home. I like that I can do this subject there but timetable clashes are common too so we have to take even more subjects at Y Pant to minimise this.
- Q. *Would we see more Y Pant students coming here for courses?***
- A. Y Pant's numbers are also increasing so they could also become a standalone sixth form.
- A. We are managing the school places with the houses that are proposed to be built here.
- A. We are hoping this will minimise the amount both sets of pupils have to travel.
- Q. *Will there be additional baguette bars or canteen areas?***
- A. We are looking at putting more facilities here for sixth form pupils. If there are more pupils we need to cater for more people which will probably mean additional food areas.
- Q. *If the site and the building aren't going to grow how will we accommodate extra pupils?***
- A. We will look at the whole site, but there are surplus places here now. There may be some extensions here and we will be looking at efficient use of the space. It is an opportunity to reconfigure this school.
- A. Sometimes we build upwards to limit the floor space used for the footprint of a building.

Q. *In some schools you said classes are too small - there will be more pupils and if you need more staff, will that balance out the pupil/teacher ratio?*

A. We look at staffing across all subjects rather than one subject specifically. We try to make it as manageable as possible and staff are flexible and will provide additional classes if they can. We are looking at roughly 18 pupils per sixth form class to be totally viable and it encourages a new way of learning.

A. We don't know in terms of subjects yet but you will have more staff because the larger the sixth form the larger the school's budget. The ideal 18 pupils per class means you are likely to be able to fund another teacher.

A. Some schools could be in huge debt if they have low pupil numbers in a class.

Q. *There is a CDU unit here and is very important to us. How will this be affected?*

A. That unit will remain and they do a brilliant job. At the moment they cater for pupils up to 16 years for statutory needs but some pupils may still need support. We will look at this in the future, but there is no plans to grow it at present.

Q. *Some have described this as a centre of excellence - will it be separate from Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4? We work very closely with them now.*

A. No, they will all be in the same school and most pupils will have come from Key Stages 3 and 4 in this school. The continuity between staff and pupils shouldn't change with this sixth form. There will be additional pupils at sixth form but we encourage sixth forms to work with younger pupils.

A. There will be more pupils with more skills to offer to the lower school community and it is an exciting opportunity.

Q. *The Council's budget has been decreasing due to Westminster. Is this just money we would have had if the cuts hadn't happened?*

A. We have to apply for this money specifically as a department and compete for this money. We received a large amount of funding from Welsh Government for Band A of the 21st Century Schools Programme which was matched by the Council and Welsh Government have approved (in principle) £168m for Band B. We have indicative costs for this school which is where the initial £10m has been identified.

A. If we didn't do this we wouldn't get this money. This isn't money that we have taken from other schools to fund this.

Q. *Is this EU funding? Will it be retracted?*

A. No it is Welsh Government specific money coming directly to the Council.

All were thanked for their inputs and the meeting closed.

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**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors
at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School**

22nd November at 3:30 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the
Pontypridd area**

Present

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services,
Lisa Howell, 21st Century Team Officer
Martin Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Team
Gavin Tranter, Governor Support Service Officer
Bethan Davies, Human Resources Adviser
65 members of school staff and governors present

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

Should the proposals be implemented, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post 16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;

- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3–16 school at Hawthorn;

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog).

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q One concern we have as a school is that there is an enhanced sixth form for Bryncelynnog but there is one in Nantgarw too. How will you get pupils to come here if they are more likely geographically to go to Nantgarw?

A. It is parental choice or pupil choice ultimately. The range of A-levels at the college may differ to what the schools offer. For some pupils, college may be a better option, but many parents and pupils express an interest in attending a school. Parents haven't been polled on this and I don't think we would get a true reflection on this yet but our experience to date with the Rhondda proposals and in particular Tonyrefail is a positive one with pupils choosing the school as opposed to the college for A-level subjects.

A. It is important to think about what is the best learning pathway for our students. The arrangements that are currently successfully supported and operated in the Rhondda schools will happen in Pontypridd and Hawthorn. The school has a great opportunity to shape a new provision here. We will encourage pupils to attend the appropriate setting that meets their individual needs.

A. Retention rates at Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High are low so we want to encourage more A-level students to attend Bryncelynnog Secondary School, as the school is improving year on year and achieving good results.

Q. But we will lose pupils from Gwauncelyn?

A. Yes, possibly if the catchment changes are agreed. However, it must be noted that there is surplus capacity in the school and as long as there is spare capacity in the school, pupils from Gwauncelyn will not be refused a place. In addition, in the Local Development Plan there are strategic housing sites within the school catchment which could significantly add to the school capacity in the future.

Q. There are currently transport arrangements in place - how will that work for pupils in Pontypridd/Hawthorn?

A. If pupils want to study here then the Local Authority will be funding their transport if they live over two miles away – in accordance with the Council's transport policy.

Q. It's not so much the cost but the amount of time that it will take for them to get here.

A. The majority of pupils are currently in the consortium arrangements and travelling to and from different schools within the school day to access some subjects. It is acknowledged that some pupils may have further to travel but home to school transport as mentioned previously will be provided free of charge.

Q. On the basis we get more children, we may be able to get more staff. What will the £10m be used for?

A. Yes, additional teachers would be required. In terms of the building we will look to

remodel some areas and remove poor quality buildings and this will be undertaken collaboratively with the school. Exact details will be developed should the proposal progress.

Q. Do you have any plans for the buildings?

A. Officers cannot pre-empt the decision of the Council. We have had to put a bid in to Welsh Government as part of our 21st Century Schools Modernisation Programme Band B funding. Officers do have options to improve the school estates and if the proposals are approved by the Council we will consult fully with the school governors, staff and pupils.

Q. What if it the funding isn't enough?

A. The Council continually review the expenditure. We had good news yesterday as Welsh Government made an announcement to commit to a 65% intervention rate of funding for the next wave of investment. Therefore we will be able to spread the funding further and have more flexibility in terms of finances on future projects.

Q. You said parents often choose a school based on future success. If parents continue to want to send their children to come here, does our capacity then increase? The numbers don't seem to be increasing that much in the document. What happens if age 11-16 pupils don't drop that much but we still get additional sixth form pupils?

A. At the moment the school has surplus places and we will continue to monitor the supply and demand for pupil places. If additional capacity is required the Council will address this need and provide additional accommodation.

Q. We are currently in consortia with Y Pant. Will that be affected?

A. Great links have been forged and the two schools will continue to work together for the benefit of pupils. However, if the sixth form numbers improve, more subject options can be offered here and less pupils will need to travel to Y Pant for their curriculum choices.

Q. Would we be leaving Y Pant in a vulnerable position?

A. No because Y Pant has a successful and growing sixth form.

Q. We could be competing directly with the college if we can offer the same.

A. Yes it is possible that subjects will be offered by both establishments.

Q. I live in Tonteg and what is the thinking behind sending Gwauncelyn pupils to Hawthorn rather than here?

A. The Local Authority has to manage schools places and regularly review these to

match supply and demand.

Q. Parents are concerned about travelling to Hawthorn.

A. Most of the streets that form part of that area will qualify for school transport to Hawthorn, but while there is space in this school, parents / pupils can still choose to come here.

Q. Talking about building for the future, there is no guarantee that those housing developments will be built and in Efail Isaf we are being asked to object to those proposals.

A. There is an application going to Cabinet tonight for 400 houses and that would attract a large number of schools places. The Council needs to be pro-active to strategically manage supply and demand for school places.

A. We appreciate that people don't like change and while there are spaces in our existing schools we have a duty to fill these empty spaces before we build new capacity into our schools.

Q. They would be eligible for transport to Hawthorn but not here?

A. Yes because that is their catchment school should this proposal be agreed Hawthorn High is also a good school and we need to have that balance.

Q. As a pupil they would go to Hawthorn for year 7 to 11 and then here for sixth form?

A. Yes, possibly or they may choose an alternative such as college.

Q. The catchment map in the document isn't particularly accurate in terms of defining the catchment area in terms of those streets.

A. We can provide a larger map for reference.

Q I was delighted when I read this document and it says you will improve the areas for ALN. I am asking you to improve the facilities and expand the ALN/CDU unit here for post 16 provision. This is the opportunity to get it right. Has it been considered?

A. To the credit of the School Parliament, they have also asked us to look at this. This will be considered as part of the feedback.

Q. You have five key points and this is one of them and there is no other reference to this in the document - can you keep it a key focus and expand our provision? This will help us be in line with the new ALN proposals too. We don't want to be sidelined and we would love it to be written into the proposals now from the beginning rather than be an add-on. We are often

considered and then it is moved on. If we are going to be a 21st Century School then we need their right to equity to be considered and put in place rather than just be 'adequate'. If it is to be a centre of excellence then you need this to be a centre of excellence for all.

A. Your comments are noted and we would encourage you to complete the questionnaire to formally express your views.

Q. Beyond the strategy, what will the Local Authority do to support the aspirations within the plan? Parents/pupils will influence the proposal by making choices either to come here or go to the college. Could this proposal fail if there is no support to meet this plan?

A. The Council would not have put this proposal forward if we could not support the strategy moving forward. We have a track record of delivering successful projects and our aim is to improve educational standards in a 21st Century learning environment. If the proposal is approved we will support the school with transition to ensure that the school goes from strength to strength.

Q. The Governors are disappointed with the new artificial pitch, as we can't play rugby.

A. You can play rugby on the pitch and it has a shock pad for tackling. The run off area isn't appropriate for senior rugby matches but this is a school based all-weather pitch for multi sports.

Q. You could build on our grass pitch?

A. This is a school based community pitch and we are not building a facility which is just for rugby. The Council invested substantially in providing drainage to the rugby pitch to provide a good quality grass pitch. Therefore the 3G is an addition to the current facilities on offer.

Q. You also can't play hockey on this.

A. Yes you can play hockey on this pitch but not senior league matches.

Q. We would love to promote multiple sports too and to not be able to access this is an issue.

Q. You also can't play full size football on this because of the size. Also with the athletics facilities there are no hammer/discus facilities etc.

A. The Council is investing substantially in the school to improve facilities and the funding is not available to invest in stadium type facilities. The facilities that are being provided will ensure that the school can improve the delivery of the curriculum for PE and encourage sport for all pupils, improving their health and wellbeing.

Q. We weren't consulted in terms of revenue and the teams won't hire it because of the size. In terms of publicity this won't go well for us if the sixth form can't use it to play sports on.

A. This has not been the case with 3G facilities provided to other schools. The 3G pitches are a Council asset for pupils and the wider community. However, your points have been noted.

Q. Following the £24m spent on Y Pant, I spoke to Owen Smith MP who said that Bryncelynnog should be next for a new school. It seems unlikely that this would become a new site with a new school. This will predominantly remain a mid-20th Century School in terms of buildings.

A. The Council cannot comment on Owen Smith MP's conversation with the school. Planning of school places is a management issue for the Council. The Council has undertaken successful projects to remodel schools within our estate to develop them to provide 21st Century facilities. Therefore we do not agree with this comment.

Q. On that basis £10m isn't that much is it?

A. The Council will ensure that appropriate investment is made in the school and if additional funding is required Members will consider the matter further.

Q. Will you consult with us on those changes?

A. Yes, consultation will be undertaken throughout the process.

Q. Will the sixth form centre be part of the school or separate?

A. It will certainly be part of the school. The site will be looked at holistically and improvements made across all curriculum areas that will benefit all students not just the sixth form students.

Q. Can you give me an assurance that the school will be involved at the earliest stage for the planning of the building?

A. This is a two stage process. This is currently the consultation for school organization and the school will be fully involved in the development of the site if the proposal proceeds.

Q. It will be down to the school to decide what they offer in terms of curriculum, then surely the school needs to lead on the facilities we need?

A. As mentioned previously we will engage with the school and you will be heavily involved in designing and refurbishing the facilities. However, the school need to understand that schools need to be designed to a certain standard and meet certain regulations and the Council will ensure this is undertaken.

Q. Were they consulted in Ferndale in terms of their 3G?

A. I am disappointed that you are not happy with the 3G pitch. As we have other schools in RCT that would have been delighted with over £1m of investment in a 3G pitch and athletics track. This is a Council facility and we need to ensure that there is parity of provision across the county borough.

Q. For staff who may have to make career choices at the other schools involved in the consultation process, are there any plans to have them redeployed here?

A. They will all be in redundancy positions if this goes ahead but that is not the case here. If there are vacant posts here we would encourage them to apply for posts.

Q. If there are people who want to come here, will we be forced to take them?

A. We would ask you to consider them and if they are the best person for the job then you could appoint them. It will be a matter for the governing body.

All were thanked for their time and inputs and the meeting concluded.

Notes of a meeting held with school council
at Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School

Thursday 22nd November 2018 at 2 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in
the Pontypridd area

Present:

Grace Zecca-Hanagan, 21st Century School Officer
Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Sarah Corcoran, Senior Challenge Adviser - CSC
15 members of the school council

Welcome and introduction from school council.

Introduction 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, the consultation process and timescales relating to the consultation process and the proposals themselves, should they be implemented.

GD opened the meeting up to questions from the school council.

Q. *We feel that there is more of a focus on making financial savings. Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School's sixth form offers an environment that is comfortable for pupils and supports their wellbeing.*

A. GD acknowledged the comments made and replied that any changes made would be made with support offered to pupils.

GD also commented that a change in 6th form provision can help to prepare pupils for when they move into Higher Education.

It was confirmed that the change was not just financial but because the breadth and depth of subject choice could not currently be offered at Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School's sixth form due to its small size – at present only 36% of pupils return to year 12 from year 11 – we need to question why 64% aren't returning and where they are going.

Q. *Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School's sixth form has only been in place for two years and needs to be in place for longer for the benefit of the pupils of Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School.*

A. The Local Authority looks at a Rhondda Cynon Taf wide approach, not just Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School approach.

- Q. Years 7, 8 and 9 are large year groups that would in turn mean larger sixth forms.**
- A. This is not necessarily the case as the data demonstrates that pupils are choosing a different learning pathway already.
- Q. The teaching at Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School is very high quality; by taking away, the sixth form you are taking away high quality teachers.**
- A. It was acknowledged that Cardinal Newman is a good school.
- Q. Having a larger sixth form means that pupils can get lost in the system and will not be supported by staff with whom they have formed close relationships.**
- A. New relationships with new members of staff in new settings could be formed. Officers talked about the sixth forms at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and St. David's Sixth Form College.
- A. Officers also explained about the pastoral and wellbeing systems currently in place in Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and the college.
- Q. In 2016, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School underwent an Estyn Inspection where they were graded 'adequate' for current performance and 'good' for prospects for improvement. Is this good enough for Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School pupils?**
- A. Officers discussed the results of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School. Officers also discussed how the proposals are not about how well and badly a school performs but are also based on the size of the sixth form. The current size of Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School's sixth form is very small and unsustainable.
- Q. There are transport implication to St. David's Sixth Form College. Would the long journey time be justifiable when you consider the other pressures facing young people?**
- A. When you have a future pathway that you are keen to follow you are incentivised to travel to achieve it. It is a further distance to travel and many students currently choose this option to attend a quality provision.
- Q. The pupils at Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School's sixth form currently run a 'buddy system', which brings a family ethos to the school.**
- A. The officers outlined that these systems are in place in schools throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf that do not currently have sixth forms, so there are new opportunities to develop different systems.

Q. We feel that Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School is the best performing school in Rhondda Cynon Taf – why are these proposals being made?

A. GD confirmed that Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School is a very good school, however it is not the best performing sixth form in Rhondda Cynon Taf currently.

GD explained to the School Council why these proposals were being made – namely, a small sixth form being subsidised by Key Stage 3 and 4 which is run at a high cost per pupil head and offering a limited subject range. We need to look at offering a greater choice of subjects with larger teaching groups, which is not subsidised by Key Stages 3 and 4.

Q. Why was Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School chosen?

A. Officers outlined that Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is a good, improving school with strong outcomes and is led by a strong Senior Management Team. The percentage of learners that return from year 11 to year 12 is nearly 45%.

Q. Why is Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School not being refurbished in any way?

A. Faith Schools are voluntary aided and funded differently to maintained schools. However, the Local Authority support the school with investment and will continue to maintain the buildings in partnership with the Diocesan.

All were thanked for their attendance and inputs and the meeting closed at 3pm.

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**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors
at Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School**

Thursday 22nd November 2018 at 3:30 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in
the Pontypridd area**

Present:

Grace Zecca-Hanagan, 21st Century School Officer
Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Catrin Edwards, Head of Service Transformation and Data Systems
Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources
Sarah Corcoran, Senior Challenge Adviser - CSC
Ellen Williams, Human Resources Adviser
32 members of staff and governors

The headteacher welcomed Council officers.

Introduction from Council officers in attendance.

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

Should the proposals be implemented, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post-16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;

- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3 -16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3–16 school at Hawthorn;

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycloed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog).

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

GD explained that there had been a meeting earlier that afternoon with the student council where the proposals had been explained to them and a question and answer session followed. GD expressed her thanks for their time and inputs.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q. How and why has no funding been allocated to improvements within the school?

A. Responsibility for the building is with the Roman Catholic Diocese who should make proposals to the Welsh Government as the funding stream differs from that of non-Faith Schools.

It was explained that officers of the Council work in partnership with the Roman Catholic Diocese to look at options. However, now this proposal has been made further engagement has taken place with the Diocese and meetings have taken place between parties. The Council and the Diocese are developing a business case for future improvements to the school.

Capital improvements and maintenance works have been carried out to Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School and the Council is committed to providing on-going support to the school in terms of assisting the school to maintain the building.

Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School is one of the Council's family group of schools and the Local Authority will continue to support the school in the future.

Officers explained that Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School is a voluntary aided school and the implications associated with this.

The headteacher outlined that a positive aspect of these proposals is that it has started action towards improvements.

A. It was commented that judgments about the condition of Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School are potentially being made by comparison against schools that have received funding through 21st Century Schools Band A funding.

Q. Why was Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Coleg y Cymoedd and St. David's Sixth Form College chosen?

A. It was based on retention rates, data and location.

The Council is trying to offer a range of options for young people. Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School is currently in a deficit budget position and the sixth form is currently being subsidised from Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 funding.

When looking at the data, learners are currently opting to receive post-16 education elsewhere for numerous reasons.

Financially it is challenging for a sixth form to be delivered in Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic Comprehensive School. Only 36% of learners are returning to sixth form – they are already deciding to go elsewhere i.e. St. David's and Coleg y Cymoedd.

Officers are not disputing the quality of education in Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School. We need to address the budget deficit and part of this involves deciding whether to continue with sixth form courses etc.

Q. *Pastoral care is not maintained with pupils moving from one school to another. How can you guarantee that this aspect of education will be maintained?*

A. There is the capacity to provide more specialist teachers and a greater number of teachers offering pastoral care in larger schools. Improvements and systems will be put in place for transition arrangements to ensure the emotional needs of pupils are met.

Part of sixth form studies is about preparing learners for change and benefits can be gained from change in advance of entering Higher Education.

Q. *Son has Asperger's and is anxious about change already. He is excelling at Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School because he feels safe and is supported pastorally. From an ALN point of view I feel that this is putting a barrier in his future learning.*

ALN provision at Bryncelynnog is well developed with an ASD Learning Support Class. New ALN reforms focus on person centred planning and input. Support will be provided to ensure that the transition for pupils works well. The college is also fully inclusive and currently supports many learners with specific needs.

Q. *Transition opportunities for staff involved in sixth form transition.*

A. Decisions around staffing will be made by the governing body. There may be capacity in Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, as a larger school to offer further opportunities for staff.

Q. *Concerned about pupils who live far away from St. David's Sixth Form College who currently attend Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School and want to continue their education in a Roman Catholic setting – transport.*

A. Transport would be provided to St. David's Sixth Form College at no costs to pupils living in Rhondda Cynon Taf – the logistics of this are yet to be agreed.

Q. *Catchment area for Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School is Rhondda Cynon Taf wide. How would the organisation of this be made?*

A. It would depend on the volume of students and where they live. Transport may decide to use taxis, mini buses or larger buses. Parents will not be charged for this home to school transport.

Q. *Have discussions with St. David's Sixth Form College taken place to accommodate sixth form numbers?*

A. A conversation with the Principal of St. David's Sixth Form College has taken place and there certainly is space available.

The headteacher echoed the above comments of the Chief Executive. Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School would become an associated school and it would be written into the Admission Policy of St. David's Sixth Form College and pupils would have same rights as other associated schools.

Q. *We are the only school where pupils do not just live in Pontypridd. This may mean that lots of our learners may go to other sixth form establishments nearer their homes. In terms of the logistics of where the pupils will go and someone being in charge of transition of this it could be a complex task?*

A. The current retention rates are not good with pupils going to various settings. Each Sixth Form will have open days for pupils and parents to engage in and make choices.

A. Based on previous data, the vast majority of pupils go to the settings that have already been put forward.

Q. *Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – how will this affect consideration being made for sports within schools?*

A. Officers explained that they work closely with colleagues in Leisure Services. Schools use leisure centres during the day with members of the public using the centres in the evening. There is an opportunity for schools to use local leisure facilities and more opportunities can be created in the future.

A. The Council has invested hugely in leisure centres recently and use has increased.

Q. *Do we have any data on where Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Ysgol Nant Gwyn Sixth Form students have gone?*

A. This is tracked to ensure pupils have access to the sixth form options that they want.

Q. *Does extra money being spent on schools mean that the schools will be better and provide more successful outcomes for pupils?*

A. Providing schools with a first class environment assists teachers and pupils to improve.

Q. *In a perfect world, I would like the Sixth Form to remain in Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School. However, we have to be realistic of the climate in which we are in and we want what is best for Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School and its pupils. There is a partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and a desire to move forward together ensuring the protection of our pupils with their best interests in mind.*

- A. Statement noted and confirmed the positive relationship with Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. However, there is a large deficit budget and we would prefer to intervene and support now to protect and develop the school for future learners. We are undertaking this for the right reasons, and when you look at schools that have been through this process the outcome is always positive.

Officers thanked the staff, and outlined the work that will take place with the Council over the coming months.

The meeting closed at 4:45pm.

Notes of a meeting held with the school council of Cilfynydd Primary School

Monday 19th November 2018 at 2:30 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

Present

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services
Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Tim Britton (TB), Senior Challenge Advisor
Sophie Nicholls (SN), Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
10 pupils – members of the Cilfynydd Primary School Council

ET explained that the Council are looking to reorganise some of the schools in Pontypridd. The changes would include new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn, a new Welsh primary school in Rhydyfelin and moving the school sixth forms into larger sixth forms in Bryncelynnog and the college.

ET went into more detail about the proposal that would directly affect the pupils in Cilfynydd Primary, as the school would close and become part of the Pontypridd 3-16 School. The pupils would be part of a larger school and would not have to move when they reach secondary school age. ET explained that although the children would be part of one school, the younger pupils would be separate from the older pupils and would have their own yard to play on. Pupils would have new or refurbished classrooms and would be able to use some specialist facilities in the school such as the P.E sports hall, playing fields, science laboratories and ICT rooms from a younger age.

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.

ET asked pupils if they had any questions about the proposals.

Q. *How are you going to make sure we receive a 21st Century education in the new school?*

A. We would be spending a lot of money on the buildings, but we haven't yet decided exactly what will happen to the buildings because this is the start of the process. If this is passed by the elected members, pupils would move to the new school in 2022. We would put lots of new ICT equipment into the school and you would have access to the other facilities such as the science laboratories. You would also have access to your own large play area and the grass playing fields.

A. You would have nice new classrooms and we would ensure that you have the best teachers, as you have good teachers now. You would have excellent new resources in your classes.

A. We also look at the environment and if we can, we try to put energy efficient

technology into the building too.

Q. *What outdoor resources will you be putting in the new school?*

A. Firstly, we need to go and have a look what is there now. The facilities there now are for older children so we would need to do a lot of work to make sure it was safe for younger pupils. In other similar schools, we have put fencing, outdoor classrooms, and soft play for the younger pupils. There are also facilities there for you to use such as the grass pitches. What would you like us to put there?

Pupils - A netball court. Football field. We have a trim trail that we would like too. We would like some grass too. I like exercising so maybe you could put things outside that we could exercise on.

Q. *How will you make sure the younger children are safe in the new school?*

A. That is a question that many parents asked us when we built the new schools. All of the play areas will be completely separate. There is a big building there now and we could possibly move some of the areas around to make sure the school suits you and that primary aged pupils would have your own play areas, toilets and hall.

A. There would be some areas that you can share but only when your teachers are with you.

Q. *There are lots of roads there. How will you make sure we are all safe walking to and from the new school?*

A. We ask experts to come and look at everyone's routes to school. They look at pavements, the number of cars and where you would cross the road. They will make sure that it is safe for you to get to school. They have put speed bumps in Porth to make sure cars go slow by the school. There are two separate zebra crossings in Porth too. Sometimes they would make us put a puffin crossing in with the green and red man lights. They are already looking at this and they will advise us on how we can make it as safe as possible for you. Whatever they say we will have to do because your safety is the most important for us.

ET - Do any of you currently cross the road when you come to school?

Pupil - Yes and we have to look both ways.

ET - There are pavements on the road and you have to make sure you are crossing safely too and use any new crossings that are put in place, or traffic calming measures.

Q. *At break time and dinnertime, how will you make sure that younger children feel safe?*

A. There will be specific playgrounds for you to play in with fencing too. Your teachers and support staff will also be with you looking after you. In many of our 3-16 schools, younger pupils actually have different play times to the older pupils. There will always be supervisors too. There are also children that you can go to

if you are worried about something, like you have the buddy bench here. There won't be anything to make you feel uncomfortable and if you did how would you deal with that?

Pupil - Tell a teacher.

TB - Yes that is the best way to deal with this. You have to say something if you don't feel safe and your teachers can deal with it.

ET – Secondary school age pupils have lessons all afternoon usually so it would be down to the Head teacher and staff to decide when play times are for the younger pupils.

Q. *Where will the primary department be situated on the site?*

A. We don't know yet. We will go to the school and have a look at the site. We need to make sure that it has nice outdoor space and that we can make it safe for you. We may need to build new parts of the buildings such as a new hall or canteen area. We are looking at this and if this proposal goes through we have a planning consultation, which is an open event for your families to come to and then you can tell us what you think about it and if you have any ideas to contribute.

We want to hear your ideas then too.

Q. *What will the new school be called?*

A. That isn't for us to decide. The new governing body will put ideas forward and then the local elected members will decide what the name will be. It could have Pontypridd in the name, in the same way that Tonyrefail have kept their name. Tonypany have changed their name to Nantgwyn School. You could put ideas forward to your governors.

The new governors at Cwmaman asked the pupils what they would like to call the school and then there was a vote. The Council then voted on the final option.

ET - Do you think it should remain as Pontypridd?

Pupils - Yes.

Q. *How will you make sure that the new school is at the heart of the community at Cilfynydd?*

A. When we build new schools we make sure that we build new community spaces. We call them community schools but that means that we want to make sure people from the community can use them. They need their own space that is separate from the school to make sure you are safe. We have outdoor space like 3G pitches and community teams book them to use for training and parties. It will be up to community groups and the schools to decide how they use it.

The Welsh Government are giving us half of the money for the school and they make sure that we put those facilities in place.

Teacher - There are no groups that use this school now.

Q. What will happen to this school after we move?

- A. This proposal would have to be approved first, but we do not know what will happen to it yet. What do you think should happen?

Pupil - I think it should stay as a school.

ET - We don't know what will happen yet. Some schools are being used for other things like clubs. Sometimes they are knocked down and the land used to build houses. It depends on the condition of the building and the Council's Estates Department decide what to do with it. They wouldn't leave it empty because it could become vandalised.

Q. Why are you knocking the school down?

- A. We don't know what we will do yet, but as I said we are looking at the condition of the schools and there are currently spaces in Pontypridd High which are costing lots of money. The buildings there are much newer. I know that this school looks lovely and it is historic, but there are better buildings in Pontypridd High that could be better for your education and could be used better by you. We don't think that this is a bad school, but the building isn't very good.

Q. What happens at post 16?

- A. The school-based option would be Bryncelynnog, or pupils could choose to go to Coleg Y Cymoedd.

Q. How will you make sure all of the children like the new school?

- A. There will probably be many of the same teachers. Also, you said you like your classrooms but there will probably be better classrooms there. There will be easier transitions for pupils that go to year 7 as they are already in the school. We will try to make sure everyone is happy there.

We come and speak to you to make sure we get your opinions. If you discuss this with your class, you can let us know what you and all of your friends think of the plans.

A pupil thanked the officers present for answering the pupils' prepared questions.

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

Monday 19th November 2018 at 4:00 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in
the Pontypridd area**

Present

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services
Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Tim Britton (TB), Senior Challenge Advisor
Sophie Nicholls (SN), Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
Catrin Edwards (CE), Head Of Service Transformation And Data Systems
Ellen Williams (EW), Human Resources Advisor
Richard Evans (RE), Director of Human Resources
25 members of schools staff/governors

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

Should the proposals be implemented, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post 16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current

Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school;

- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn.

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained Secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog)

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q. *Where is the academic research to show that an all through school is actually a good idea? There is not any in the English language and I cannot see any evidence of this happening in other countries. They stick to the primary/middle/high school model. There were 13 out of 2300 schools in Wales that were all through schools but we have no evidence of this being a good idea. Scottish head teachers do not agree with this as younger pupils can be bullied by older pupils and teenage issues being issues for younger pupils. Can you comment please?*

A. We have one all through school in Llanhari but that was a decision taken for different reasons due to the new comprehensive school in Maesteg. Llanhari School is now growing from the bottom. We have recently created three new 3-16 schools in the Rhondda with Porth, Nantgwyn and Tonyrefail. There is no longitude data that says this model is a good idea. We have not seen any issues

with bullying in Llanhari. One of the key things for us is the safeguarding of young people and we make sure that when we build 3-16 schools that safeguarding is the highest priority. We would want them to use the same facilities e.g. Science labs, games areas, specialist rooms for DT etc. but they would be under supervision. There is no evidence yet however that this is a better model.

Q. What is the process for staff who are already here?

A. The process will be the same as the previous schools. Providing this proposal is accepted there will be a temporary governing body comprising governors of this school and Pontypridd High about two years before the new school opens. They would then appoint a head teacher and then together, the temporary governing body and headteacher would create a staffing structure. It is difficult to anticipate what this will look like but in the schools we have just opened, there are year groups but no primary or secondary phase. We ask the governing body to ring fence the application process for current staff in the first instance, which, based on what we have already done would likely involve an interview. No roles would be advertised externally unless a role could not be filled internally. Another element is that technically all staff are in a redundancy situation. If there are staff who want to take redundancy or early retirement, they are able to do so. They would not put themselves through a recruitment process, redundancy would happen first.

Q. The school is the centre of the village and is accessible for everyone. The new site is quite a long way from the top of the village. There are a few issues such as road safety. How are you going to get the pupils to the school? I can foresee there being queues of traffic going to the school.

A. We appreciate your concerns about this and safety is paramount in this process.

A. We will undertake a safe routes analysis for this project, which is going to be funded by a separate budget. We will have to create a safe route for pupils.

Q. There is only one bridge, which is stepped, and if parents have buggies etc. they may not be able to get their (possibly four) children to school safely.

A. We have done some extensive traffic calming in some areas where the new schools are. We can create crossings and speed humps etc. to minimise risk. For example in Porth we found that within a few weeks of the school opening, we were having complaints from residents. They have now staggered the school day to make sure that the pupils are not all being dropped off at the same time. This is working much better and the changes were made very quickly. Until the new school is in operation, there may be issues that we cannot foresee, but any issues will be addressed.

Q. I guess there will be schools that are three or four years down the line that we could learn from and take on any advice that they have.

A. Yes, we would like to get one of the Headteachers to attend our open evenings to answer some of your questions too. It is helpful for you to see how it works and to speak to people who deal with this every day.

Q. The leader of the Council has said to me that there will not be any experts appointed to survey this. There is literature that shows that, due to the proximity to the road there are difficulties for pupils with asthma, heart issues and even cognition. If we were building a school in 1980 we would not know this, but now we do and maybe we would not build a school there?

A. We are going to undertake environmental testing of the site to provide assurances.

S/G comment - Can we have an independent expert to conduct this survey and advise that it is a safe idea to do this?

A. There is a school there already.

Q. Maybe they would say that we should not do that. Are the Council afraid of what the result may be of that survey?

A. The Council conducts regular monitoring of air quality and as previously mentioned there is a study ongoing on the A470.

Q. This is a school and we lost many pupils to Coedpenmaen. We take many children from out of catchment and I was wondering are there any plans to make it more viable to operate on this site for the 21st Century or was the funding specifically for 3-16?

A. No it was not specific to 3-16 but if we look at this site there are hardly any outdoor spaces for the these pupils to play in.

A. There are 149 pupil here and it is reception to year 6 pupils that receive more funding.

Q. If there was some money spent here, I think we could make this school fit for the 21st Century. Was there any consideration given to close any other schools in the locality that have buildings in a bad state?

Staff/governor comment - If there are parents that are 50/50 about Welsh medium, they often send their children to Cilfynydd.

A. The majority of pupils who attend Pont Sion Norton do not live in Cilfynydd.

Staff/governor comment - Even if half of them came here, we would not have a surplus.

A. ET - You are then assuming that parents aren't choosing Welsh medium

Staff/governor comment - We had a community meeting on Thursday and the overwhelming response from people there said that if their children had to catch a bus for Welsh medium then they would change to English to be able to walk to school.

Staff/governor comment - I am concerned about them walking to school. Cars come through at 70mph even though it is a 30mph road. If there is a camera or surveyor there then people will slow down and it will not be accurate. A young girl was injured recently, which I am sure you would know about.

A. All work would be done before the school opens. We often drop the speed limit to be around 20mph near schools and we put physical barriers in place such as speed humps etc.

Q. What happens at night when the A470 is closed and the traffic comes through Cilfynydd? Sometimes there are huge vehicles that come through here. There is no alternative diversion so I do not think that we can say that there will be a speed hump on that road because I have done research and this is unlikely to happen.

A. We do not know what the recommendations will be for traffic calming. Currently there are no primary school age pupils crossing that road every day, so that will change and the highways team need to make sure that the road is safe and used appropriately.

Q. Would you have the traffic report before the Cabinet meeting regarding the proposal in January?

A. No, but there will also be a planning consultation and if the plans were not appropriate then it would fail at the planning stage on this issue. The planning process will help shape this. We have previously had planning open evenings, and the traffic management comes under here. Although it is obviously linked, they are separate processes.

Q. You know you said that if staff wanted a job and could apply; does that happen for LSAs and dinner staff?

A. Yes, it is for all staff. It will be a new structure and the difficulty is trying to look ahead when we do not know the future structure.

A. We also look wider so if there are no vacancies in these new schools we can look at vacancies elsewhere. We try our best to ensure you all have jobs.

Q. Can you clarify in terms of leadership roles how it is ring-fenced? I know that headship roles have to go external.

A. Assistant Headteacher level and below are ring-fenced for existing staff in the first instance, but Headteachers posts are advertised externally.

Q. Is the closure of Cilfynydd linked directly to Pontypridd High pupils leaving after sixth form?

A. The proposals are linked, but we know there is already surplus capacity at Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School.

Q. How much information will we get about the plans before the January meeting? Will the site be split?

A. There may be a need for a small new block or extension or remodelling. This is very early and we want to try to assure you that it will work. We have changed the layouts of schools following consultation before. We have listened and learned about this and we want to have your views too.

Staff/governor comment - There would be around 150 primary age pupils but almost 800 comprehensive pupils.

A. We look at the flow of the school and see where we can create good outdoor facilities and make sure it flows.

Q. Is there a possible name yet?

A. Tonyrefail stayed the same but Tonypandy changed its name to Nantgwyn. Governors put proposals forward and Cabinet make the final decision.

A. We are currently doing this with Garth Olwg and the decision has just been made to retain the name as Garth Olwg.

Q. If someone wanted to go through interview and they were unsuccessful, would they still get redundancy?

A. Yes of course. You can ask for figures and not proceed, or apply and if you are unsuccessful then you still get the redundancy option.

Q. What support would be in place in terms of staff wellbeing during the process?

A. We have a people development team who could work with the staff, or if people just want to talk on a welfare aspect, we could link with occupational health. Colleagues from HR will come out, spend time with the staff and address all concerns. If we do this right now it may be a 'what if' scenario and give examples from other schools, but we will work with you through the whole process.

Q - The packing up of the school, will we get time to do this?

A. Yes, we have closure days and there will be no lifting and carrying by staff as we employ a company to do this. We ask the school to declutter beforehand and we hire skips too. The Data Team will help in terms of disposing of information etc.

Staff/governor comment - We want to make sure the children do not suffer and we do not want staff welfare to impact on them. We have a fantastic school and we do not want their welfare to suffer because of this process. We feel like we have been chosen because of surplus places and the building condition.

A. We will support staff through this and children should not see any impact from this.

Staff/governor comment - We have massive community links for harvest and Christmas services and I am not sure you would get the same kind of community interaction when it moves.

A. The other side of that is that there are more facilities in Pontypridd High e.g. the games areas and the ICT suites. The children we spoke to here said that there are currently no classes here in the evening and you could have an opportunity to do that. I realise that this is not in the heart of the community geographically but it is only a few minutes' walk to the High School and I cannot argue with that but it will be down to school management to ensure that this happens.

A. We try to build in community spaces where possible and Welsh Government insist on this. We design separate access for the community space too, so that it can be completely segregated from the pupils. For example, if we put a 3G pitch at a new school, then we would expect it to be open to the community.

Q. I saw in the document that the projections for pupil numbers are dropping off. What are the plans to increase pupil numbers in the primary phase? What hit us the hardest was losing our nursery. We lose children to other facilities due to that.

A. You may be able to attract people to run a childcare setting on the new site.

A. The new schools tend to be attractive for parents due to the new facilities. I understand that this is not guaranteed.

Q. I understand the proposal and our children deserve the best, but I would not want us to move and have a falling number on roll. We hope that it will increase but I wondered if there was a secret plan for this.

A. We get the birth rates, which are quite accurate, and these form the projections.

Q. Would you be looking at closing Trallwn Infants' school and moving it to Pontypridd?

A. That is not part of this proposal.

Staff/governor comment - So the infants then would go to Trallwng rather than going to Pontypridd High. I live here and I hear so many parents saying they will send them there instead.

A. We had the same issue in Porth and Tonyrefail where parents said they would not send their children there. The Headteacher opened up the school to expect 50 parents to turn up and more than 200 turned up. The additional facilities encourage so many to go once they are in place.

A. Through schools minimise transition for pupils too.

A. We have undertaken a lot of work for transition into year 7 for the other

primary schools that join the through schools to make it easier for all and this is ongoing.

Q. Following on about the future and numbers - The intergovernmental panel on climate change (the gold standard for climate change) on the 8th of October said that humanity has about a decade to make changes to stop humanity dying out. I do not see how generating extra traffic is in anyway consistent for our commitment to the Future Generations Act and other Acts.

A. We also have to make these buildings more energy efficient and we often add solar panels and rainwater harvesting to assist with environmental impacts. Due to the funding, we have to adhere to the BREEAM model. The contractors we use have to keep their carbon footprint to a minimum during the process too. The closure of inefficient buildings has a positive impact on environmental factors too. In terms of traffic with the proposed sixth form relocation, the emissions may even balance out as they often go from one school to another during the school day for their lessons. This will be reduced by them going to one site for the whole day.

Q. Is there a plan for this building?

ET - There are not as of yet. If the proposal is successful, the building will be handed over to Corporate Estates to manage and they would make recommendations to Elected Members.

Q. If there is a new school and there is closure of this school, how do the finances work? If we had a surplus and they had a deficit how would that work?

A. We work with the closing schools to see how best to manage it and the deficits are cleared and a new school budget would be created for the new school. All data is linked to the new school e.g. SIMS etc. We work closely with schools on this.

Q. Will there be any new buildings or just refurbishment?

A. We are not sure of the designs yet, these are progressed in partnership with staff, pupils and governors.

Staff/governor comment - Some parents do not think there is enough detail on this.

A. We undertook refurbishments on previous 21st Century Schools projects. The quality and the standard of the refurbished classes in YGG Tonyrefail and the new Tonyrefail through school are the same.

Q. If there is surplus capacity then other schools could join too?

A. LH - We are not looking to do that and if we were, now would be the time to look at that and we are not. We need to look at community use and change the designations of some of the classes to make best use of the school.

Staff/governor comment - As fantastic as the school may be it is the road safety and the safeguarding that we want to raise and note.

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Notes of a meeting held with students at Coleg Y Cymoedd (CYC)
Monday 26th November 2018 at 10:30 am

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

Present

Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21st Century Schools
Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Sophie Nicholls (SN), Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
23 students who previously attended Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High or Cardinal Newman.

Introductions

Gaynor Davies (GD) 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.

GD explained that officers are here today to ask in particular why the students chose college over school and what has been their experience here.

Feedback

Pupil – School wasn't a positive experience. Teachers wouldn't listen to us but they do in College.

Q. GD - What is the pastoral care like here?

A. Student – Very good. They help me with my course and are always available to support me if I am struggling with a piece of coursework. They also listen and help if I have any worries and any personal problems I'm having.

Student – It depends on the teachers. There were some at school that were great but some that were not. I chose to come here because I could do a BTEC here but in Pontypridd High it was an exam. I wanted to do music and business and there wasn't enough take up of music in school. I think it would be a really good idea to have a big sixth form in Bryncelynog because you will have more choice there as it will be funded, but you could still come here for BTEC.

Q. GD – What about A Levels?

A. Student – I spoke to my friends at Pontypridd High and they said that the teachers are spread too thinly as they are working with years 7-11 as well as sixth form and they don't have the time to commit and support especially if they are having problems with their coursework.

Student – I think a big sixth form is a brilliant idea. I went to sixth form in Hawthorn High and the support and technology there was awful. It's much

better here and I can undertake in particular the computer course I specifically require to go to University.

Student – The consortium is a shambles. Teachers are stretched and we could tell they were stressed. Post 16 wasn't a focus. It is a focus here and we get more attention. In chemistry, I had one teacher in Hawthorn High and one teacher in Pontypridd High. I had less support split over two sites and the teachers didn't talk to each other so we would have the same lessons twice.

Q. GD – What was it like meeting the new people here?

A. Student – I prefer it here. We all did our own thing after GCSE and I have made loads of friends here and met my girlfriend. It's great preparation for university.

Student – I found it hard to start because I had five close friends from Pontypridd High but I now know so many more people with different viewpoints and have lots more new friends.

Q. GD – What do you think the big differences are between sixth form in school and here?

A. Student – You can express yourself how you want to here and are accepted for that.

Student – We are treated like adults and we are trusted more here. We can go home to study and I am doing more learning independently rather than being forced to stay in school.

Q. GD – Are there any negatives to taking the sixth form out of the schools?

A. Student – It will be hard for the people who live far away from the school.

GD – We will offer transport to those living more than two miles away.

Student – Yes we get transport here too but it can be difficult on occasions. We get public buses can be unreliable. Some of the buses are school buses but they are often late because they have already been to drop off at one school.

GD – We need to get the transport right for these pupils then.

Student – Yes.

Q. GD – Do you think the level of your course is right for you?

A. Student – Our A level chemistry teacher spent a lot of time with us to make sure we were happy to do the level of work and what the options were. In school we were just told "do this course, it will be fine". At the college open day I spoke to people about one subject for 25 minutes and they supported me to undertake the correct course for my future options for University.

Student – In Hawthorn they don't speak about college at all. They just say the best thing is sixth form but they don't ask and know what we need. They just say you're in sixth form and you're an adult so grow up if you have issues.

Student – The relationships here are fab. They are always there for you to make sure you are good at home too.

Student – Pontypridd High brought us here to the college to see what was on offer.

Q. AR – Do you think you have benefitted from coming here?

A. Student – yes and we are undertaking the courses we want.

Q. GD – How many of you wouldn't have been able to do your current course had you stayed in school? Can we have a show of hands?

A. 13 out of 23 pupils.

Student – In Hawthorn I could do IT but not computer science. They said for me to go off and research it. I can't do that I need to be taught and I need it for the university course I want to do.

Q. GD – Is there a clear pathway shown to you here?

A. Student – Yes if you have a target they will tell you all the different options to reach it.

Student – The tutors are really supportive and they sort any problems. They help you learn from your mistakes here instead of just disciplining you.

Q. AR – Do you get advice on work experience here?

A. Student – I can go abroad for two weeks on my business course, and we also have university lecturers who come in to teach us from time to time.

Student – I have add-ons here too. I can learn extra things if I want to and put the time into it.

Q. GD – If we are looking at investing in schools, how best can we get pupils' input?

A. Student – Do interesting events and make it worth them coming to give input.

Student – Show off the equipment and technology.

Q. LH – Do you think the learning environment is important to you?

A. Student – Yes, Hawthorn High is a prison. There are fences all around it. There is so much freedom here to go home if we need to.

Q. GD – What do you think about the learning environment at the college?

A. Student – They trust us to leave and come back and we trust them to support us.

GD – What impact does that have on your learning?

Student – I know that I am responsible for my own learning and I feel more like an adult. You lose your drive to do well if you are trapped in school and there is no room for you. Not everyone learns the same.

GD – So sixth form rooms are full in school?

Student – Yes, rooms are full and then you are told off for wandering or you have to ask for a key to a spare room if there is one. In the college there are lots of excellent places to self study.

Q. GD – Does anyone regret coming here?

A. Student – No.

Student – No, I met so many friends here and I am not bullied here. In school you have to sort it out yourself and fight because teachers don't do anything.

Student – If you are bullied here they sort it out. Everyone is different here but we all respect each other and we are tolerant of each other.

Student – The PE boys in school were the favourites and they could get away with bullying.

Q. LH – Is there any vandalism here?

A. Student – Everyone respects their environment here. Everything is clean and tidy here. In school the driers and toilet doors were hanging off the walls, we had no nice areas to study and the college has lovely areas that we feel safe and secure in.

Q. Student – With the 3-16 schools would they stay on the same site? I really enjoyed moving up to high school.

A. GD – We are trying to limit the transition for pupils who can find it hard. The playgrounds will be separate but the older pupils could help with the younger pupils and the younger pupils could use the specialist facilities that are only usually available for high school pupils.

Q. Student – It would be good if the schools just showed all of the options to you instead of only looking at sixth form.

A. GD – Yes we need to show a variety of options.

Student – I went to Cardinal Newman when it was split, but it wasn't the friendliest of splits. I was really worried I wouldn't get enough support but I get

so much support here. I even get email responses off teachers on the weekends when I have asked them a question to help me with my coursework.

Student – There is way more access to extra-curricular activities here. I do the knitting nanas club. There is also a huge LGBT support group here too. In my first lesson here my teacher said that the most important thing we can do is respect each other and that she would happily have a lengthy debate with anyone who disagreed with that. I know that maybe there aren't enough funds to create the same type of support groups in Pontypridd High, but people weren't confident enough to come out in school. Some of my friends changed their names here and staff would help here and adapt what they called them to make it suitable for them.

Q. AR – Do you think sixth form in schools is old fashioned?

A. Student – Yes in a way because you are trapped and so many teachers left Pontypridd High because they are stressed and too busy trying to teach year 7-11 too. The 3-16 is okay but I loved meeting new people when I went to high school and made that transition. There was a lot of bullying in my primary so I was glad to meet new people.

GD – There will still be some other pupils joining in year 7, but we are trying to minimise the number of transitions generally.

GD thanked all for their inputs.
The meeting closed.

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**Notes of a meeting held with the school council
at Hawthorn High School**

Monday 12th November at 3:30 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in
the Pontypridd area**

RCT Council officers present:

Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary School Achievement
Lisa Howell, 21st Century Team Officer
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
46 pupils present

Gaynor Davies (GD) 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.

Q. GD – Do you understand the proposal and what are your views on it?

A. I want to stay here and if the sixth form shuts I will have to travel. My parents don't drive and I can't get free transport.

A. GD - We want to give you more choice at sixth form instead of small sixth forms with limited courses. Those who are eligible for free transport will get it providing they live further than the two mile safe walking distance from their nearest suitable school.

Q. If this will be a 21st Century School does this mean all schools in the 21st century won't have a sixth form?

A. We are trying to create a larger sixth form to make more curriculum courses available and financially viable. We also want to ensure that school buildings are fit for the 21st Century. Creating a 3-16 school also minimises unnecessary changes for pupils and eases transition.

A. The 21st century developments mean there will be change. This can include moving schools. So far in the new schools that have opened this year pupils and staff have found that moving schools for post 16 education has been a great stepping stone for pupils to prepare them for Higher Education.

Q. The Pontypridd area is huge with 33,000 people and some live as far as Ynysybwl. If you are spending £12m, can't we have a sixth form in the Pontypridd area, like Garth Olwg have for Welsh Medium?

A. Sixth forms need to have around 250 pupils to be financially viable. Small sixth forms take funding away from Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils, which is unfair to those pupils. Projections and formula from Welsh Government help the Local

Authority assess where there is a need for a sixth form and how large that would need to be. Welsh medium catchment areas are much larger so they need a local sixth form to avoid travelling over the 40 minute maximum travel time recommended by Welsh Government.

Q. Will you be changing the shape of the building?

A. The Council's Corporate Estates team undertake several surveys on the buildings to see what is possible. With a £12m investment it is likely that some of the buildings will change.

Q. Cardiff Road already has too much traffic on it. If there are 400 pupils attending the sixth form how will the road cope with the traffic?

A. As part of the 21st Century Schools works we often change the entrances to schools where appropriate or necessary.

A. Safe routes to school surveys are always carried out by the RCT Highways department and any changes needed to ensure the route is safe for staff and pupils to access the site will be undertaken. This could include traffic calming measures, road lay outs etc.

Q. There is already a 'super-school' with a sixth form in Y Pant and Bryncelynnog is very close. If the proposals go ahead there won't be one in Pontypridd, so why are you going to put it in Bryncelynnog?

A. Y Pant is a school that is full and oversubscribed every year. We are looking to expand and create one larger sixth form to benefit pupil curriculum opportunities and when deciding on the location we look at a number of factors. Bryncelynnog currently has a larger sixth form, improving results for A Levels, and has a site that is appropriate to build on and adapt for the new sixth form provision.

A. Coleg Y Cymoedd is also an option for pupils studying at post-16 level, which is based in the Pontypridd area.

Q. So why make Y Pant a 'super-school' if it's already full?

A. Y Pant is always oversubscribed and the catchment area for this school has been changed to try and combat this issue.

A. We are also restricted with some sites, especially Y Pant, as there has to be enough outdoor play space for pupils. We wouldn't be allowed to build much more on the Y Pant site due to the size of the site.

Q. Cardinal Newman tried to send their pupils to Coleg Y Cymoedd for sixth form a few years ago and brought them back because the results weren't good enough. How are they doing now?

A. Coleg Y Cymoedd offer a range of A-Level and vocational courses. You will be able to choose between Coleg Y Cymoedd and Bryncelynnog for your post-16 education if proposals go ahead.

- A. The un-ratified results for the 2018 A-Level exams at Coleg Y Cymoedd were very good. These will soon be ratified and made public.
- Q. *I used to travel to Cardiff College every day and it took over an hour. It could take the same to get to Bryncelynnog from here so I think this would make more students automatically choose college.***
- A. Welsh Government recommend that the journey to school should take no longer than 40 minutes. It definitely shouldn't take that long for pupils of Hawthorn to reach Bryncelynnog. Continuing the pupil/teacher relationship is important too which is why 3-16 is a good option here. Post-16 pupils are more capable of coping with a transition to ensure they are able to access the best curriculum options for them.
- Q. *Sixth formers have free lessons so have more time to do extra duties e.g. school council and buddies. This would be put onto year 11 pupils who don't have the time to do this.***
- A. Sixth formers should in fact be busier because of the nature of their workload. They have a lot of independent studying to do. The 11-16 schools I have worked in have shown this to be beneficial because many 15/16 year olds relish the chance to have the responsibilities at a younger age.
- Q. *If year 12 is similar to year 11, I wouldn't want the responsibilities so young. Sixth form contribute loads to all pupils and year 11 has more exams. The sixth form do newspapers, anti-bullying ambassadors etc. and if they weren't able to help it would be hard.***
- Q. *I had so much help from the sixth form then I moved to this school and I chose this school because of the education and relationships instead of going to Tonyrefail or Bryncelynnog which are both closer to me.***
- Q. *School Lane is already very busy. Will you be able to manage the increased volume of people with the budget that you have?***
- A. The proposal is match funded by Welsh Government so this makes it much more financially viable. We will conduct safe routes assessments and we have a duty of care to ensure the routes into school are safe.
- Q. *Garth Olwg have a 3-19 school being created; why don't we get that opportunity to have senior leadership roles? We won't get that in Bryncelynnog.***
- A. All pupils transitioning to Bryncelynnog could still have the opportunity to apply for those positions in the new sixth form. The new provision would be larger but could allow for a better education. The sixth form there will still have responsibilities to help with the whole school.
- A. In Tonyrefail where other sixth forms have amalgamated the current Head Boy was from Ferndale School and has just moved to Tonyrefail School for sixth form.

- Q. So we could still help younger pupils there.**
- A. Yes
- Q. Why are we changing it if it is going okay so far?**
- A. We always strive to move forward and improve. Improvements mean change and we always strive for change that will improve current education provision.
- Q. Half of sixth form provision here and half at Bryncelynnog or Coleg Y Cymoedd. What happens to me as I will be going into year 13 when this happens?**
- A. At the end of year 11 you would be given the option to move then. If you stay on for sixth form in the school your subjects will have to be offered when you move.
- Q. Y Pant had more than £20million and Tonyrefail had more than £40million. How can we be a super school with only a £12million budget?**
- A. The way the budgets are calculated depends on the size and condition of what is there already. We in RCT spend a lot on our schools. We need to think holistically about the budgets as the money being put into Bryncelynnog will be benefiting some pupils here too.
- Q. There doesn't seem to be enough money being spent here to make the school eco friendly and new technology costs a lot of money.**
- A. If you compare £40million to £12million it obviously seems much less but we look at the sites holistically. This is still a consultation and if the proposal is accepted and surveys completed, the allocated budget could go up or down. This is also not a one off spend as we continually undertake school improvement works.
- Q. With more pupils coming here how will you make it eco-friendly with the increase of traffic on site?**
- A. New materials for schools help make it eco friendly by lowering the CO2 emissions used to create heating etc. A traffic impact assessment will also be undertaken.
- Q. This school was built a long time ago. 21st Century schools should be built with 21st Century materials and not have buildings with asbestos. Is £12million enough?**
- A. Not every building will be removed but we need to do as many surveys as possible to ensure we invest sensibly in a way that is safe for pupils and staff.
- Q. GD – How best can we consult with you in the future?**

A. Pupils – Assembly, online surveys and social media.

Questions and comments from School Council at Hawthorn High – left as written notes.

- **What are your plans for disability access for the new supers-school within the school?**
- **Have you considered the psychological effects of having such young children and older children in a combined space and how it will affect their mental health?**
- **What compensation will people living on school lane receive if you are making drastic changes to the road and surrounding areas?**
- **How do you justify the difference in expenditure for the 21st century schools? For example Tonyrefail had £40m and Y Pant had £23m but we only get £12m. Why is there such a big difference? Surely in such a deprived area a focus should be put on us?**
- **We have been in the school since year 7. Why should our learning be disrupted? I don't understand why we need to move. Why fix something if it's not broken? Our school wouldn't have the same dynamic if the sixth form left.**
- **Are the current super-schools working?**
- **This would affect all the children - learning GCSE level is stressful enough but not having adequate classroom space to learn effectively is very detrimental to their learning.**
- **How much of our green space are you going to use?**
- **What does Bryncelynnog have that Pontypridd doesn't?**
- **We have read the reports you have written about our school and they are quite negative, when in actuality we are on a par with schools like Bryn and Ponty. How will reviews like this encourage pupils from Gwauncelyn to join our school?**
- **There is too much pressure on year 11 already and to take away the sixth form would make it worse.**
- **How are you going to ensure pupils in different primaries get the same education as those who are involved in the school?**
- **GCSEs have changed an extreme amount, so it is unfair to give sixth former duties to year 11 pupils. I find having a small sixth form is beneficial as teachers are able to focus on pupils' needs.**
- **What do you plan on doing with the current teachers when the new school is built?**
- **What would happen if A-Level grades worsen because of the change?**
- **What strategies are to be put in place to guarantee safety for younger children?**
- **Do you really expect children from Gwauncelyn to come to Ponty only to go back at 16?**
- **As a year 10 pupil I will be in my final year in 2022. I came to Hawthorn believing that I would be able to stay on and get my A-Levels. Am I expected to move to a different school half way through my A-Levels or move the year before? However, with both options, my close friends that are staying on for sixth form and I may end up separated. How am I expected to balance my social life with my education?**

- **Already the car park is extremely full. With double the pupils in the school, how will you accommodate the amount of cars/buses etc that will be here?**
- **I feel that students that go to the sixth form in Bryn have a massive disadvantage because we would have to re-navigate and find our way around the school.**
- **Why is Bryncelynnog better than HHS? Bryn have 19% FSM (Free School Meals) pupils and Hawthorn has 25%. Hawthorn grades should be worse yet we have more 1s and 2s on the charts compared to Bryn. WE ARE ABOVE AVERAGE.**
- **Will we have to pay for travelling?**
- **When you create the 3-16 school years 7/8/9 will not have a choice to go to a sixth form in Pontypridd and if you create the super-school you are taking that choice away from us, so why can you not give us a choice to decide whether we go to sixth form in Pontypridd.**
- **What will the £12m be spent on? Is this project in the best interest of education or money? College life is extremely different to sixth form. Without a sixth form in Pontypridd we could see a decline in further education?**
- **Would RCT Council be responsible for the education at Coleg Y Cymoedd? (Described as 'adequate' with their A-Level education by Estyn.)**
- **Have you considered the year 7s that may want to go to sixth form in Hawthorn?**
- **What will happen to the teachers in the primaries that are shutting down?**
- **What will happen to the current pupils of Hawthorn high during construction?**
- **Moving to a new school can be very scary as if none of your friends were going to the sixth form in Bryn, you might not know any of the people and won't be as close with the teachers.**
- **If Bryncelynnog is getting £10m for a sixth form centre, why not move it to Pontypridd where there are a lot more people – 33,000 people in Pontypridd as well as being a university town.**
- **Cars go to fast down Cardiff Road and this 21st Century plan will also possibly cause traffic going from Hawthorn through to Upper Boat and maybe even Taffs Well. Even though buses will be put on there are still parent cars and more accidents are more likely to happen.**
- **The extra-curricular activities currently run by sixth form in Hawthorn is not only beneficial to KS3 and 4 but allows KS5 to develop their university application as it's not all reliant on results but experience.**
- **Is there a worry that all the change surrounding sixth form will discourage pupils from staying in education?**
- **Why would putting infants in the same environment as young adults be beneficial?**
- **With the expansion of our age range we will definitely need an expansion within the school itself as there are many classrooms that are almost always full.**
- **I think that we should have a sixth form and Ponty should have a sixth form because they are easy to access from each other and they are not too far away.**

- ***Why do you spend less money on us? Y Pant. What you going to do with our car park?***
- ***Do you care about school bullying? I think Welsh Government mostly care about our future but if a kid gets bullied in school and school teachers can't really help. It will make this kid's future all dark. So I think Welsh Government is first not looking after the future, they should look do the students get bully or no because if this gets to you he will choose end his life.***
- ***If you can spend £40m on Tonyrefail and £23m on Y Pant why is Hawthorn only getting £12m? If we had more we could have a super school that INCLUDES a sixth form.***
- ***21st Century Schools are supposed to be Eco friendly, yet you want to create more roads destroying more grass lands and taking away the school fields.***
- ***When the super-school goes ahead after a year say it starts going not so well, what will happen?***
- ***By including a 3-16 school, how would the lunch times be altered for the needs of these children? Surely there would be issues having a three year old having the same breaks as a 16 year old.***
- ***Since the time the 11 plus was removed, equality of education and opportunity was the main aim. Removing the sixth form from Pontypridd denies this equality as we only get the opportunity to go to sixth form in catchment area.***
- ***If there is a sixth form on USW campus then they can work hand in hand and makes it easier for pupils to transition to sixth form and then to university.***
- ***Why are pupils expected to stay at Bryncelynnog after arriving at school at 8:30am. As a sixth former I sometimes have one lesson a day, but I enjoy my independence and do studying at home as school is too noisy.***
- ***Removing the sixth form at Pontypridd diminishes schools potential to have a centre of excellence. Pupils are not pushed to do A-Levels as there are not many opportunities. Why isn't there a choice of sixth form but rather where you are closest to?***
- ***How will we handle the parking because we are struggling now and if you do make a new entrance it will take money so what will you do?***

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Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors at Hawthorn High School

Monday 12th November at 3:30 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

RCT Council officers present:

Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary School Achievement
Lisa Howell, 21st Century Team Officer
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
Ellen Williams, Human Resources Advisor
47 members of school staff and governors

Gaynor Davies (GD) referred to the excellent participation of the school council during the earlier meeting with them.

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

Should the proposals be implemented, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3-6 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn

School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.

- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3–16 school at Hawthorn;

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained Secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog).

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q. *What does sixth form centre of excellence actually mean?*

A. There are unsustainable numbers forecast for this sixth form. The ultimate goal is to give pupils a wide range of curriculum choices. This is currently unavailable here and is financially unsustainable.

Q. *The sixth form pupils took that as meaning that all of the A-Levels would be at Bryncelynnog and all of the vocational courses at Coleg Y Cymoedd.*

A. That is not the case. Both will be likely to offer A-Level and vocational courses.

Q. The consultation document says that Bryncelynnog have better results at A*-C than the Welsh National Average. That is not the case for the academic years 2015/16 or 2016/17.

A. Bryncelynnog are consistently improving and performing well. The 2018 data shows Bryncelynnog performing better than Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman.

Q. Wouldn't you expect that for their free school meals numbers?

A. I agree that the factors and indicators for KS5 data are difficult, but Estyn don't compare free school meal numbers at 6th form, and only 36% of pupils returned to sixth form here.

The budget here is in a large deficit and the school has a large catalogue of backlog maintenance. We need to consider this and sixth form numbers on roll to see where is best to set up this sixth form provision.

This will provide opportunities for all young people in terms of subject choice and is fair, as budgets are then also spent more equitably between pupils in years 7-11.

Q. You can't say that all will be able to go to Bryncelynnog because not all pupils will be able to afford to travel. Will they have a choice or will you pay for transport to wherever they choose rather than just to the closest provision? It is a huge catchment and pupils from Ynysybwl will have to leave so early to get to Bryncelynnog.

A. There is also a huge cost for us currently as we pay to transport pupils from one school to another for A-Levels as they work with other schools in the consortium.

Q. Why not build one in Pontypridd and one in Bryncelynnog?

A. The data isn't there to warrant doing that. The demand isn't there to create a sustainable sixth form.

Q. Put a sixth form centre in Pontypridd. There are more numbers in that area than in Beddau.

A. Coleg Y Cymoedd have a sixth form provision for the Pontypridd area for 300+ pupils. I asked Headteachers to look at the sixth form provision when I was Director of Education and nothing has improved a great deal. The school is £400,000 in deficit which is money effectively being borrowed from the Council to fund a financially unviable sixth form with only 36% of pupils returning.

Q. Cardinal Newman moved their sixth form to Coleg Y Cymoedd (CYC) and it didn't work.

A. Data for 2018 shows that they are doing very well.

- Q. But we can't see that data. We have tried to improve links with CYC. The consultation document says that classes with under 5 pupils are as high as 28 when in reality there are only 8. I am distressed by this data. Travelling to Bryncelynnog is difficult and there is no direct transport link to here. We have no data from CYC to advise our pupils to go there.**
- A. We aren't criticising the effort you have put into this. The deficit has a detrimental impact to the KS3 and KS4 pupils too. CYC outcomes have improved so much this year and data will be ratified shortly. Children are already voting with their feet because you are constrained by the budget to offer a wider range of subjects.
- Q. We always budget for the number of pupils that pass the level 2 threshold and I don't register the figure of only 36% of pupils staying. I don't think that the direct comparison between us and Bryncelynnog is helpful. Calling them an improving school and not us makes it difficult for pupils to decide where to go.**
- Q. Carrying a deficit for 8 years we have fought to deliver a strong education using that deficit. We haven't spent carelessly. We are a leaner machine now. We shouldn't be lumped together with worse schools financially. The consultation document is painting a different picture.**
- A. You may have decreased the deficit previously but it has grown again in the last few years and this is linked to the fewer number of pupils staying for sixth form. There is more choice here but they are already choosing to go elsewhere.
- A. Staff - We have high aspirations to offer whatever pupils want, but pupils are leaving to do other things, not other A-Levels elsewhere.
- Q. If there is no sixth form in Pontypridd, you will remove the aspirations for pupils to do A-Levels because they want to stay with supportive teachers. We will lose sixth form teachers and will be a category 3:2 school because we are already a category 3 school but will then be without the sixth form. Putting a sixth form in Bryncelynnog where they have less pupils, it is not true that they will be able to do it in a more financially viable way up there. We are being treated differently to Mountain Ash who are a category 1 school. We are treated differently to the Cynon and Rhondda valleys. From a political point of view there is a huge argument to maintain a sixth form LEA provision in the Pontypridd area regardless of which school it is in.**
- A. Young people will have a choice to pick CYC and Bryncelynnog and have the choice of many subjects and career pathways.

- Q. From the top site they won't go to Bryncelynnog. Their parents won't pay for them to go. We need to encourage them not get in their way. After school these pupils can't get home, even from Hawthorn. We are giving them opportunities and if there is one barrier in their way they will use that as an excuse. 2018 statistics show that our most deprived pupils have improved.**
- A. There are sixth form provisions in the Hawthorn catchment area in CYC.
- Q. Why can't we take pupils from Pontypridd and CYC here?**
- A. The distance between the sites are then the same for those travelling.
- Q. No because there are no direct bus routes to Bryncelynnog. You could have a bespoke sixth form unit in Pontypridd for the whole area instead of for a small village.**
- A. Why would we build something new here when there is already something in place in Coleg Y Cymoedd?
- Q. The teaching information isn't clearly available for CYC. I understand it is not sustainable at the moment but a smaller setting which they are used to rather than a large facility at CYC that some pupils can't cope with must be better. Locate the A-Level facility in Pontypridd.**
- A. It is not cost effective to do this and there is already an A-Level provision in CYC. It is not morally right to prop up a sixth form with funds that should be used for KS3 and 4. If the pupils meet eligibility criteria then they will get transport to the new sixth form. The wider curriculum offered might engage those that are maybe less motivated.
- Q. Bryncelynnog is smaller than the combined sixth form figures of Cardinal Newman, Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High, and you are only moving it because a facility exists in CYC. We don't know the background, age of students etc. in CYC for safeguarding reasons, or have any control over their curriculum. How are they more financially sustainable?**
- A. As an LEA we don't decide the curriculum offered in CYC or in any other sixth form in RCT as the school governors decide this.
- Q. Has wellbeing been considered if you ship them off to Beddau?**
- A. You are assuming that it would be detrimental to change the location of the sixth form provision. There are economies of scale with a large sixth form and there will be more staff to consider the wellbeing of pupils.

Q. Kirsty Williams talks about the new through school approach to dealing with mental health wellbeing in schools. In addition, 75% of mental health problems start by the age of 24 according to the Joshua Foundation. We need to address this better in schools.

A. Good transitioning would be key to ensuring that their wellbeing is the highest priority.

A. One traumatic move is between year 6 and year 7. By creating a 3-16 school they would benefit from continuity. There are costs and benefits of moving but at 16 it could be argued that pupils are more capable of dealing with the transition and it is useful for pupils who can prepare for the inevitable transition to higher education or the workplace.

Q. Can you allow them to stay in Pontypridd?

A. Receiving education across two sites can be unsettling. There is no continuity there if pupils are struggling with an issue. We are striving for continuity in post-16 and staff will be able to meet the emotional needs of pupils. Economies of scale will allow this to be done effectively in a larger setting. Some pupils will inevitably struggle with the transition but the support will be there to help them.

Q. There is more and more pressure for staff to do the job of CAMHS etc. in schools. These Welsh Government proposals worry me as I think some children will fall through the gaps.

A. I totally understand where you are coming from. School and education psychology support is given to schools based on pupil numbers. If there is a larger sixth form and a 3-16 school, all schools involved could have even more support due to the increased numbers.

Q. Education psychology reports take time. If they are only in a school for two years that time has gone.

A. Transition is key. We need to ensure transition for these pupils is a priority. There are also Additional Learning Needs reforms being consulted on at the moment and we have a duty of care to all pupils. Communication is key, especially when services are stretched.

Q. We have a communication link with Pontypridd High too. If it takes over 8 months to reach an education psychologist or CAMHS that is a concern.

Q. Building a trusting relationship with pupils is key. They may achieve academically but their wellbeing needs to be of the utmost importance.

Q. I have a special needs child and the transition is just words. I have to deal with her emotions when she comes home from school.

Q. The college offers 28 A-Levels and 7 vocational courses. We have a large number of sixth form pupils who have 5 GCSEs who then have to do a level 2 course because they didn't have Maths and English, but they

would have been able to access a level 3 course had they stayed in school. Will that happen in Bryncelynnog?

Q. Have you done a survey with pupils to see how many will go to the new sixth form? You could spend all that money and not have any pupils move there.

A. That would be difficult to gauge now because feelings and emotions about the scheme could change over time. Some parents who were adamant that their children wouldn't go to the new Nantgwyn school, but they are attending now.

Q. My child is 12 and he said he wouldn't go to Bryncelynnog because it is too far. That's one pupil less already.

A. After doing their chosen subjects they may or may not change their minds and decide to go where the better course is for them. If they are engrossed in a subject, the extra mile may be insignificant to them then.

Q. We need to bring more pupils to the Pontypridd area not fewer. Will they be too far away in Bryncelynnog to do their Saturday jobs in Pontypridd if there are fewer chain companies and less people there?

Q. There is a social inclusion issue here. The message you are giving is that Pontypridd isn't good enough to have a sixth form. The pupils have to travel. It should be in Pontypridd and equal to all. What about redundant buildings, could we turn Pont Sion Norton into a sixth form centre?

Q. Aberdare has a sixth form and it has a smaller population than Pontypridd, so does Beddau and Pontyclun. People are seething because they want an in-school option. Shut Y Pant or Treorchy and see how people feel. There are colleges up there too. Pupils stay to do A-Levels here because it is an educational establishment which runs on passion and hard work. The college doesn't do that.

A. With only 36% of pupils staying the vast majority are leaving and take up is low. There is a steady decline and you can't sustainably offer these subjects to one or two pupils. The quality of KS3 and 4 education is not as good because the money is being used to prop up KS5. It is a spiral. The work you have done has been a huge effort but it is not working. There is a sixth form in CYC and we couldn't invest in that area as Welsh Government wouldn't support it and it wouldn't be viable.

Q. But we are borrowing all of the money for it.

A. It is 50% funded by Welsh Government and 50% by us.

Q. We are borrowing more money to the detriment of Pontypridd. Do it in the Cynon Valley. The poor children up there aren't getting any investment.

A. There is a wider picture and £160m was spent on Band A and Band B is another £168m. We are continuously trying to improve our schools ambitiously. We

aren't trying to lay off teachers etc., we are trying to create the best education provision for pupil. We do listen and change based on people's views but we will never please everyone.

Q. How do the sixth form changes alter social mobility? With the 3-16 school they won't see pupils with aspirations to go to university because they haven't got these role models. It is difficult to establish these links with CYC.

A. In the past we have worked with the college to engage with the schools. This is much better now than it was. It can be a partnership for the young people rather than operate as competition.

A. This can happen with Bryncelynnog too by establishing long transition links.

Q. How much money does RCT pay for pupils to get to CYC?

A. Nothing. Welsh Government pays the transport costs.

Q. The consultation document says it only pays for the transport for post-16 to the nearest establishment that offers this.

A. This is stated to stop pupils for example going from Hawthorn to Treorchy. We have stated that we will give them a fair choice of sixth form provision and we will do so.

Q. I am struggling to cope with the projections. If a significant number choose CYC then £10m for a sixth form in Bryncelynnog is a waste if there aren't 420 pupils there. If the funding is going to do other things on site then we want to understand that better because I see they need that too.

A. Realigning the catchment areas is being done to cope with the housing developments in the area. We are still looking at options for the building alterations at the moment.

Q. How sustainable post 2022 is Hawthorn if we are trying to get pupils here from closer to Bryncelynnog, when we are being described as third / fourth quartile school and Bryncelynnog is being described as 'improving'. It will be difficult to get pupils here, especially if they will have to go back to Bryncelynnog for sixth form. It is not a fair comparison to take a school with 25% Free School Meals and compare them to Bryncelynnog with 14.5% when the Welsh average is 16.5%.

Q. Pupils at Gwauncelyn won't want to come to Hawthorn if they are going to then have to go back to Bryncelynnog for sixth form, especially when looking at pastoral needs. It's not about Hawthorn it's about continuity. Gwauncelyn have a two form entry so that's a huge number of pupils that could come here but probably won't.

A. Parents can choose to send their child to any school if there are spaces available in the year group. In Y Pant we still have a lot of pupils from Penygawsi attending. Until the year group is full, parents can choose.

- Q. We are grateful for the catchment changes, but I think the reality will be slightly different. We need to think about how they are perceived as parents are looking for schools to add value to their child. The subliminal message is that Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High aren't good enough.**
- A. That hasn't happened so far. The number of out of catchment pupils attending Treorchy has dropped.
- A. The primary section of Nantgwyn is now full. That number could have decreased as there is now no sixth form in Nantgwyn, but that hasn't happened.
- Q. The cause and effect are not directly linked. Painting a school doesn't mean it is better. We need to keep thinking how quickly these catchment changes will actually happen.**
- A. Again, transition is important to think about to improve this in the future.
- Q. You're going to put a 3-16 school here. In practical terms what does that mean?**
- A. There are currently options appraisals being undertaken by the Corporate Estates department but we need to think about what the staff, community and pupils want and what works on the site in terms of layout.
- Q. Is the ICT structure incorporated? What about the heating and lighting for all the buildings?**
- A. Porth 3-16 included new build elements and refurbishments. There are options we need to investigate. It may include demolitions, extensions and refurbishments. Where we can we try and go into older buildings and we do everything in consultation with the school. We do vast data analysis and costs are also based on our experiences elsewhere. Until we conduct surveys we don't know what we will find. It is a £168m budget for RCT and surveys help us decide how to split that money up.
- Q. The Governors of the school wrote to Andrea Richards in the summer with regards to the state of the main building. There are extensive drainage issues with the roof. The response I had from Andrea didn't include any details about the roof. Are you aware of these issues?**
- A. Yes we are and this will inform our surveys and the options we take.
- A. We did a study with Tonypandy and the final proposals were very different and much better than the original plans. Consultation is key.
- Q. For the exhibition in January, if I contact Andrea Richards, will I have an indication beforehand of what it will look like?**
- A. The plans will develop over time and change through the planning process which is a different consultation process again. That is where we finalise the building proposals. We are looking at changing education too.

- Q. *Is the roads reorganisation being spent as part of the £12m too?***
- A. Everything inside the school boundary is from the 21st Century Schools budget. Everything outside of that will be an external budget.
- Q. *I think you may need to think about separate points of access as School Lane can't cope.***
- A. Previous consultations did change the layout of the access. We will have to prioritise but we also have to try and look at the site holistically. Corporate Estates will conduct these feasibility studies but we will also be undertaking visits and working with you.
- Q. *We want to understand what we get for £12m.***
- Q. *Rhydyfelin is one of the most deprived areas and you are proposing to close Heol y Celyn. Is Welsh Medium right for Rhydyfelin after they have already had an infant school close?***
- A. There is no reason that the new school on the Heol y Celyn site can't provide an excellent education. Currently 40% of pupils from the Heol y Celyn catchment already attend Hawthorn. A new building on that site could increase investment there and create aspirations. There is a possibility for Welsh Medium child care provision to be available too. What we are proposing is beneficial to many.
- A. Only 50% of pupils on Free School Meals from the Heol y Celyn area actually attend Heol y Celyn. Many go to other schools including Hawthorn, YGG Evan James etc. and are already voting with their feet. The bilingual model doesn't work there at the moment and our WESP highlights our commitment to investing in single language schools.
- Q. *Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in schools. What will happen? Are there plans to extend these provisions?***
- A. The proposal to realign ALN provision in schools is currently on the Council's website. New schools are often well placed to provide these provisions. ALN provision will have reserved areas in schools should they need to be used in the future. These spaces will be fit for purpose and fully accessible. There is no need for a primary complex needs class in the area at the moment, but there may be in the future and we will reassess this as part of our wider plan every few years.
- Q. *If this is a 21st Century School we need to be mindful of pupils who may be transferring here and how we cater for them.***
- A. Current data says we don't need it now, but we designate space to try and accommodate that in future.
- Q. *Don't be afraid of saying good outcomes about Hawthorn. The language used around the school isn't fair and we need to change that.***

Q. What are the timescales for staff? Can the staff changes be done as early as possible? We don't want teachers thinking of redundancy so leaving early.

A. The decisions regarding the proposal are made first. Then, if the proposals proceed, the temporary governing body are appointed which will be a mixture of governors from affected schools. The Headteacher is then appointed and the rest of the school structure is put in place. A document will be issued to staff explaining the Headteacher and Governors' proposals for a new structure and you will be consulted on this.

Q. The information given to Governors should happen by when? How can a representation of three schools happen with two staff Governors and one support governor?

A. Aberdare Community School was created from three schools. Porth from four, and Nantgwyn from five. These all worked smoothly.

Q. What criteria do they use to make it an equitable decision?

A. Individuals can apply and the LEA will decide. Governors selected then choose community governors. They are making decisions about a new whole school, not three schools. There will be representation from all current governing bodies on the temporary governing body on it. There will be your representative for Hawthorn if you like.

Mark Cleverly – Members meet with unions for advice when the structure happens. I have been through this in Tonyrefail as a staff member and as a union representative. We can arrange a meeting to clear up any questions.

A. HR can also meet with staff on an individual basis if required.

GD thanked all for attending and sharing opinions.

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

Wednesday 14th November at 3:30 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the
Pontypridd area**

Present

Esther Thomas, Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services
Lisa Howell, Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Martin Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer
Ellen Williams, Human Resources Advisor
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
Catrin Edwards, Head Of Service Transformation and Data Systems
24 members of school staff and governors

The headteacher opened the meeting.

Esther Thomas (ET) introduced the Council officers.

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

Should the proposals be implemented, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post-16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision

will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;

- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn;

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog)

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q. We had an invitation to a meeting at Clydach Vale. At 3pm we were told the proposals. We were told that the proposals would be online the following morning but they were online that day and we didn't have enough time to tell staff. We would like RCT to listen and give us more time to tell those affected.

- A. The reason for that meeting was for people to be told so it wasn't a shock.
- Q. *We had some staff who found out on social media and they were obviously concerned for their jobs.***
- A. There was an embargo on the information and it wasn't supposed to be released. It was uploaded onto the website after the end of the working day.
- A. We take your point on board and it shouldn't have happened and we can only apologise for that error.
- Q. *What evidence is there that 3-16 schools are better and raise standards?***
- A. We have an all through school in Ysgol Llanhari that is working very well.
- Q. *Our worry is that there is no evidence for it now and we are worried because this school is already working well.***
- A. With the new curriculum the pupils will have opportunities to develop and create a continuum of learning.
- A. It is new but we are looking at giving opportunities for younger pupils to use facilities that aren't currently available for them. We want to push a continuum of learning that goes along with the new curriculum. We are managing our pupil numbers and this is how we are trying to manage it here. We don't have data yet on the new all through schools in the Rhondda as they are very new, however the schools have settled and progress is very positive.
- Q. *Are you also telling us that whatever the consultation says you will go ahead anyway.***
- A. No - we receive comments of objections and support, and this will all be measured and evaluated.
- Q. *But where is the data.***
- A. There is data in England but we didn't want to use this data because it is not like for like as the system is completely different.
- A. Speak to the Headteachers of the new schools in the Rhondda about their experiences.
- Q. *I have spoken to staff on the ground and I am not having good reports***
- A. That is different to what we are hearing from schools as we are having information about great transitions between years 6 and year 7 and can only work on fact.
- Q. *We are placing our children's future on a gamble with no empirical evidence.***

If that evidence exists we shouldn't have to chase it and it should be front and centre. It only appears as cost saving if that happens. I can't be in two places at once and I am a governor in Heol y Celyn. There isn't even an online web form for a 21st Century Schools proposal. This is one of the worst processes for people to respond to this that I have seen. I'm not certain we can have the best possible consultation with the public on this.

A. We follow the WG School Organisation Code in terms of what we do and how we consult. We do take your comments on board and you are welcome to email us.

Q. You have to scroll to the end of the consultation document to find the feedback form.

A. We can look to make the feedback proforma more obvious online.

Q. Parents won't be able to ask questions.

A. They will be able to in the event in January which will be a different and more interactive session for people to come and ask us their questions individually.

A. We have found that this is more helpful with parents as they may have specific concerns about safeguarding etc.

A. That is a public event for the community too.

Q. Can some be TUPE'd over to the new school rather than making them redundant? Why are we introducing a risk of losing good teachers?

A. We close a school and open a new school. The benefit of doing that is that it gives the opportunity for any staff to take early retirement or redundancy. If you amalgamate schools rather than closing them we cannot offer that opportunity.

Q. Why can't you amalgamate? Is there another way of doing it? I don't want to know if we don't have jobs in 4 years. Staff are going already.

A. A temporary governing body is set up - then a headteacher is appointed. Then the temporary governing body and headteacher set a new staffing structure and may ring fence the jobs on the new staffing structure to the staff in the current schools.

Q. You will still lose good staff who don't want to wait.

A. Some staff would leave anyway, to retire or look for promotion elsewhere, but the number of staff that have previously left due to other proposals are very very low.

Q. You will always get rumours and I have learned five or six people lost their

jobs.

A. We appreciate how stressful this is. However, once a temporary governing body and headteacher are appointed we can progress. The staff are fully consulted with right up until the new structure is put in place. There will be a lengthy document highlighting the processes for this and the job descriptions for the new structure. There is an opportunity for you and trade unions to feed back. By the time you make decisions you will be fully informed.

Q. *Have you seen standards drop in the time leading up to this as people 'jump ship'?*

A. No we haven't. The standards have remained but staff have left for a variety of reasons.

Q. *If we were to make a drastic change in school we would have to research this massively.*

Q. *Can't we use that money to improve existing schools.*

A. Not under the funding criteria.

A. There are also lessons that we will learn by the time this is implemented.

Q. *Will there be a cross of ages like a lower/middle/upper school.*

A. That is down to the school governors and headteacher. We want to give them the chance to use more specialised facilities.

Q. *Is there a training issue because I know a teacher in Porth who is now teaching in the primary level for a maths project.*

A. We don't know those circumstances to comment but the headteacher in Porth must think that this is going to have an impact on the pupils in a positive way.

Q. *The new Head will probably be a Head of a secondary school*

A. No it could be anyone and could end up being nationally advertised.

Q. *Of the leadership distribution in the Rhondda, how many are primary trained and how many are secondary trained?*

A. I don't have that data now.

A. In Tonyrefail, for example, the former deputy head of Tonyrefail Primary is a deputy leader in the new Tonyrefail 3-19.

A. I think numbers should be equitable but the governors would have to decide this to

ensure that there wasn't a gap.

Headteacher - we invested heavily in KS2 when I started as Head and realised that it was too late for our pupils and we have now invested heavily in nursery to ensure we build for the bottom up. I have a passion to say that when a Head is appointed they should have a passion to do the same and be aware of foundation phase.

Q. Would there be a full-time nursery?

A. It will be the same as it is now. RCT will fund 50% of the time in nursery and then it is down to the schools and governing body.

Q. How is the governing body formed?

A. The governing body members that exist on the three schools now will form the 3-16 temporary governing body. The LEA Appointments Panel appoints the LEA, parent teacher and staff representatives from the existing governing bodies of the schools. Once these appointments have been made, the temporary governing body will appoint the Community Governors.

Q. Catchment changes - Gwauncelyn numbers are more and we are losing two schools.

A. It is still parental choice. Gwauncelyn numbers are more but there would be no sixth form should the proposals proceed.

Q. Data on page 38 of the consultation document – 198 children in 2022, 259 in Heol y Celyn = 457; but in the bottom table it is 27 lower than that. Secondary school - if you remove the sixth form pupils then there are 26 children missing in the bottom table. I'm concerned because that affects surplus.

A. The first table is based on current status quo with no catchment changes. The bottom table is demonstrating the catchment changes made.

Q. Won't that be very disruptive if it's the same from years 1 to 6 but in year 7 there are 60 children coming into a new school who have already been there.

A. We have done a lot with transition. The associated schools are heavily involved in transition events to ensure that we minimise this effect and that they feel like it is as much their school as those pupils who were already there. These pupils would have had to transition anyway.

Q. But only half are coming in new rather than all starting new at the same time.

They are then invading the new school

- A. Invading isn't quite an appropriate word. That is why we try to create strong transition links.
- Q. ***Your document says that it is positive that there is a lack of transition for pupils in 3-16 schools - it doesn't seem fair for pupils from other schools.***
- Q. ***It's not true either because once they come here they will have to go to Bryncelynnog for sixth form which is another transition.***
- Q. ***The schools in the Rhondda all closed and started new. That isn't the case here because they will be here already. We will then have Heol y Celyn children moving here and with a new name/badge, it doesn't make those pupils feel welcome.***
- A. I completely agree that we need to ensure this is minimised. We will ensure that we have additional funding to fund some transition events to try and ensure everyone feels welcome.
- A. Headteacher - We work hard to make team Hawthorn and we wouldn't want everyone feeling it is Hawthorn with a new badge.
- Q. ***I am worried that the standards would drop because the two areas are so different.***
- Q. ***Can you set up the governing body three years in advance?***
- A. The main function of the temporary governing body is to appoint a headteacher and thereafter a new staffing structure. We would then be paying someone to appoint people for three years time. It has to be sensible. In terms of senior leadership concerns, we ask in interviews about the whole 3-16 school approach. Some excellent candidates fell short on this and then didn't get the jobs because they didn't look at the structure as a whole. They need to have a buy in from foundation phase.
- Q. ***It's easy for a secondary head to pop into primary schools and read in the news about the importance of foundation phase but I wouldn't be able to comment on the high school side with just popping into a high school for a few months.***
The three heads appointed in the Rhondda were secondary trained.
- Q. ***Page 37 of the consultation document alludes to parental choice being a***

reason for there being such a small surplus in Hawthorn relative to Heol y Celyn which is a great testament to this school. But on page 38 it seems to invert and says that it has 2.2% surplus and Hawthorn has 19.2%. There are links to parental choice and demographics which would hint that there is a much higher birth rate in the Heol y Celyn area.

A. We use the birth rates for this too and some of these are estimates as obviously many of these children aren't born yet.

Q. All of that information should be here because it's information that we don't know. I feel strongly that you need an outsider to come and scrutinise this before it is published.

A. You have asked the question and we can provide that data.

Q. What about the parents who won't ask that question and then think that they don't understand.

Q. My wife and I are strongly in favour of Welsh language provision, but that doesn't seem to be factored into the figures. It might be but I can't see that. If they live in Hawthorn and want Welsh language then they have to send them to Heol y Celyn.

A. A Welsh language survey is used to see where the demand is and we use this to make these decisions.

Q. I haven't been asked that question.

A. Every household where we know that there has been a birth is sent one every two years. But responses are very low.

Q. If responses are low then that is an issue as it may not be representative anyway.

Q. What consideration has been made in terms of road safety? We are working on a three year plan currently.

A. We work closely with Highways on this and I know you have been working with Sustrans on this. What we have done on all our projects is to provide a safe route for pupils coming to the new school. A traffic impact assessment is undertaken to look at all the routes – in Porth for example, zebra crossings, table tops etc. were put in place to provide traffic calming.

Q. There will be more traffic - will that be considered?

A. RCT have always made a commitment to fund this ourselves as 21st Century Schools funding only covers expenditure within the school boundary.

Q. What if it can't be done.

A. We will make it work. We have highway engineers to do this. We would have to undertake a planning consultation if this proposal proceeds. Planning have strict regulations which must be followed.

Q. Why can't you do the planning first?

A. We can't do that because we don't know if the proposal will progress yet. The statutory consultation process has to conclude first. We spend some money commencing initial investigations at risk, such as desktop feasibility studies but we will need to do more work on this in detail should the proposal proceed. We have to look at the whole site.

Q. So you could put up a statutory notice without any provision for traffic? If that was the case we would put an objection in?

A. But that is a planning objection rather than a school organisation objection. The roads are not directly relevant to this consultation.

Q. Can you have a proposal for the roads in January? The community will care about this.

A. We can't give too much information because people will think we are making the decision in advance of the outcome of the consultation.

Q. Children should walk anyway. The volume of traffic will affect the Hawthorn area generally. I understand that they are different issues in terms of the process but we cannot separate them. We are currently strangled at this point in time with the traffic so we need to think about this.

A. We have opened new entrances to Porth for example and that is also an option.

A. We are thinking about this alongside our consultation process and by all means make your comments on this now.

Q. In a consultation period we want as much information as possible to address people's fears. Even if you were to show some possible solutions and not strict plans then we need to have some information.

Q. Whose idea is it to create a through school? If this funding wasn't in place I wonder if this would be happening and I don't see how we would benefit other than facilities?

A. Officers have researched this.

Q. What consideration is made to demolition and noise?

A. This is a high priority. We did this in Y Pant. Safety is paramount and we minimise this by working with the construction companies and the school to keep disruption to a minimum. Construction programmes are planned where possible to ensure the noisiest work is undertaken in the holidays etc.

Q. *Is there a timescale for construction? It's a concern as a parent.*

A. Average timescales are 18 months to 2 years. We often work on live school sites – for example, the new science block in Treorchy; Treorchy primary had an extension block too. Contractors speak to pupils in assemblies to engage them in the construction processes. Any children with additional learning needs who need consideration - the contractor will work around their timetable.

Q. *Is there data on the how they were impacted?*

A. There weren't issues. We have discussions with children and staff about the whole process and the safety of the children are paramount.

Q. *It says in the document that there is no possibility of extending this building. Why as there is plenty of space? So would the extended primary school provision be in two buildings?*

A. It could.

Q. *I'm not sure how that would work because it feels like we are just stealing a few rooms from them.*

A. We will come and look again with surveyors in respect of the final plans. We won't disregard anything when looking at the best solution. The £12m in the budget may end up increasing once we have done our surveys. The whole programme is £168m. If we think this school needs more funding we can ask Welsh Government to revise this. Plans will also be shared with staff to get their opinions.

Q. *If I apply for a job on the new site and don't get it. Would I still get a say on what will happen?*

A. We want to tap into your experience and the building plans would be put in place before the staffing structure.

Q. *What is the criteria to determine if this goes ahead? What weight do the objections carry/ road safety objections? Presumably those putting this forward have a say in the vote?*

A. You could attend that Cabinet meeting if you wanted to.

A. A consultation report is written at the end of the consultation period. Cabinet will consider all of the information and decide whether or not to proceed to the next

stage, namely the issuing of a statutory notice. If a decision to proceed is made, then objections could be made.

Q. Is there a recommendation by officers - e.g this should go ahead.

Q. Would we have an opportunity to put opinions forward in the meeting?

A. No we would have already had your comments and objections by then so Cabinet would decide based on that information which will be contained in the consultation report.

Q. Why was our school chosen? We have reduced capacity to make sure we have the appropriate environment for this school. We previously fought for an extension and failed. Why not merge Heol y Celyn with Parc Lewis?

A. The Local Authority must look at the whole picture for RCT. It's a complicated jigsaw and we look at all school stock. The post-16 provision at Hawthorn High isn't sustainable. We aren't picking on Hawthorn because it's doing badly. We are looking at managing all assets, places and geography. We have to look wider and we know how successful this school is.

Q. When I first saw the proposals I thought that going to one school for your whole education is beneficial. It seems to be two schools that share senior management team.

A. That is up to the school management and staff to make it feel like a 3-16 school.

Q. But if there are some classes over on the other site, the primary element won't interact if they are separate or you would have three year olds going over there in the rain.

A. It's interesting that you took that view. The parents for the Rhondda consultation wanted that segregation.

Q. My main concerns are that my personal aspiration for an integrated site is there but if the primary element is split over two sites then it isn't good for their health and safety or for their attainment.

Q. We don't have any concrete data on these schools but I am leaving here tonight thinking – 'all this disruption and what will change here?'. This stays as this school and they get a new block etc.

A. You don't know that yet. The solutions created on some other schools are very modern and work.

A. We wouldn't want them to be separate.

Q. Would we be at a disadvantage with a refurbishment?

- A. That is why architects are involved. They think creatively about how we do this.
- A. The quality of the refurbishments for example in the new YGG Tonyrefail are the same quality of a new build school.
- Q. *The feel of the school will inevitably go off the lay out. I think it will be good for the Donaldson curriculum, but it's getting the geography of the site right.***
- Q. *We are not all sat here against it but we would like an input and this is where we can ask these questions.***
- A. Yes and you need to ask.
- A. If you speak to the headteachers of the new schools, I'm sure they would say that they have had a huge input to this.
- Q. *Can one of the headteachers come?***
- A. We are hoping to bring some of the new headteachers to the public events, where possible. The headteacher of Ysgol Llanhari came to the previous public events but we now have more headteachers that could come and dispel some myths. The attainment data is too early to comment on but in terms of the running of the school we are hoping to have someone here.
- Q. *Timescale on seeing plans?***
- A. 2022 is the end date but we are hoping to be as flexible as possible between this to try and make the transition as soon as possible, should the proposal proceed. Working back from 2022 we would hopefully have a plan by the end of next year for the buildings.
- Q. *So current staff could have input on what they want?***
- A. Yes but we want to have a standard in accordance with Building Bulletins etc.
- Q. *When would transition start?***
- A. It is in tandem with the staffing structure. We ask that question in interviews because it is for the Headteacher to push on as early as possible with the transition work.
- Q. *If staff are made redundant how will they find out?***
- A. Cabinet is a public forum so anyone can turn up and listen to find out if the proposal is going ahead or not.
- A. If anyone has any issues please come and speak to HR - individual meetings can be arranged as required. There are opportunities for people to look at retirement

and redundancy if that's what they want, but there are other opportunities too. We can look for redeployment opportunities and often that is quite last minute but we will try and sort this out as soon as possible. On previous schemes, in relation to the staff who wanted a position, there were very few staff who didn't get a position.

Q. *Can we have those figures?*

A. Yes and we have the numbers of staff who have been promoted during this process too.

Headteacher - NASUWT have been out and it was a positive meeting for staff.

ET thanked everyone for attending and for their comments.

Meeting ends.

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Notes of a meeting held with the school council of Hawthorn Primary School

Wednesday 14th November at 2:30 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

Present

Esther Thomas, Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services
Lisa Howell, Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Martin Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
Number of pupils present = 14

Esther Thomas (ET) explained that the Council are looking to reorganise some of the schools in Pontypridd. The changes would include new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn, a new Welsh primary school in Rhydyfelin and moving the school sixth forms into larger sixth forms in Bryncelynnog and the college.

ET went into more detail about the proposal that would directly affect the pupils in Hawthorn Primary, as the school would close and become part of the Hawthorn 3-16 School. The pupils would be part of a larger school and would not have to move when they reach secondary school age. ET explained that although the children would be part of one school, the younger pupils would be separate from the older pupils, but would be able to use some specialist facilities in the school such as the P.E hall, science laboratories and ICT rooms from a younger age.

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.

ET asked pupils if they already knew anything about the proposals.

ET explained what the Local Authority did in the Rhondda area last year and that the Local Authority are looking to use new funding for the Pontypridd area.

Q. *Why do you have to close the school?*

A. We have to close the school to create a new 3-16 school. Welsh Government have rules that we have to follow when we want to do something like this and part of that process is for us to close both schools and create a new 3-16 school for the Hawthorn area.

Q. *Where will the new school be?*

A. The new school is going to be here. The buildings are close together now and we will use our map and draw a new red line around the two sites to create one larger boundary for one school. We may build some new elements and remodel some other parts of the school to make it a new school.

Q. How is it going to work?

A. We haven't made any decisions of what the buildings will look like yet because firstly the Council's Cabinet have to agree whether we can do it. The proposal is for the school to have one Headteacher over the whole school. You will be in your own classes with peers of your age. You will have access to the facilities that are in the other school such as science/computer/PE rooms and facilities. You may have some use of that now but as one school you will be able to work together much more. Pupils and teachers will know each other through the whole school.

Q. How many children will there be?

A. The children from Heol y Celyn English medium will come here too. As a whole school the pupil numbers will be very large because that goes from age 3-16. The capacity will be 1,260 for the whole school, but if you were going to split it into primary/secondary phases that would be 540 primary and the secondary element would be 720 from years 7-11. This sounds like a lot compared to the amount of children you see now but it will be similar to how it is now because you will still have the same numbers in your class.

Q. When will we know if the new school is happening?

A. This consultation happens now with you, staff, governors and parents of your school and at all of the other school affected. This will continue until the end of January next year. A report of your views will then go back to the Council's Cabinet and they will decide whether or not to go ahead to the next stage. They will probably make this decision in March next year. If they decide to go ahead with the proposals, we then go to a 'statutory notice' period where everyone can give their views / objections for another month. That is then reported back to Cabinet for them to finally say if we will definitely go ahead with the plans or not. This will possibly happen by the end of April. The new school won't be set up until 2022 so you will probably all be affected by it.

Q. Will we have the same teachers?

A. It is highly likely that you will have the same teachers. There may be teachers who want to retire or move to new schools but a lot of the teachers will probably be the same. The new governing body for the 3-16 school will decide on the staff.

Q. Will we have the same Headteacher?

A. We don't know if it will be the same Headteacher. The governors will decide. It may be, but it may not be.

Q. Will there be loads of children in each class?

A. There won't be loads of children in the same classroom. We don't know how many children will be coming here exactly but it may be easier to organise the school better with more pupils here, and extra classes could be created to accommodate everyone. There shouldn't be more than 30 in one class.

Q. Will the classrooms be bigger?

A. Some of the classrooms here are already lovely and it looks quite new in some places. When we build new spaces within schools there are certain sizes of classrooms that we have to provide. The Building Bulletin book which we use says exactly how big we have to build the classrooms when we build new ones. They won't be small classrooms for you.

Q. Will all the rooms be different?

A. The classrooms are different now. The teachers have their own rooms and decorate them how they want to. If we build new classrooms there are some things that have to be the same, for example we have to put glass panels in the doors, but they are mainly standard classrooms that the teachers are able to make their own with displays etc. We make sure that there is good lighting, ICT infrastructure and a C-Touch board. For younger children they are on risers so the touch board can move up and down for all pupils to reach. There will be different equipment outside and different size tables and chairs etc. for pupils of different ages.

Q. What are the classrooms going to look like?

A. They will be beautiful. You already have a lovely school. Is there anything you would like changed in your classes now?

A. No not really.

A. There will be sinks etc. that are slightly different heights in different classes, tables, chairs, ICT, storage etc. Then the classroom will be filled with your lovely creations.

Q. Where would the classes be in our new school?

A. We don't know the answer to that yet. We are here to get your ideas but we don't know yet exactly how it will look. In a few weeks' time we will bring some surveyors with us who will come and assess what buildings are best to use and what needs to be changed. An architect will draw and design a plan for the new school and see where we can put some new classrooms. I don't think we will need to do too much here but as the primary will be larger we will need to put extra classrooms somewhere. When we have the plans we will bring some drawings for you to see and give us your opinion on.

Q. What new things will we have?

A. New ICT equipment as we mentioned. New toilets, new furniture.

A. It will depend on how the buildings are used too. It depends if your hall is big enough for everyone and there will be lots of new things to accommodate everyone.

Q. *Where will all the equipment be kept?*

A. We try and build in some storage into every classroom. There will be other places in the school where we can build stores for things like health and safety equipment. They need to have specific places to put things. Storage for classes is important for you too. There will be places for everything.

Q. *Are we going to have a second floor?*

A. Again we don't know yet. There won't be one on this block but if we build a new one there may be a second floor. We have built a range of new schools with a single floor and others with two floors because we have a smaller area to build on. We need to make sure you have enough outdoor space to play in. Would you mind if it was one or two floors?

A. Pupil - We want two floors.

Q. *Why?*

A. Pupil - If I am tired I can walk downstairs and wake up a bit.

Q. *Will we have a lift?*

A. If we build two floors then you will definitely have a lift. If it is one floor then you won't.

Q. *Why would you need a lift?*

A. Pupil - For disabled people

A. Well done. We need to think about the future if there are any pupils who need help to access a second floor.

Q. *Will there still be a football field?*

A. Yes we wouldn't take any of your play space away. To be healthy and fit you need places to exercise so the more room we give you to try new sports or exercises the better.

Q. *Will there still be a SAP room - where we talk to the teachers about our feelings and emotions?*

A. That will be down to the teachers to say that they really need to have that for the pupils. We need to make sure the children are happy and as you go through the 3-16 school it is important that you talk.

A. In many secondary schools there are also special spaces for this.

A. We can give you the space but it will be up to the staff to make sure it is used for that. Older children may be able to help too.

Q. What will happen to the swimming pool?

A. It will stay. We have no plans to take it and you should be able to use it during and after school.

Q. What will the canteen look like?

A. What would you like it to look like that is different to how it is now?

A. Pupil - Comfier chairs not benches.
Colourful instead of one boring colour.
Not benches for you to fold out all the time.
Like in high school it is a canteen, not a hall too.

A. We are trying to do that in other schools. We need to have the space on site for outdoor play too. That is why we tend to put the canteen and hall as one shared space. That doesn't mean that you can't advise us on colours or furniture that you want.

Q. What will the food be like?

A. It won't really change.

Q. Will there still be after school clubs?

A. If you have lots of after school clubs now then they will probably continue and we would advise the teachers that they should make sure they have the opportunities to do more.

Q. Will the older children mix with the other children?

A. They might. There are opportunities for the older children to help with you reading etc. If you have older brothers or sisters next door you may get to see them. There won't be older children wandering around where you are as they would be in lessons. Are you happy for the older children to be there?

A. Pupil - Yes as long as they are in their own classes.

A. You would always be safe and have your own toilets. If some of you excel in maths etc. then maybe you can have a lesson with year 7.

Q. Will there be mixed toilets?

A. What do you have now?

A. Pupil - We have separate toilets now but the infants are mixed.

A. Where we have put mixed toilets in for secondary age pupils, you can see into the sink area. Where there are mixed toilets the doors go from the floor to the ceiling to they are private. Lots of people were a bit worried when we did that but they are working very well in the schools they are in now. Bullying and children misbehaving in toilets has got much less.

Q. Will it take 10 minutes to get to the toilet and back?

A. New schools have toilets very close to the classes. That is how we will start the planning, but where we can't do that we will have to ensure that the toilets are close enough.

Q. Will older pupils be in the pupil council?

A. A school council could then be from age 3-16. To make decisions for the whole school you would need opinions from many pupils. There may be smaller groups but that would be down to the staff and Headteacher to decide.

Q. Will older children come to our discos?

A. Do you want the children at your discos? It would be down to the staff. The older children may not want to come. As a whole school council you possibly could decide that. Do you want something for everyone or for just one part?

Q. What about bullying? Will there be more and will it be harder to control? Lots of our children moved from Heol y Celyn because of bullying and now they will be with us. We are worried about this.

A. Is there bullying here?

A. Pupil - No

A. Staff in this school won't tolerate it and we need to manage this so that pupils don't get bullied. Bullying often happens in places where people can't see you. We design buildings so people can't hide in places and bully people. You must always tell a member of staff if you are being bullied. Our priority is for children to be safe.

Q. My brother said there are not adults on the yard in Hawthorn High.

A. There should be people on the yard supervising.

A. Lots of schools have safe places for you to go to. Where there are a mix of ages we have found that pupils become calmer because they are around their younger brothers and sisters etc.

Q. Will they still swear and be nasty like they do in the park?

A. You will have segregated play areas too and you may have play times at different times to minimise this. None of us can eradicate swearing. It is hard to make people stop swearing but the staff will manage this and make sure you are safe.

Q. Are we going to be disrupted when everything is being built?

A. I can't say that there will be no disruption because you are going to be in a school where we may be building other blocks, decorating or demolishing some

spaces etc. I can promise that the construction team are going to put big fences up to keep the staff and pupils separate from the works and they would have a good team on site that would come and visit you and speak to you to explain to you what is going on. If you have issues or complaints your staff will be able to complain and tell the construction people to stop. It will be important for exam time to be quiet so we need to make sure there is excellent communication. The project manager will be familiar to you and anything too noisy or disruptive can be sorted out between your staff and the project manager. We only let builders on our sites that will work with us and listen to us.

Q. *When will they start building? Will it be in the six weeks holidays?*

A. Some work may be in the six weeks holidays, But there would be a project plan for the whole school. Pupils would be able to visit and see how it is being built. We need to make sure you can still learn while it is going on, so no extra days off for you.

Q. *What is the school name going to be?*

A. It will be for the school governors to come up with suggestions based on your opinions and they then recommend the name to the Council. The Councillors will then decide the final name for the school.

Q. *What will the uniform and logo be like?*

A. What would you like it to be?

A. Pupil - Half of ours of half or Heol y Celyn
Red

A. It will be up to the governors and school staff to decide.

Q. *Will we get to see the school before it opens?*

A. Hopefully you will be part of the whole process rather than just seeing it at the end. We can make changes to colour schemes etc. then as it goes on. Pupils could help choose toilet colours etc.

Q. *We know what we would like in our new school. Will we get to have an opinion on the school?*

A. If it is passed we will show you photos of what we have done so far on other schemes and you can help decide.

ET – Thanked all for their inputs and their preparation.

ET - This has been excellent and you have had very sensible questions.

Do you think overall that this is a good or bad thing?

8 = good

1 = not good

5 = unsure.

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Notes of a meeting held with pupils at Heol y Celyn Primary School

Wednesday 14th November at 2:30 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

Present

Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21st Century Schools
Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
21 pupils of Heol y Celyn Primary School (combination of pupils from Welsh and English streams - Years 3/4/5/6)

Introductions

GD asked if the pupils understood what the proposals were and many did.

GD explained the reasons for the proposals as being - to ensure that all pupils would be in modern 21st century schools.

The changes planned to all schools as part of this proposal were outlined as:

- New sixth form in Bryncelynnog for over 400 learners (closing sixth forms in Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman);
- Two new schools for pupils aged 3-16 at Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- More Welsh medium school places at a brand new school on the Heol y Celyn site; Pupils from YGG Pont Sion Norton would also attend this school and it would be all Welsh medium;
- The catchment areas for some schools would change (i.e. which school you would be likely to go to depending on the street where you live could change for some pupils in the future);
- Pontypridd 3-16 School would be Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School together;
- Hawthorn 3-16 School would be Hawthorn High, Heol y Celyn (English medium stream) and Hawthorn Primary School together;
- By 2022 it is proposed for there to be a brand new school building and external play areas on the Heol y Celyn site for Welsh medium pupils;
- English medium pupils from Heol y Celyn school could go to the 3-16 school in Hawthorn which is also having a lot of money spent on it;
- £12m investment at Hawthorn 3-16; plus £10.7m investment at the Heol y Celyn site.

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

GD 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 GD asked the pupils some initial questions:

Q. GD asked whether the pupils understood the proposals.

A. All pupils agreed that they did.

Q. GD asked whether the pupils thought the proposals were a good or a bad idea.

A. Positive responses from pupils

- Children in younger classes will get better facilities and better education.
- Younger brothers and sisters will go to an all Welsh school which will be better as they will be more like the pupils from other Welsh schools when they go to secondary school at Garth Olwg.

GD explained the Council's proposals to also change other schools into completely Welsh medium schools, as pupils are then fully immersed in the Welsh language.

A. Negative responses from pupils

- Will be sad to see the school go.
- Concerns regarding the closure of the special needs class in the school.

GD explained that the special class in the school was proposed to be relocated due to low numbers of pupils in the class. Another class would open in a place where the need was greater.

- Friends in English and Welsh departments help each other learn languages and they won't be able to do this in the new school.

GD recognised that was a very important point and explained that the new schools would be bigger (e.g. 480 plus nursery at the new Welsh school on the Heol y Celyn site), which would give more opportunity to make new friends; have more after school clubs etc.

AR asked what language was mainly spoken in the playground and the majority response given was English.

Questions were then asked by pupils:

Q. What will happen to the teachers in this school?

A. GD explained that teachers would be offered the chance to stay in the school (Welsh department), or teach elsewhere (such as Hawthorn), or they may want to leave.

- Q. *Where would the English department pupils go in Hawthorn?***
- A. AR explained that the proposal was that the pupils from the nursery class through to year 4 would be in the Hawthorn Primary School building and that the pupils in years 5 / 6 / 7 and 8 would be in another building.
- Q. *Will the Hawthorn High summer activities be affected?***
- A. AR explained that these could get better, as the external play areas at Hawthorn may also be improved.
- Q. *Would it be bad to mix teenagers with three year olds as the teenagers drink, swear and smoke?***
- A. GD explained that teenagers should not be smoking and drinking in school and a new school like this would not mix such small children with older children - they would have separate yards etc.
- GD further explained that in the new Tonyrefail 3-19 school, the older pupils help the primary school aged pupils with their reading etc.
- AR added that the pupils can use the secondary school facilities - for science; art; sports; etc.
- GD commented that older children usually set an example to younger children in such a school environment and behave better when there are small children around.
- Q. *Concerned about the walk down to Hawthorn – risky and bad traffic.***
- A. GD explained that safety is a top priority for the Council.
- AR explained that the whole area is surveyed to make sure that the route to school is safe (for example – speed bumps put outside the current school at Heol y Celyn). Many ideas from specialists will look as what is needed to ensure the walk is safe.
- GD added that 97 children living in this area currently already choose to go Hawthorn.
- Q. *What about the traffic, as there will be lots of cars? Also, the ambulance station could be blocked off?***
- A. GD explained that it was not very far, so people could choose to walk. Safety is very important and people will take time to get used to the new arrangements and will work out what time to leave the house, their travel times, etc.

AR explained that turning circles will be created to keep the flow of traffic going whereby parents can drop children off, turn around and then go straight away.

AR also explained that the schools change start and end times so that the secondary age pupils and the primary age pupils start and end at different times. Breakfast clubs also mean that lots of pupils arrive earlier and the numbers of pupils are staggered. After school clubs also help, as different pupils leave at different times (rather than all pupils leaving at the same time).

Q. *If the schools are being knocked down, where will the pupils go to school?*

A. The Heol y Celyn building will stay in place and the new school building will be built near the existing building, so the pupils will be able to see the new building grow.

Q. *Concerns regarding sister starting in school with other pupils that she does not know.*

A. GD explained that lots of events are held to ensure that pupils get to know each other in advance by doing joint activities etc.

Q. *What happens to the houses in the area?*

A. GD commented that these would stay.

AR added that new families often move to go to new school and that prices sometimes go up when a new school is built nearby.

Q. *If the sixth form goes from Hawthorn, will other groups in the school extend? What happens to the sixth form?*

A. GD explained that sixth form pupils could go either to Coleg Y Cymoedd or Bryncelynnog School. The rest of the school would be used for all of the other year groups.

Q. *Why can't we keep the school as it is?*

A. GD explained that the Council want to provide better schools with better facilities and better play areas.

Q. *If parents are separated it will be more difficult to get to Hawthorn - dad needs to get to work and the traffic in Hawthorn will be worse.*

A. Management of the traffic will be looked at as part of the plans.

All pupils were thanked for their questions and the meeting closed at 3:30pm

**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors
at Heol y Celyn Primary School**

Wednesday 14th November at 2:30 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in
the Pontypridd area**

Present

Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Richard Evans (RE), Service Director for Human Resources
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21st Century Schools
Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Kylie Lewis (KL), Governor Support Officer
30 members of school staff and governors
1 Trade Union representative

Introductions from Council officers.

Gaynor Davies (GD) expressed thanks for the pupils' involvement and their really good comments.

GD welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the proposals, 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, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post-16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a

new 3 -16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;

- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn;

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained Secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn);
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog).

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q. *Current parents have already made enquiries to move their children from the English to the Welsh department due to the travel distance to Hawthorn. It is anticipated that more pupils will join the Welsh department in January 2019. What if this increase is beyond the capacity of the new school? It would be a shame if pupils local to the area needed to be transported to another school.*

A. GD explained that admissions criteria would be applied if the number of applications increased above the capacity of the new school.

Q. What is the capacity of the new Welsh medium school?

A. GD advised that there would be 480 in total, a further 100 spaces than is currently available. Capacity will be monitored closely; catchment areas may be reviewed regularly especially with new housing developments in the area. The Authority reviews and undertakes planning of school places on a regular basis, so any issues would be foreseen before they arose.

Q. Would Pont Sion Norton pupils have priority in relation to admissions?

A. GD stated the Authority's admissions criteria would apply. GD pointed out that some pupils within the Heol y Celyn catchment already attend out of catchment schools.

Q. How would the Authority address the traffic issues?

A. AR explained traffic assessments/observations would be undertaken at different times to monitor the traffic flow and make recommendations. The Authority will ensure safe routes for all pupils. Possible that safe pickup/drop off zones would be created. Example cited of £480,000 spent on the Rhondda schemes in relation to safe routes to schools. Planning insist on this also.

Q. How many Heol y Celyn catchment pupils attend Hawthorn Primary?

A. GD outlined that recent data shows that 97 pupils from the Heol y Celyn catchment attend Hawthorn Primary.

Q. What percentage of pupils from this area go to Hawthorn?

A. AR explained that 97 pupils would equate to approximately 40% of the Hawthorn school roll. Heol y Celyn catchment pupils also attend other schools e.g. Parc Lewis (42 pupils from the Heol y Celyn catchment); Cefn Primary (2 pupils from the Heol y Celyn catchment).

Comment from staff/governors - It is possibly due to pupils choosing other schools when Heol y Celyn was not very good and siblings are probably now going to the same 'other' school.

Q. The number of pupils starting at the school in the nursery is now increasing as the school is improving.

A. 23 admitted to Hawthorn and 35 admitted to Heol y Celyn.

Q. Although it would be good to have a brand new school, concerns are that we are losing a school which is part of the community and is bilingual. The splitting of the dual language provision is the biggest concern.

A. GD commented that some pupils had also expressed concerns regarding the possible loss of friendships, however, the new school will still be at the heart of the community. GD advised that the Authority's WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) seeks to review bilingual schools in RCT. GD further added that some of the pupils had expressed that they were keen to attend an all Welsh

medium primary school as they felt that they would then be the same as their peers when they go to a fully Welsh medium secondary school.

Q. Can parents view a 3-16 school?

A. AR confirmed this is possible; on the RCT website there are fly-through videos for parents to view. Pupils have viewed some examples of 21st Century School buildings and the feedback was very positive. Examples will also be shown at the public consultation events in January.

Q. Staff are very worried about their jobs and their futures, especially in the English Department.

A. RE explained the temporary governing bodies would be involved in all appointments for the new schools. The Authority strongly recommends ring-fencing to give existing staff at the schools the first opportunity; any unfilled positions would then go out to external advert. RE acknowledged it is a worrying time for all staff members, however, the Authority has previous experience of school closures and has a good record of helping staff through this process with positive outcomes. Although he cannot promise that all staff will have a job. Some staff may wish to take the opportunity to retire or take redundancy; there are also opportunities for redeployment.

Q. What are the timescales for the proposals?

A. RE advised that if the proposal proceeds there is a two year process to be undertaken before the new school opens.

AR added that if the proposal proceeds, the new temporary governing body would be set up in September 2020 and would be made up of governors on the existing governing bodies of the affected schools. The temporary governing body would appoint the Headteacher and the school structure would then follow.

Q. In the consultation document there is an SEN Unit referenced for Hawthorn. Why is it located there and why is the Unit closing in Heol y Celyn?

A. GD outlined that there is another ongoing/separate consultation to review learning support classes in RCT and whether they are in the correct location throughout the RCT area. There are growing needs in certain areas of learning support. Complex needs provision has a lot of capacity and the number of pupils requiring this provision at Heol y Celyn has reduced over the years.

The Authority is also looking to reduce transition and put provision into the new 21st Century Schools which comply with the Equality Act. Example given of Porth Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4 provision; also Cwmaman Primary – one class is to open there as it is a brand new school and fully accessible.

In the future, there could be provision at Heol y Celyn, but there is no demand at the current time. Reviews of provision are undertaken every few years.

Q. Perhaps some parents would choose to send their children to the new Welsh school as it is closer to their homes, but their children would struggle to cope with the language.

A. GD outlined that every parent has the right to choose the medium of language for their child's education. Exposure at a young age means that children can progress with a language. If pupils experience challenges these would be identified and support provided.

Q. Some parents may, to the detriment of their child send their child to the wrong school.

A. GD stated it is parental choice and places have to be given if there is space in the school. Schools have to be inclusive and make the right decisions for pupils' best interests.

Q. Staff feel the new school will not be a community school due to the larger catchment area. Also, that it will not offer English medium education. Staff are upset about the loss of Heol y Celyn.

A. GD stressed it will be a community school and acknowledged that change is hard to cope with for some people especially as some staff have a long history with Heol y Celyn, however, the Authority wants to provide the best facilities possible for pupils of RCT.

Q. Some staff feel there will be segregation as they will only be using the Welsh language instead of mixing both languages.

A. GD advised that total immersion in the Welsh language is positive for pupils. The Authority feels that the proposals offer the best choice for the majority of pupils. Also, some of the pupils in the Welsh Department at Heol y Celyn had commented that being in a totally Welsh medium school would make them the same as their peers from other primary schools when they move onto their secondary school education at Garth Olwg.

Q. What happens if teachers start leaving Heol y Celyn?

A. GD explained that new schools are vibrant places to work and the aim is to attract teachers to the school, this will create a positive learning environment. The new larger schools will provide opportunities for teachers to work with different age ranges. It is hoped teachers will view this as an opportunity rather than a threat.

Q. Will the community have the opportunity to speak with the relevant officers?

A. NG outlined that an open evening for parents, staff and the community will be held on 22nd January 2019 from 3.00pm to 6.00pm at Hawthorn High regarding the proposed 3-16 school, and on 17th January 2019 in the Rhydyfelin Children's Centre in relation to the Welsh medium proposals. Officers from the Authority will be in attendance and there are various formats for providing feedback.

Q. Will it be a drop-in session?

A. AR confirmed and commented that it will be very informal.

GD thanked all for their attendance and inputs.

The meeting closed at 4:50pm.

Notes of a meeting held with the school council of Pontypridd High School

Monday 12th November 2018 at 2.00 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

Present

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21st Century Schools
Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Catrin Edwards, Head of Transformation and Data Systems
Emma Griffiths, 21st Century Schools
Members of the school council – 13 pupils (Years 7 to 12), plus 2 members of school staff

The Chair of the student council was introduced.

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, the consultation process and timescales relating to the consultation process and the proposals themselves, should they be implemented.

In relation to proposed catchment changes a number of pupils identified themselves as having attended Coedpenmaen or Maesycoed Primary schools, but choosing Pontypridd High School instead of Hawthorn High School for their secondary education.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q. The proposals to reorganise schools are part of a programme called 21st Century schools. What does this actually mean?

A. ET explained that the Welsh Government provide funding along with Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) Council who match the amount to make improvements to schools. ET further explained that surplus places equals wasted money and added that the Council aims to reduce the number of secondary schools and small primary schools due to some of them being too small and/or in poor condition. The Council make decisions whilst looking at the bigger picture.

AR referred to the new curriculum for Wales and the need to 'future proof' schools to provide a suitable learning environment for the 21st Century.

Q. The programme costs £4.7m. Where does all of this money come from?

A. CE explained how local government borrow money, like a mortgage, and pay it back. Welsh Government provide 65% of the funding and the Council provide the other 35%.

Q. What do you mean by a Sixth Form Centre of Excellence?

A. ET advised that this is where there are a viable number of pupils wanting to study each subject, with a wide range of subjects available, the best facilities and staff able to teach up to A-Level. Some pupils are currently travelling during the school day to attend lessons in a neighbouring school which is not ideal.

The pupils identified that there are currently 104 pupils in years 12 and 13 and they have a choice of approximately 20 subjects, therefore, class sizes are small.

Q. Why has Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School been chosen as a Sixth Form Centre of Excellence from 2022 bearing in mind the geographical impact? Also, would there be a dedicated bus, or would pupils be given bus passes?

A. ET advised that Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School has a larger number of pupils with better results from A* to C.

AR added that pupil numbers will be considered and whether a dedicated bus or bus passes were provided would depend on pupil numbers. However, free transport would be provided to pupils living further than 2 miles away.

Q. Consultation document shows Pontypridd High School's results as 100% in one category.

A. CE provided an update on current results data and pupil numbers at Pontypridd High School compared to Bryncelynnog for post-16 pupils which show Bryncelynnog as having better performance levels.

ET reiterated that the LA are not implying that Pontypridd High's 6th form is not good, but there is a need to offer wider subject choices. Only 32% of pupils returned to Pontypridd High School's sixth form, compared to nearly 45% at Bryncelynnog.

Q. Has it been considered that pupils from Pontypridd High may be uncomfortable moving schools and meeting/mixing with new pupils?

A. CE advised that there would be a lot of transition work.

AR added that these activities would be similar to that of the Rhondda Schools which would help pupils in making new friends. The LA want

pupils to be happy in school. Pastoral care is very important and social activities as well as curriculum management is closely looked at.

Q. *Why isn't there a proposal for a 6th form in Pontypridd?*

A. ET explained that pupil numbers in Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High would not be viable to create a 6th form. 250 pupils as a minimum are required. Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High only have 245 combined on present numbers.

Q. *A setting in Pontypridd town centre may be more appealing to retain pupils in the 6th Form.*

A. ET explained that the post 16 funding is not enough to cover the costs of the courses and Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 funding has to be used to 'prop up' 6th form funding.

CE reiterated that Bryncelynnog were not running a deficit budget, however, emphasised that this proposal is not about money.

Q. *The consultation document says that A-level standards at Pontypridd High are poor. Can you tell us how you have come to this conclusion?*

A. CE referred to the All Wales Core Data Set and advised that most schools have high scores for A to E grades at A-Level. However, RCT would like all pupils to have a better opportunity to achieve A-C grades, as these are looked at more when pupils are striving for better universities.

The student council queried the Average Point Score.

CE confirmed that Pontypridd High was the highest. However, this is not a good comparator. AWPS is not a criteria used by Universities for University applications.

The student council commented that Pontypridd High scored more highly than Bryncelynnog on 6 out of 9 comparisons. On 7 out of 9 comparisons Bryncelynnog scored more highly.

ET commented that comparatives with Bryncelynnog is not like with like when Pontypridd provide more key skill courses.

Q. *What research have you done in terms of Pontypridd High School students wanting to go to Bryncelynnog if it became a Centre of Excellence? Would it surprise you to know that hardly anyone wants to go to there?*

A. ET reiterated that the LA are not saying that Pontypridd High is a bad school/6th form. The reason behind the proposal is to alleviate the need for students to travel during the school day which is not viable for the future.

AR suggested that students in Pontypridd High speak with pupils from Tonyrefail, Treorchy, Porth, etc. who have recently gone through a similar situation.

ET pointed out that some LA's have no schools with 6th forms, just tertiary colleges (e.g. Neath).

Q. *Some students always go to college for certain courses but not A-levels. What are the standards like at Coleg y Cymoedd for A-levels?*

A. ET agreed that Coleg y Cymoed are more focused on vocational courses, however, following this consultation/proposals they may offer more/wider selection of A-level courses.

Q. *Would class sizes be larger? Concerns that results may not improve if class sizes were larger.*

A. AR advised that it was hoped that class sizes would be larger and that there would be more post-16 subject choices offered in one location.

Q. *If 200 primary aged children are based on our site, where will they be taught?*

A. AR advised that the LA would work collaboratively with the school to determine what fits best. Options will be considered, for example, the use of the year 7-8 block, reshaping of areas of the site to suit, including separate external play area. Plus the school already has many surplus places.

NG and CE advised that the building was over 30% empty.

Q. *The document says 3-16 at Pontypridd High will take a 'radically different approach' to education. What do you mean by this?*

A. ET referred to the Donaldson Report and outlined the new curriculum – namely six areas of learning.

Q. *What happens in terms of our comments after this meeting?*

A. Minutes taken will form part of the consultation report given to RCT councillors. They will then make the decision whether or not to proceed to the next stage, which would be the publication of a statutory notice.

Q. *When will a final decision be made by the Council?*

A. If the decision to go ahead is made then statutory notices will be issued at the end of February/March 2019.

Objections will be received at this stage. Final decision would be made by elected members after viewing all documentation/evidence.

NG referred to the questionnaire in the consultation document which all were encouraged to complete.

ET thanked all for their attendance and inputs.

The meeting closed at 2:50pm.

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Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors at Pontypridd High School

Monday 12th November at 3:30 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

Present

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21st Century Schools
Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Emma Griffiths (EG), 21st Century Schools
Catrin Edwards (CE), Head Of Service Transformation and Data Systems
Sarah Corcoran (SC), Senior Challenge Adviser
Bethan Davies (BD), Human Resources
63 members of school staff and governors

Introductions from Council officers.

Esther Thomas (ET) credited the school council for their input into an earlier meeting held with them and asked that the Headteacher further extend the Council's thanks to them.

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

Should the proposals be implemented, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post 16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;

- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3-16 school at Hawthorn.

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained Secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog)

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Proposal to remove the 6th form

Q. You are proposing two centres of excellence – one at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and one at Coleg y Cymoedd. What is meant by the term 'Centre of Excellence'?

A. The more appropriate term to use would be '6th Form Centre'. Similar to that in Treorchy where there is a dedicated part of the school for post 16 learners. The aim is to deliver a wide range of subjects in one place hence removing the need for pupils to travel between schools as this is not viable. Neither is the current

breadth of subjects being delivered in individual schools viable. Some LAs do not have 6th forms at all, just tertiary colleges. RCT do not want to do that, but the 6th form numbers are not viable for every school to have a 6th form.

Q. What are the reasons for choosing Bryncelynnog and Coleg y Cymoedd rather than Pontypridd High School?

A. The numbers at Bryncelynnog are more viable. Also, the outcomes are good. Needs of pupils are the main consideration. The staff would be in one location. Bryncelynnog has the highest standards – highest number of pupils – highest pupil retention.

Comment from school - Disagreement expressed with several comments made – quality of provision – data in document not evidenced – standards. Therefore the arguments/points made fail badly.

Q. The document refers to £10million being spent at Bryncelynnog. How will this be spent – one single building or a number of improvements around the school?

A. The LA would look at the school and their needs to meet the new curriculum going forward. The LA would work in collaboration with school staff/governors/students as part of the consultation process.

Q. Would it not be better to carry this out before?

A. Options will be discussed and the proposal designed around the best options - this will form part of the consultation process – the LA cannot pre-empt decisions and has no pre-determined solutions.

Q. If the proposal is not successful could the funding be spent elsewhere?

A. Changes have been made to proposals in the past following consultation – nothing is set in stone.

Q. Evidence in the document is not supporting Bryncelynnog as the 6th form centre of excellence. Pupils would need to travel long distances to attend Bryncelynnog. Is this plan/proposal being considered due to news that 2,000 houses are planned for construction in the area?

A. These houses are not driving this particular proposal.

Q. Why choose Bryncelynnog as they are already in partnership with Y Pant? Why was this not considered when Y Pant building works were carried out? How does Y Pant feel now that they will be involved with a Centre of Excellence? Why is Y Pant not part of this consultation considering they already have a partnership with Bryncelynnog and let Pontypridd pupils stay in the Pontypridd area? Would this not be a better solution rather than make pupils travel?

A. Y Pant can only accommodate pupils within their catchment area.

The Local Development Plan identifies strategic sites in the area, but many have been identified for many years with nothing happening. The Cwm Coke works site is contaminated and needs a lot of Welsh Government investment.

Y Pant can be extended by 200 pupils in the future, if needed, for in catchment demand. The LA need to manage school places across all of RCT and the whole picture has been looked at in relation to these current proposals.

Q. *What happens to the link between Bryncelynnog and Y Pant? Will pupils in Bryncelynnog have to travel to Y Pant for some of their lessons?*

A. Given the numbers, they should not have to travel, as Y Pant has a viable 6th form on its own. It is a possibility though. The school will continue to work with Y Pant and further strengthen links and shared opportunities.

Q. *Has a feasibility study been carried out to consider building a 6th Form Centre in Pontypridd? Couldn't the £10 million be invested in this?*

A. This is a consultation period. The feasibility study would be carried out after the consultation and feed into the final report for Cabinet. There is no available land in Pontypridd and designing a new 6th Form Centre would be very expensive and not sustainable.

Q. *The tone of the document appears to be promoting one school over another – it is not in favour of Pontypridd High School and is giving the wider impression that things are better elsewhere.*

Page 10 of the consultation document refers to the 6th forms at Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School as being less than 250 and with relatively poor educational performance – this is strongly contested.

Misleading statement referencing Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School as being in the third/fourth quartiles in some instances; the same applies to Bryncelynnog in 8 out of 18 instances, yet this is not highlighted.

A. The number of pupils is also taken into account. Both Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School have a combined 6th form of just under 250 pupils. Example given of pupils achieving A* and A grades = 21% at Bryncelynnog; compared to less than 8% at Pontypridd High School. Evidence shows the poor retention rate of Pontypridd High School's 6th form. It is about viable numbers going forward.

Q. *Many concerns strongly expressed by several school representatives that the data in the consultation document is inaccurate. Need to look at trends and take all indicators into account.*

A. The LA is not saying that Pontypridd High School is a poor school. Bryncelynnog is improving and has consistently better results.

Comment from school - Pontypridd High is also improving and references to 'consistently low' and 'worst in Wales' are strongly disputed. Third and fourth quartile positioning is the same for Bryncelynnog, yet Pontypridd High is emphasised. The document is factually incorrect – the data is correct, yet the analysis is wrong.

- Q. The Cabinet report refers to Bryncelynnog as an improving school consistently performing above the Welsh average for A-Level provision. Where is the evidence Bryncelynnog is an improving school?**
- A. Results are going up. KS4 and KS5 data for 2018 evidence this statement.
- Q. Pontypridd High School's results have also improved – these have not been mentioned. The wording has been used to mislead and data used is not factual.**
- A. The LA appreciates it is not easy to hear and appreciates that the school have been working hard. The data is correct.
- Q. Conclusions made from the data are inaccurate. Data does not support the statements made. Decisions are not being justified. This document has already gone to parents/Cabinet Members with inaccurate data included. LA should have made sure information was correct before misleading Members' decisions.**
- A. A final decision has not been made. The only decision made is the decision to consult which is what this period is.
- Q. What does the LA think of the provision in Coleg y Cymoedd now (after the £40 million new build)? They were in a partnership with Cardinal Newman and the school has now withdrawn from the agreement.**
- A. In terms of vocational pathways, the college is a good choice. They are an improving college and ESTYN have recognised this and they have invested in new A Level teachers.
- Q. Does the Director of Education have any influence on Coleg y Cymoedd?**
- A. Coleg y Cymoedd have a different management structure but the LA is represented on the board and is aware that the college's results have improved this year.
- Q. A-Level results would have included Cardinal Newman pupils.**
- A. This is not correct, as establishments can only report results against where the pupil is actually registered.
- Q. What evidence can be produced to show that Coleg y Cymoedd results have improved?**
- A. An inspection has been carried out.
- Q. Isn't the fact that Cardinal Newman has withdrawn after three years from Coleg y Cymoedd proof that this type of agreement does not work?**
- A. Pupils following vocational courses deserve the same opportunities/options. Not all LA's in Wales have 6th forms still forming part of their secondary schools. 6th

form provision is vocational as well as A-Level and the college offers a different pathway.

Q. *In Coleg y Cymoedd only 3% study for A-levels. This is not a Centre of Excellence. Pontypridd High School could be a Centre of Excellence. Concerns expressed regarding Coleg y Cymoedd not publishing results.*

A. The school does not have the pupil numbers to have a viable 6th form.

Q. *Children in college don't have the same level of support.*

A. The LA cannot comment for the college.

Comment from school - It shouldn't be an option in the document then.

Comment from LA - 67% of Year 11 pupils chose not to return to Pontypridd High School.

Q. *Pontypridd as an area has a high volume of traffic which could add an hour onto the day due to travelling.*

A. Some pupils (e.g. those in the Hawthorn area) would have a shorter distance to travel to Bryncelynnog than if they had to travel to Pontypridd High.

The school summarised their concerns:

- Questions about the data analysis in the consultation document.
- Questions about standards in the college – Estyn report refers to the need for improvements in A-Levels.
- Questions regarding the 6th form numbers in the consultation document.
- What is a viable 6th form? Where does the 250 pupils figure come from?
- The consultation document states that the combined 6th forms of Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School are 245 pupils with 44 post-16 courses of under 5. Where did these figures come from? There are only 6 post-16 courses at Pontypridd High School with 5 pupils or less.

A. 6th form numbers are calculated from funding levels data, SIMS returns and timetables.

Comment from school - Consortium working is used to make classes viable.

A. Pontypridd High School is running at a £500,000 deficit which could increase by a further £100,000 next year.

Comment from school - No-one is disputing the need to review 6th form provision in Pontypridd. What is disputed are the options which have been put forward.

Q. Concerns expressed regarding the language used in the consultation document stating that pupils ‘will transfer’ to Bryncelynnog. What happens if students choose not to go to Bryncelynnog? In a survey carried out with 900 students only 4 said they would possibly go.

A. Pupils’ decisions cannot be pre-determined, but similar discussions/conversations took place with Porth/Ferndale and Tonypandy (Nant Gwyn) however it largely resulted in pupils choosing to go with the alternative proposals made.

Q. Pupil voice is being disregarded.

A. Pupils opinions are not disregarded, they all form part of the consultation and will be included in the consultation report.

Q. Do we know of the numbers in Tonyrefail School and has it made the proposal financially viable?

A. 50% of pupils from Ferndale’s Year 11 chose to go to Tonyrefail’s 6th form.

Comment: Bryncelynnog is anticipated to have a 6th form of 388 comprising:

- 105 pupils from Pontypridd High
- 178 pupils from Bryncelynnog
- 105 pupils from Hawthorn High

Proposal to relocate primary school

Q. Page 7 refers to a radically different education – what is meant by this?

A. Professor Donaldson’s report refers to the ability for schools to share staff between phases and building up relationships with pupils at all key stages. Also, being better able to cater for more able and talented pupils.

Q. The provision of transition is challenging. Would any additional funding be available, particularly in relation to schools which are not part of the 3-16 school?

A. This is very much in the thinking of the 3-16 and 3-19 schools that have been established to date and would be supported and organised by the headteacher of the receiving school. Transition was looked at closely in relation to the Rhondda and Tonyrefail schools and transition events continue. During the setup of existing through schools, opportunities were looked at and funding provided to support.

Q. If the Year 7/8 block was used, would three new DT rooms be provided elsewhere?

A. The teaching environment is important. Remodelling works etc. would be investigated once a decision had been made. All areas of the buildings and the overall requirements of the school would be looked at, taking into account the removal of the 6th form and the space that would create.

Road safety measures

Q. Road safety measures are needed and consideration needs to be given to the number of cars accessing Pontypridd High School. The £4.7 million could end up being spent on a road programme, not on the school.

A. A full traffic impact assessment will be carried out and this is separately funded. Any road safety measures outside the school site would be separately funded.

Q. Are Coedpenmaen aware there will be no free transport provided to Pontypridd High if the catchment changes?

A. They would be aware and this would be the case (i.e. no free transport) if they live within 1.5 miles of Pontypridd High School.

Q. Is transport provided to Bryncelynnog, or just the nearest centre?

A. Transport would be provided to the nearest centre offering the subject choice, if the pupil lives over 2 miles away.

Q. Has any consideration been made to create a 6th form facility in Pontypridd town centre – suggestions made of possible locations including – the Old Girls Grammar School which is owned by the University and a large area of land behind the former Pontypridd lower school site at Tyfica Road. Only an office block type structure would be needed, no external play areas would be needed for the 6th form.

A. The former Girls Grammar School is part of the University and the site at Tyfica road is simply too small. We cannot build an office type structure as we need facilities to accommodate the curriculum and comply with Building Bulletin Guidelines for school facilities. This simply would not be an economical or physical option.

Human Resources

Q. What is the process for appointing staff?

A. Initially a temporary governing body would be appointed. Then a new headteacher would be appointed. It would be their responsibility to develop a staffing structure. There is a Managing Change document which outlines how the structure would be put in place. Trade Unions are also consulted with/involved. Decisions of the temporary governing body cannot be pre-determined, but the posts are most likely to be ring-fenced for staff in the existing affected schools. It would be a top-down appointment process starting with the senior leadership roles. Staff can apply for many jobs. Some staff may express an interest in leaving/ retiring etc. and figures can be provided on a without prejudice basis. Human Resources and Trade Unions would be available for advice. The best time to meet would be when the structure was out.

Q. What is the timeframe?

- A. Working back from 2022 – the temporary governing body would need to be set up from September 2020 – this would comprise of existing governors of Pontypridd High and Cilfynydd Primary Schools.

Protected salary arrangements discussed. These costs would be picked up by the LA, not the school. Protection would be one grade only and there is no protection on hours.

Q. During previous school re-organisations were some staff left without jobs?

- A. A small minority were offered re-deployment into other schools in RCT. RCT will make every effort to ensure every employee who wishes to remain employed gets the opportunity to remain, however that cannot be guaranteed.

Q. If not successful in retaining a post will redundancy be offered?

- A. If there is a compulsory redundancy situation, employees who are 55 years old or over would also get release of their pension (without detriment). Human Resources staff will be available for further discussions in the future.

Summary provided by the school:-

- Change recognised.
- Pontypridd High School is a good school with a lot to offer.
- The options for the 6th form are not accepted for the following reasons:-
 - Data analysis is wrong/misleading.
 - Geographical location/distance to Bryncelynnog does not work (the schools have tried to work together before).
 - The college is vocationally strong however the level of success at A-level is not known.
 - The primary school proposal is not objected to.
 - More discussions are required in relation to options in this area for 6th form provision, especially in the town of Pontypridd.

ET thanked all for their attendance and the meeting closed at 4:45pm.

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Notes of a meeting held with pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton

Tuesday 20th November 2018 at 2.30 pm

Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area

Present

Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Team
Non Morgan, School Organisation and Governance Team Leader
Number of pupils present: 9

Introductions

GD asked if the pupils understood what the proposals were and many did.

GD explained the reasons for the proposals as being - to ensure that all pupils would be in modern 21st century schools.

The changes planned to all schools as part of this proposal were outlined as:

- New sixth form in Bryncelynnog for over 400 learners (closing sixth forms in Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman);
- Two new schools for pupils aged 3-16 at Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- More Welsh medium school places at a brand new school on the Heol y Celyn site; Pupils from YGG Pont Sion Norton would also attend this school and it would be all Welsh medium;
- The catchment areas for some schools would change (i.e. which school you would be likely to go to depending on the street where you live could change for some pupils in the future);
- Pontypridd 3-16 School would be Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School together;
- Hawthorn 3-16 School would be Hawthorn High, Heol y Celyn (English medium stream) and Hawthorn Primary School together;
- By 2022 it is proposed for there to be a brand new school building and external play areas on the Heol y Celyn site for Welsh medium pupils;
- English medium pupils from Heol y Celyn school could go to the 3-16 school in Hawthorn which is also having a lot of money spent on it;
- £12m investment at Hawthorn 3-16; plus £10.7m investment at the Heol y Celyn site.

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

GD 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 GD asked the pupils some initial questions:

Q. GD asked whether the pupils understood the proposals.

A. All pupils agreed that they did.

Q. GD asked what the pupils liked about the proposals?

A. Pupils listed the following:

- If the pupils come together there is an opportunity to create new friendships.
- There will be more after school clubs with more staff and more pupils.
- Brand new equipment.
- A flat yard. Pupils can play football.

GD explained that breakfast clubs can also be established.

Q. GD asked if there were any concerns regarding the proposals?

A. Pupils explained that they had undertaken a questionnaire with pupils and the outcomes were that some were worried about making new friends and losing staff members, but on the whole there were no major concerns.

GD explained that there will be lots of opportunities to make new friends and that pupils may have more friends as they progress to the secondary school.

Q. GD asked the pupils their opinion on how the consultation is being undertaken?

A. Pupils suggested the use of iPad and/or group discussions.

The pupils were then given the opportunity to ask questions.

Q. How many pupils will be attending the new school?

A. The school will have 480 places for reception to Year 6 pupils and then a further 60 places for nursery pupils. There will be more staff, which could mean more clubs can be offered.

Q. What will be the name of the new school?

A. This will be discussed with pupils, the community and staff. It will be for the school governors to come up with suggestions based on your opinions and they then recommend the name to the Council. The Councillors will then decide the final name for the school.

Q. *Ysgol Evan James is named after a person. Could we name the new school William Edwards after the man who built the bridge in Pontypridd?*

A. Pupils will be able to give their opinions on the name of the school.

Q. *What will the new uniform be?*

A. Pupils will be able to give their opinions regarding any new uniform.

Q. *What staff will be in the new school?*

A. The school will be larger and the Local Authority will ensure a process where current staff can apply for positions in the new school.

Q. *Will there be a big yard?*

A. There will be a grassed area and a large yard. The new school will be built on the Heol y Celyn site and once completed the old school building will be demolished, making way for more playing facilities including a Multi-Use Games Area.

Q. *Will the new school be ready by 2022?*

A. If the proposal is agreed, yes. A number of new schools have been built and completed on time.

Q. *Will school times stay the same?*

A. School times will need to be discussed by the temporary governing body and new Headteacher.

Q. *Will there be a fence to separate senior pupils?*

A. Some schools have a fence, some have a drawn line marking out the area, but the nursery will have their own soft play areas.

Q. *What new facilities will be in the new school?*

A. The Local Authority will improve the standard of all facilities, internally and externally. There will be new technology and IT equipment, a heart space, a new hall and dining area and lots of opportunities for outdoor play and learning.

Q. *Will there be enough resources for everybody?*

A. Everything will be brand new.

Q. Why chose the Heol y Celyn site?

A. The Local Authority look at the current school sites and review the condition of the buildings and surplus places. We also look at the needs of the community and if there is a high demand for Welsh education, the Local Authority needs to meet that need. We are looking to give more pupils the opportunity to learn through the medium of Welsh. We want to provide better opportunities for everyone and the Heol y Celyn site is a great site of a really good size to build a new school.

Q. Will there be a Heol y Celyn football team versus a YGG Pont Sion Norton football team?

A. No there will be one school, one team, in a new community.

Q. In the Eisteddfod now there are different schools competing. Will we be competing against Heol y Celyn?

A. No, you will be one big team in the new school, competing against other schools.

Q. Will there be a new School Council and Eco Council in the new school?

A. Yes. The new Headteacher will work with staff and pupils to establish a new School Council and a new Eco Council.

Q. The history of both schools needs to be remembered and maintained

A. This is important. The schools may want to work on project, for example, creating memory books.

Q. Will there be a School Hall?

A. Yes and in new schools we create a heart space.
GD showed pictures of Cwmaman Primary School and the heart space which incorporates break out areas for multiple small group activities.

GD thanked the pupils for their questions and for their excellent input.

**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors at
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton**

Tuesday 20th November 2018 at 4:00 pm

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the
Pontypridd area**

Present

Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Sophie Nicholls, Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
Non Morgan, School Organisation and Governance Team Leader
Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools
29 members of school staff and governors

Introductions

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

Should the proposals be implemented, the Council seeks to:

- Develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw;
- Create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- Improve and increase Welsh Medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools, to better meet and match the demand for school places;

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post 16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3-6 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;

- Closing Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn School and creating a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh Medium Primary School to be constructed on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh Medium at Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3–16 school at Hawthorn;

Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the three LA maintained secondary schools by:

- Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
- Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog)

It is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

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 early 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.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

Q. *The nursery provision is approximately 60 places - would they be in the main building or in the centre that already exists in the site next to the school?*

A. In the main building.

Q. Regarding special needs, will there be a unit attached to the school where staff could go and teach those children or discuss the needs of those children. I think a unit would benefit the children, staff and parents.

A. There are 47 learning support classes across RCT and we do review these on a regular basis to ensure we have the right provisions. In some Local Authorities there will be a special Learning Support class in Welsh medium schools and as part of the WESP we review this. The last evaluation showed that there wasn't sufficient demand to meet the need for this. We also try to future-proof any settings we create so where possible we try to develop cross-phase provision. As part of this proposal there is no consolation for a specific provision, but we try to ensure that there is a room designated that we could use for this in the future if the demand is there. Centrally located provisions are ideal and we will continually review this.

A. Part of the grant conditions are for a fully inclusive school. There will be a building that is completely adaptable for any child going in and it will be completely accessible.

Q. In Cwmbach there is a setting called 'Rainbows' and the school can use it to take advice from specialist staff and it prevents going through the long procedures.

A. The 'Rainbows' setting is an independent provider who rents the space near the school there. One of the things that has been raised is wrap around care – this has been brought up in this consultation process and we are looking at this. We are separately consulting on Additional Learning Needs (ALN) proposals in addition to this consultation. In terms of the Welsh medium sector there is a separate budget for this and early years intervention for ALN and we agree with this.

Q. Time-scales for this. If the school will open in 2022 can you take us back from there to show the process from the endorsement from the Local Authority (LA) and then to the opening of the school in terms of staff and governors etc.

A. Should the proposal be approved, we would set up a temporary governing body and representation would be decided by the LA appointments panel. Only current governors of the affected schools can apply for a position on the temporary governing body. Once established, the temporary governing body would appoint the headteacher and then a new staffing structure for the school would be created by the headteacher and the temporary governing body. The temporary governing body would also be responsible for organisation issues such as uniform, school name proposals etc. We would encourage them to consult with pupils on this too.

A. We look to start the recruitment process at least two years prior to September 2022. It does take a while to go through the process but once the headteacher is appointed, the LA will work with them on the structure. The positions are usually ring-fenced to current staff in the first instance and if we positions cannot be filled then they are advertised externally. We are currently doing this successfully in Garth Olwg. Another technical point is that both schools close, therefore all staff become

redundant. Those staff who want to take voluntary redundancy or retirement are therefore able to do that. We try and do this as soon as possible to ensure you as staff know where you are. If you are unsuccessful we approach other schools in RCT to try and create a bump redundancy if there are other schools where people are looking to retire etc. There are many processes we can follow to support you through this time.

Q. Are jobs only advertised internally?

A. We recommend that the governors do that, however, it is for the governors to make that decision. So far all schools have done that.

Q. When would the head be appointed? Would they be the head of the new school and the current one?

A. No they are just the head of the new school. There is a lot of work involved and the headteacher would be heavily involved in the design of the building too.

A. The consultation will be running for a while. It takes about 18 months for various processes to happen and then the construction takes place. You will be heavily involved in this. We would ideally like to start building in 2020. There would be approximately 18 months of construction on site.

Q. Pupils won't move until 2023 then?

A. No the build will hopefully be ready by June 2022 and then they would move in September 2022.

Q. We deal with child protection issues now daily and I would like a child protection officer based on site. Will this happen?

A. The governors and headteacher will decide the staffing structure and that goes out to consultation to you as staff. In the past structures have been changed and then the structure is appointed to.

A. The beauty of a larger school is that you have got more staff who could specialise in certain areas.

Q. Yes and for ALN etc. we need to make sure there is someone looking at this because it will be a big school.

A. The new ALN reforms show that this could be a leadership role in new schools too.

Q. The quality impact assessment online says – 'As the proposal for Pont Sion Norton is the relocation and expansion of the school, the staff of Pont Sion Norton will stay with the school and will be extended'.

A. This has been revised since this.

Q. *It is in the equality assessment area and is on the website. Why has it been changed?*

A. There have been lots of discussions and we have looked at this and decided it will be fair and equitable to all to close both schools and we want to build this into the new larger school. As part of previous proposals we have done this and only two people haven't had jobs in the new schools.

A. We are trying to be equitable to the Welsh area of Heol y Celyn too.

A. If people want to finish, they are able to leave and retire. If we didn't close both schools we would have to say that people could not retire.

Q. *2022 is when the new curriculum will happen and 2020 is the ALN reforms. Education in Wales is changing dramatically. During a period of disruption like this how do you mitigate this against the advent of the new curriculum?*

A. Some of our schools are not fit for the 21st Century. By building the new school we are able to try and future proof this school and ensure that the digital technology is current and that the learning spaces are flexible enough for the new curriculum. It could be argued that this is a perfect time to do this and shape the school for the new curriculum. In terms of mitigating this, we have a large team who specialise in different areas who can help make this a smooth process. All projects have been delivered on time, except at Tonyrefail due to a listed building and the associated issues that has brought. We need to ensure that teaching and learning are at a high standard and that there is no disruption to this. This school will continue to operate here meanwhile.

Q. *We have already started speaking to staff at the Welsh department of Heol y Celyn to ensure we are on the same page in terms of the Welsh Medium education in the new curriculum.*

A. We design new schools to meet the new curriculum. We are asking challenging design questions and we are pushing architects to give us more information to ensure that schools are future proofed for this.

Q. *Are there any proposals to improve the traffic situation?*

A. A robust traffic impact assessment is undertaken and any traffic calming measures required will be put in place and any recommendations made will be met. Some schools have turning circles etc. to minimise the time parents are parked on site but we will be researching this.

A. This will also be a planning condition and we need to ensure it is safe for pupils and that there are enough spaces. We look further than just Holly Street to ensure that pupils also get on their school buses safely.

Q. Does the money for the school take into account these links or are there additional funds?

A. This is additional money to create safe routes and we have done this with £440,000 in Porth. This will be undertaken for all of the schools involved in this proposal and we fund this from the Council's core capital funding, as pupil safety is of paramount importance to us.

Further information:

You can still submit any queries online for this and there will be an event in January for yourselves and the community.

You can also e-mail the school planning email address and we will answer your queries.

All were thanked for their input and attendance and the meeting closed.

Appendix 4

Notes of meeting with Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 19 December 2018 at 5.00 pm at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park. Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-

Councillor S. Rees-Owen (Chair)

Councillor W Lewis Councillor J Brencher
Councillor A Calvert Councillor H Boggis
Councillor M Griffiths Councillor G Jones

Officers in attendance

Mr C Hanagan, Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services
Mr P Nicholls, Head of Legal - Litigation, Planning & Environment, Community & Children's Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Ms A Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools
Ms S Nicholls, Graduate Officer
Ms L Howells, 21st Century Schools Officer

26 Declaration of Interest

The following declarations of personal interests were declared in matters pertaining to the agenda:

(1) In accordance with the Code of Conduct Co-opted Member Mr J Fish declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 4 Scrutiny engagement in 21st Century Schools Modernisation Proposal, as he is a parent governor at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School also a Chair of Governors at Maesybryn Primary School. I believe that my personal interest is not prejudicial and in the event these plans are implemented I will no longer be a parent governor.

27 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillors A Davies – Jones, S. Evans, J. Davies, H. Fychan, M. Powell, G. Stacey and Co-Opted Voting Member N. Crowley.

28 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 21st November 2018 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

29 School Holiday Enrichment Programme Update (SHEP)

The Head of 21st Century Schools and the 21st Century School Support Officer

presented the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with the School Holiday Enrichment Programme report.

Members were informed that the report provides information on the provision of the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) (also known as the 'Food and Fun Programme') that was delivered over the summer holiday period of 2018 in four primary schools and one special school, namely;

- Genboi Community Primary
- Heol y Celyn Primary
- Maerdy Community Primary
- Penywaun Primary
- Ysgol Hen Felin

The Head of 21st Century Schools explained the background of the School Holiday Enrichment Programme. It was explained that at the SHEP Wales 2017 'food and Fun' National Event held on 30th November 2017 a keynote speech delivered by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Mark Drakeford AM, confirmed the allocation, in the draft budget of £500,00 per year for 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 to support the further development of the SHEP across areas of social deprivation in Wales.

Members were informed that following on in December 2017, the Council submitted a completed match funding application form to the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to deliver the four primary schools outlined in 1.1 of the report.

The Head of 21st Century Schools explained that in early February 2018 the WLGA informed the Council that the match funding application had been successful. Then subsequently in late February 2018, the WLGA contacted the Council requesting the submission of a further match funding application in order to deliver the SHEP in special schools over the summer holiday period of 2018. A further match funding application was submitted to the WLGA and in April 2018 the WLGA informed the Council that the match funding application had been accepted.

The Head of 21st Century Schools informed Members of the delivery of SHEP and its evaluations. It was explained that the provision of the programme has supported some of the most vulnerable young people in the County Borough and provided much needed support during the school summer holidays and this gained positive feedback from both pupils and parents.

The Chair thanked Officers for their hard work in providing the excellent provision for the families that need the service the most and opened the meeting up for Members questions and observations.

A Member commented on what was a pleasing report they had in front of them and asked for clarification on some of the figures within the report.

Members asked how schools were selected and what criteria was used in selecting pupils for the project. It was explained that the schools that were selected were based on the high percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. In respect of the criteria for pupil selection, this was on a first come first serve basis but all pupils on free school meals were automatically given priority.

A Member commented that there are high levels of poverty within RCT and

asked Officers if they had reviewed whether there were any other programmes going on in these areas with voluntary sector, church involvement, etc. and had we considered this as an extension of the programme. It was explained that Council currently works with our Children's Services Team and Barnardo's and vulnerable families and agreed that this would be a good idea for the future to involve the wider community.

A Member enquired whether the match funding by the Council had been taken from the correct budget. The Member asked would it have been more appropriate to come from the budget of Children's Service rather than Education. It was explained that the match funding comes from the catering budget and some suppliers even donate free food.

A Member enquired on the numbers of pupils that took up the offer of SHEP compared with the previous year. It was explained that at Penywaun Primary School the numbers had doubled and the other schools had increased, however Heol y Celyn numbers were static.

The Chair asked what could be done to expand parental involvement and make it more inclusive. Officers explained that feedback from parent was overall a very positive experience and in the future we would look at expanding the programme with a cluster approach. Parents would be invited in to undertake food and cooking sessions such as preparation of healthy meals and cooking to a budget.

After further in depth discussion Members **RESOLVED**:

- To Acknowledge the content of the report
- Thank officers and staff for their hard work in delivering the scheme.
- To receive additional reports at a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

30 Scrutiny Engagement in the 21st Century School Modernisation

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 21st 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 21st Century Schools proposals being considered by the Council as part of Band B Programme.

It was explained that on the 20th September and the 3rd 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 21st 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.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services took Members through the next consultation process in respect of the Greater Pontypridd Area in the same way as the Cynon Valley Proposal.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained to Members that their views are sought in relation to the School Organisation Proposals for the Pontypridd Area.

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 following proposals:

- To develop post 16 education at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg Y Comoedd, Nantgarw;
- To create two new 3-16 schools in Pontypridd and Hawthorn;
- To improve and increase Welsh medium primary provision by building a new school on the former site at Heol y Celyn, which will incorporate the former provisions at both Heol y Celyn and YGG Pont Sion Norton;
- To amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and the 6th form catchment of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive Schools to better meet and match the demands for school places.

These changes will be achieved by:

- Closing the sixth form of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High, School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transferring the post 16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Natgarw. For those students who opt for Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College,

Cardiff.

- Closing Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and creating a new 3–16 ‘all through’ school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School.
- Closing Hawthorn High School and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and creating a new 3-16 ‘all through school’ on the site of the current Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Closing Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and opening a new Welsh medium primary school to be constructed on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School. The pupils educated through the Welsh medium at Heol y Celyn Primary School will transfer to the new school and the Heol y Celyn pupils educated through the English medium will transfer to the new 3–16 school at Hawthorn.
- Amending the catchment areas for pupils aged 11-16 of the LA maintained secondary schools by:
 - Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd which is part of the catchment area of Maesycod Primary School to the new 3–16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently Hawthorn)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn (currently Bryncelynnog).

It was explained that the proposals are interdependent of each other and should they be implemented it is proposed that all changes will be in place by September 2022.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services took Members through 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 view on the Greater Pontypridd Proposal which, as indicated, will be recorded and because this is a consultation it may or may not be reported back to Cabinet when they received when they receive the wider consultation feedback.

The Chair once again thanked the Officers for the overview of the proposal and reiterated that the meeting does not have the jurisdiction to make any decision, but provides an important opportunity to comment on the proposals and for the observations of Members to be reported back to Cabinet when they receive the wider consultation feedback.

Members were invited to put their views and comments in relation to the following points.

The of development of post 16 centres of excellence based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw investing £10m in new sixth form provision at Bryncelynnog

A Member commented that she totally understood the argument for a post 16 and a sixth form provision for all however felt that consideration need to be given as to the location of the build of the sixth form provision. It was felt

communication with Transport for Wales and the wider area of Pontypridd should consider the best option for where the pupils should go to school. The Member felt that Pontypridd would be the best area and not the area of Beddau where the proposed sixth form of Bryncelynnog is set.

In replying to the Member, Officers explained that we look at the demand for 6th form places and Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School are low in numbers compared to Coleg Y Cymoedd. The college provides an alternative choice which many young people are exercising that choice and learners will be provided with transport to the nearest college. It was explained that outcomes are strong in Bryncelynnog and are higher than in the other settings.

Co-opted Member thanked the Chair for the opportunity to speak. Before he asked his first question the Co-opted Member commented that he would like to remind Members of an important tenet of this committee. We have always prided ourselves in putting the lives of children and young people at the forefront of our challenges and we must ensure that the Authority does not lose sight of the fact that the lives of pupils, parents and staff that will be affected by these proposed changes.

Co-opted Member put his first question to the Officer, which was as follows:

This is comprehensive plan for the Council. As I understand it is based on meeting Band B requirements to secure funding for school and educational development and is in part informed by forecasted changes in population demographics, planning development as well as being supposedly justified by existing educational attainment outcomes. As I understand it even in the event the plans are in the future delivered upon parents and pupils will still have choices e.g., Post 16 pupils can chose where they wish to receive their education. Now whilst I am all for parental choice surely we must ensure that this investment produces deliverables not only in terms of cost efficiency but in terms of educational outcomes. How are we going to ensure these outcomes are achieved if the vagaries of choice could have a considerable impact?

In reply, Officers explained that although the proposals involve the sixth form provisions being removed there is still excellent provision within Bryncelynnog and Coleg y Cymoedd and there is scope for improvement and we need to provide pupils with the best possible chance to succeed. Officers support and challenge on a regular basis and we have a good working relationship with the college. It was explained that the Chief Executive sits on the college board and data is made available and outcomes are regularly reviewed and challenged. Bryncelynnog have shown strong and positive outcomes.

The second question put forward by the Co-opted Member was a supplementary question, what plans are being developed to support schools and importantly Governing Bodies to deliver on the proposal and in particular with regards to school choice. It was explained that larger numbers in 6th forms allows the school to enhance the range of subjects available. Bryncelynnog has a good reputation and good leadership and an enhanced offer of subject choice will be available to all students.

With regards to parental choice a Member asked that whilst capacity exists in

Bryncelynnog children attending Gwauncelyn Primary will still be able to choose the existing secondary provider as opposed to that proposed under the boundary changes and when is it forecast this would end? In addition, would pupils receive pupil transport for this choice or only those attending Hawthorn?

It was explained that the School Admission Code would be implemented and pupils within the new catchment would receive transport to Hawthorn if eligible under the Transport Policy but pupils out of catchment would not receive transport.

With regards to Transportation the Co-Opted Member asked how will pupils from deprived areas such as Glyn Coch and Ynysybwl have true choice at post 16 when travel time and more importantly cost will be a significant factor. What plans if any are being considered for pupil transport? Is the WG School Transport Policy to be applied strictly or is discretionary travel being considered? If so, what does this look like, for how long and what are the costs the Authority?

It was explained that if these proposals are agreed we would amend the catchment area of both Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools for post 6th form provision.

Another Member of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee asked why are we taking away the option for Cilfynydd and Hawthorn 6th form? Could you explain the reason for this? Offices explained that numbers are small in both schools and because class sizes are small, there is a greater cost to the schools and limits the choice of A level subject available to students.

A Member thanked officers for the opportunity to be part of the consultation. She agreed that there was a need for change however felt that all aspects needs to be considered. It was asked if pupils required faith education schooling would pupils want to go to St David's Sixth Form in Cardiff, which would be sharing facilities with other authorities? The Member felt that there should be a secondary school within their area. We need to build on a model that is working to increase higher retention rates. We need to look at a whole range of factors.

It was explained that currently Hawthorn, Pontypridd High and Cardinal Newman work in partnership with Coleg y Cymoedd.

A Member commented that a child that attends a sixth form school setting goes there for support, familiarity and a good relationship with staff within their community, by removing the sixth form out of their local environment pupils may feel isolated and we could end up with there being no relationship with staff or other pupils which could have an effect on the young person's wellbeing.

Officers explained that the colleges have excellent pastoral services and pupils are well supported.

Members stated that a 6th form college within the Pontypridd Area would be a better site as it is a university town and it would connect wider valleys and beyond.

Transport links need to be looked at as students travelling to Bryncelynnog would be limited. The Member felt if the building was in the centre of Pontypridd it would be more beneficial for both pupils and economy.

Officers explained that data shows that pupils are making decisions to leave the local schools. There is a significant percentage of learners going to college and outcome data shows that outcomes from the college are positive. There is a willingness to collaborate the current situation hasn't worked we need to offer what meets the pupils needs.

Officers explained that in relation to transport from key areas, pupils would have bus passes, taxis. Transport Service would look at the route. Officers reiterated that pupils are making their own decisions and choice as to where they want to study at sixth form.

The Co-opted Member asked a question with regards to the post 16 education at Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw, what accountability if any will they have to this Authority for their outcomes and what governance will be in place? I ask this as I understand the majority of effected post 16 leavers at Pontypridd and Hawthorn have given early indications of this being a likely choice over Bryncelynnog.

Officers explained that the college is accountable to Estyn and accountability to the Local Authority does not exist however the Chief Executive of RCT sits on the Board.

The Member asked with regards to secondary school professionals seeking fulfilment and professional development through post 16 teaching, with that being removed from Pontypridd and Hawthorn how do we intend to recruit and retain excellent provision at these locations?

An Officer explained that professional development is at the forefront for staff and the proposals create opportunity for the staff of the new school to work across the phases.

Members proceeded to the next part of the proposal which was the creation of two new 3–16 schools in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn which will take a radically different approach to education in these areas by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources and investing £16.7m in improved educational facilities.

A Member welcomed the provision however there were two things she wanted clarification on; one, the design of the building and secondly the concerns of travel time for pupils to the new schools. The Member felt parents had concerns over the distance pupils had to travel and wondered whether there had been any feedback from both pupils and staff.

In respect of the proposal to improve and increase Welsh medium primary provision by investing £10.7M in a new school to replace Ysgol Gynradd Gymreag Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium stream of Heol Y Celyn Primary School Members put their questions and observations forward.

A Member commented on the concerns of parents over the distance some of the young children would have to travel and what transport would be

provided.

It was explained that transport would be provided as normal.

The Chair thanked the Officer for taking the Committee through the consultation document and received general comments from the floor.

The Chair commented that she and a few Members of the Committee went to visit four of the new schools that had recently been developed through the 21st Century Band A process. These schools provided first class facilities but it is too soon to receive outcome data.

The Chair felt that a piece of work could be carried in twelve months' time to see how the Band A proposal is progressing and take into consideration staff and pupils comments.

The Chair explained that feedback from the visits was positive from Headteachers, staff pupils and parents. However, the transition process to the three to sixteen schools needed greater support. Transport was another concern with the amount of traffic at the start and at the end of the day.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services suggested that some of the Headteachers would be happy to attend a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in the future to talk about their experiences.

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to

- Acknowledge the Consultation report
- To receive a progress report in 12 months to see how Band A Schools were progressing (inviting Pupils and Staff to Comment)
- Send a letter from the Committee to the Headteachers thanking them for the school visits.

31 **URGENT BUSINESS**

**This meeting closed at Time Not
Specified**

**Cllr S Rees-Owen
Chairman.**

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Appendix 5

Estyn's response to the proposals

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Estyn's response to the proposal to close Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School and create a new Welsh medium community primary school.

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.

Introduction

This is a proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to improve and increase Welsh medium primary provision in the Pontypridd area. The proposal forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary and secondary schools along with sixth form provision in the wider Pontypridd area. The proposal is to close a Welsh medium primary school along with the Welsh stream of a dual language school and to replace them with a new Welsh medium school.

Summary

The proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area. The proposal is to close Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg (YGG) Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School and create a new Welsh medium community primary school. A separate proposal by the proposer seeks to transfer pupils who are currently educated through the medium of English at Heol y Celyn Primary School to a new 3-16 school, which will be built on the adjoining sites of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary schools. The new Welsh medium primary school will be built on the site of the old Heol y Celyn Primary School.

The proposal also notes changes to the catchment area of the new school. This will include the existing catchment of YGG Pont Sion Norton along with that of the current Welsh medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School. Although the proposer recognises that it is likely that pupils currently attending YGG Pont Sion Norton will have further to travel to attend the new school, it has not noted sufficiently the impact of this on the wellbeing of pupils.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer have given a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits when compared with the status quo in relation to improvement in educational provision, pupil outcomes, the learning environment and leadership. They also explain clearly how the proposal fits with the local authority's broader plan for the review of school provision as part of its 21st Century Schools programme and it's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The local authority has provided sufficient evidence to show that the plan is likely to at least maintain the standard of education in the local area.

The proposer notes appropriately the advantages of the proposal. These include efficient and effective use of resources, access to a purposeful learning environment and increased capacity for Welsh medium education in the area. The proposer has only identified a very few disadvantages to the current proposal, which focus on implications for staff currently employed at the two schools as well increased home to school journeys for YGG Pont Sion Norton pupils and subsequent increased transport costs for the local authority. The proposal also includes appropriately the advantages and disadvantages in relation maintaining the status quo.

The proposal also notes changes to the catchment area of the new school. This will include the existing catchment of YGG Pont Sion Norton along with that of the current Welsh medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School. This proposal does not change the current provision of home to school transport. This includes pupils of the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton catchment area who will qualify for free home to school transport to the new school as it is more than 1.5 miles from their home addresses. However, the proposer does not provide sufficient details on the impact of the change in catchment areas on the travelling time and wellbeing of pupils.

Both schools included in the proposal currently provide education through the medium of Welsh. This arrangement will continue under the proposal. The proposer has noted appropriately how the proposal forms part of the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The proposer notes suitably that the increased capacity of the new school will help promote Welsh medium school provision in the area and ensure that they meet the demand for places. The proposal is therefore likely to have a positive impact on the Welsh language.

The proposer has considered reasonably well the impact of the proposals on the quality of the outcomes and provision for both schools. However, it has not considered sufficiently the impact on the leadership and management of the schools.

The proposal includes an appropriate summary of outcomes for the schools, which is concise and clear. It compares performance with similar schools based on entitlement to free school meals over an appropriate period. The proposer has considered appropriately the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspection reports and school categorisation in relation to the National School Categorisation system for all three schools.

Estyn inspected Heol y Celyn Primary School in June 2014 and the judgements for the school's performance and prospects for improvement were both adequate. YGG Pont Sion Norton was inspected in September 2014, the current performance of the school was judged as adequate along with a judgement of good for prospects for improvement. Both schools were placed in a category of 'Estyn Monitoring' following these inspections. Estyn removed YGG Pont Sion Norton its list of schools requiring follow-up in April 2016. However, Heol y Celyn Primary School was deemed to not have made sufficient progress following a monitoring visit in November 2015 and was placed in statutory category of a school requiring 'Significant Improvement'. Estyn inspectors removed the school from this category of follow-up following a further monitoring visit in January 2017.

The local authority has also evaluated each school's performance in relation to the National School Categorisation System. The system aims to provide a clear and fair picture of how well a school is performing compared with other schools across Wales and helps to identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve. Under the system, schools are categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, with red being schools which require the greatest support and green requiring the least. Both schools are currently categorised as 'yellow'. This defines them as effective schools which already doing well, know the areas needed to improve, and by identifying the right support and taking action have the potential to do even better.

The proposer has not considered sufficiently the likely impact of the proposals on standards and curriculum delivery at the new school. The proposal includes appropriate community and equality impact assessments, which considers the impact of the proposal on vulnerable groups including those with a disability. However, the proposal does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with special educational needs.

Estyn's response to the proposal to change primary and secondary school provision in Pontypridd.

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.

Introduction

This is a proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to change primary and secondary school provision in the Pontypridd area. The proposal forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary and secondary schools along with sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area. The proposal is to build a new all through 3-16 school to replace an existing primary school and a secondary school in Pontypridd. The proposer notes changes to the catchment area for the new school, which will affect other schools in the area. A separate school reorganisation proposal made by the proposer seeks to relocate pupils currently attending the Sixth Form at the secondary school to another provision as part of their proposal to reform Sixth Form provision in the Pontypridd area.

Summary

The proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area. The proposal is to close Cilfynydd Primary School and Pontypridd High School, along with its sixth form, to create a new 3-16 all through school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. Pupils

from the sixth form will transfer to either Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, dependent on student choice.

The proposal also includes proposed changes to the catchment area of the new 3-16 all through school. However, the proposer has not noted sufficiently the impact of these changes in catchment areas on other schools in the area nor on its impact on the wellbeing of pupils.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer have given a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits when compared with the status quo in relation to improvement in educational provision, pupil outcomes, the learning environment as well as leadership and financial benefits. They also explain clearly how the proposal fits with the local authority's broader plan for the review of school provision as part of its 21st Century Schools programme. The local authority has provided sufficient evidence to show that the plan is likely to at least maintain the standard of education in the local area.

The proposer notes appropriately the advantages of the proposal. These include efficient and effective use of resources, the continuity and progression in pupils' learning, access to a purposeful learning environment, improved professional development opportunities for staff including leadership along with better use of financial resources. The proposer also notes appropriately that the proposal is likely to have an impact on reducing the current level of surplus places across the local authority.

The proposer has identified suitably the disadvantages to the current proposal, which focus on the impact on travel arrangements for pupils including those currently attending the Sixth Form provision. It also notes appropriately the impact on staff in terms of job security particularly in relation to the removal of the Sixth Form curriculum. The proposal also includes appropriately the advantages and disadvantages in relation to each of the alternative proposals including maintaining the status quo.

The proposal also includes proposed changes to the catchment area of the new 3-16 all through school. The admission of pupils 3-11 years of age will remain the same and include the current catchment area for Cilfynydd Primary School. However, the proposal notes changes for the admission of pupils 11-16 years of age. The new catchment area will include that for the existing Pontypridd High School along with the addition areas that are currently part of the catchment area of Hawthorn High School. These include the the Graig area of Pontypridd, that is currently in the catchment area of Maesycod Primary School along with the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School.

This proposal does not change the current provision of home to school transport.

This includes pupils of Pontypridd High School's Sixth Form who will continue to receive free transport to the nearest post-16 establishment that offers the choice of courses that they require, provided they meet the current qualifying criteria. However, the proposer has not provided sufficient information as how many pupils will have to travel further to their new school or college of their choice. In addition, the proposal does not provide sufficient details on the impact of the change in catchment areas on the travelling time and wellbeing of pupils. This is particularly relevant in respect to pupils currently attending Cilfynydd Primary school which is located at the centre of the community and the journey to the 3-16 school will present greater risks for the primary school pupils.

Cilfynydd Primary School and Pontypridd High School currently teaches Welsh as a second language but does not provide education through the medium of Welsh. This arrangement will continue under the proposal. There would therefore appear to be no impact on the Welsh language arising from this proposal.

The proposer has considered reasonably well the impact of the proposals on the quality of the outcomes, provision and leadership and management for both schools. The proposal includes an appropriate summary of outcomes for the schools, which is concise and clear. It compares performance with similar schools based on entitlement to free school meals over an appropriate period. The proposer has considered appropriately the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspection reports and school categorisation in relation to the National School Categorisation system for both schools.

Estyn inspected Cilfynydd Primary School in May 2014 and the judgements for the school's performance and prospects for improvement were both adequate. Pontypridd High School was inspected by Estyn in January 2014 and the school's current performance was judged as adequate, with prospects for improvement was good. Both schools were placed in the category of 'Estyn Monitoring' following these inspections. The local authority has also evaluated each school's performance in relation to the National School Categorisation System. The system aims to provide a clear and fair picture of how well a school is performing compared with other schools across Wales and helps to identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve. Under the system, schools are categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, with red being schools which require the greatest support and green requiring the least. Pontypridd High school is currently categorised as 'yellow' whilst Cilfynydd Primary school is categorised as 'green'. The proposer believes that the proposal will have a positive impact on the quality of education outcomes and provision in the area.

The proposer has appropriately considered the likely impact of the proposals on standards and curriculum delivery including better transition and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. It has considered appropriately the positive effect this will have on pupil outcomes and wellbeing. The proposal includes appropriate community and equality impact assessments, which considers the impact of the proposal on vulnerable groups including those with a disability. However, the proposal does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with special educational needs.

Estyn's response to the proposal to change primary and secondary school provision in the Hawthorn area.

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.

Introduction

This is a proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to change primary and secondary school provision in the Hawthorn area. The proposal forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary and secondary schools along with sixth form provision in the wider Pontypridd area. The proposal is to close a secondary school and two primary schools and to build a new all through 3-16 school on the site of the current Hawthorn High School. The local authority designated ALN class will also be accommodated in the new school. The proposal also includes proposed changes to the catchment area of the new 3-16 all through school. A separate school reorganisation proposal made by the proposer seeks to relocate pupils currently attending the Sixth Form at the secondary school to another provision as part of their proposal to reform Sixth Form provision in the Pontypridd area.

Summary

The proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Hawthorn area. The proposal is to close Hawthorn Primary School, Heol y Celyn Primary School and Hawthorn High School along with its Sixth Form provision. A new 3-16 all through school is to be built on the adjoining

sites of the current Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School. This will also accommodate the local authority's designated Additional Learning Needs (ALN) class for key stage 3. A separate proposal on the future of ALN provision in the area could have an impact on pupils attending the new school. The proposer notes that this ALN proposal includes the closure of two ALN classes at Heol y Celyn Primary School due to the reduction in numbers attending. Should both proposals be successful, there will no dedicated ALN provision at the new 3-16 school for neither foundation phase pupils nor those in key stage 2. The proposer does not provide sufficient evidence as to how the needs of these pupils will be met in the new school. The proposal also notes changes to the catchment area of the new 3-16 all through school. However, the proposer has not noted sufficiently the impact of these changes in catchment areas on other schools in the area nor on its impact on the wellbeing of pupils.

The proposal notes that only those pupils currently being educated through the medium of English at the current Heol y Celyn Primary School, will transfer to the new 3-16 all through school. The proposer has submitted a separate proposal for the establishment of a new Welsh medium primary school to accommodate those pupils currently being educated through the medium of Welsh at Heol y Celyn Primary School. A separate school reorganisation proposal has also been submitted as part of the local authorities plans to reform Sixth Form provision in the Pontypridd area. Under the proposal, pupils currently attending Hawthorn High School Sixth Form will transfer to either Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, dependent on student choice.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer have given a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits when compared with the status quo in relation to improvement in educational provision, pupil outcomes, the learning environment as well as leadership and financial benefits. They also explain clearly how the proposal fits with the local authority's broader plan for the review of school provision as part of its 21st Century Schools programme. The local authority has provided sufficient evidence to show that the plan is likely to at least maintain the standard of education in the local area.

The proposer notes appropriately the advantages of the proposal. These include efficient and effective use of resources, the continuity and progression in pupils' learning, access to a purposeful learning environment, improved professional development opportunities for staff including leadership along better use of financial resources. The proposer also notes appropriately that the proposal is likely to have an impact on reducing the current level of surplus places across the local authority.

The proposer has identified suitably the disadvantages to the current proposal, which focus on the impact on travel arrangements for pupils including those currently attending the Sixth Form provision and an increase in travel costs for the local authority. It also notes appropriately the impact on staff in terms of job security particularly in relation to the removal of the Sixth Form curriculum. The proposal also includes appropriately the advantages and disadvantages in relation to each of the alternative proposals including maintaining the status quo.

The proposal includes proposed changes to the catchment area of the new 3-16 all through school. The admission of pupils 3-11 years of age will remain the same and include the current combined catchment areas for Hawthorn Primary School and the Heol y Celyn Primary School (English Medium). However, the proposal notes changes for the admission of pupils 11-16 years of age. The new catchment area will include the existing Hawthorn High catchment area along

with that of Gwauncelyn Primary School, Tonteg. However, the new catchment area will exclude the Graig area of Pontypridd that is in the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School and that of Coedpenmaen Primary School. The proposer notes appropriately that these changes are necessary to match the demand with the available supply across the secondary school provision in East Taf Ely, along with additional demand for places as a result of a housing development in the south east of the County Borough.

This proposal does not change the current provision of home to school transport. This includes pupils of Hawthorn High School's Sixth Form who will continue to receive free transport to the nearest post-16 establishment that offers the choice of courses that they require, provided they meet the current qualifying criteria. However, the proposer has not provided sufficient information as how many pupils will have to travel further to their new school or college of their choice. In addition, the proposal does not provide sufficient details on the impact of the change in catchment areas on the travelling time and wellbeing of pupils.

All schools included in the proposal currently teaches Welsh as a second language but does not provide education through the medium of Welsh. This arrangement will continue under the proposal. There would therefore appear to be no impact on the Welsh language arising from this proposal.

The proposer has considered reasonably well the impact of the proposals on the quality of the outcomes, provision and leadership and management for both schools. The proposal includes an appropriate summary of outcomes for the schools, which is concise and clear. It compares performance with similar schools based on entitlement to free school meals over an appropriate period. The proposer has considered appropriately the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspection reports and school categorisation in relation to the National School Categorisation system for all three schools.

Estyn inspected Heol y Celyn Primary School in June 2014 and the judgements for the school's performance and prospects for improvement were both adequate. Hawthorn Primary School was inspected in January 2012 and Hawthorn High School in March 2014. The current performance of both schools was judged as adequate with a judgement of good awarded for prospects for improvement. All three schools were placed in a category of 'Estyn Monitoring' following these inspections. Both Hawthorn Primary School and Hawthorn High School were removed from this followup category in April 2013 and October 2015 respectively. However, Heol y Celyn Primary School was deemed to not have made sufficient progress following a monitoring visit in November 2015 and was placed in statutory category of a school requiring 'Significant Improvement'. Estyn inspectors removed the school from this category of follow-up following a further monitoring visit in January 2017.

The local authority has also evaluated each school's performance in relation to the National School Categorisation System. The system aims to provide a clear and fair picture of how well a school is performing compared with other schools across Wales and helps to identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve. Under the system, schools are categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, with red being schools which require the greatest support and green requiring the least. All three schools are currently categorised as 'yellow'. This defines them as effective schools which already doing well, know the areas needed to improve, and by identifying the right support and taking action have the potential to do even better.

The proposer has appropriately considered the likely impact of the proposals on standards and curriculum delivery including better transition and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. It has considered appropriately the positive effect this will have on pupil outcomes and wellbeing. A separate proposal on the future of ALN provision in the area could have an impact on pupils

attending the new school. The proposer notes that this ALN proposal includes the closure of two ALN classes at Heol y Celyn Primary School due to the reduction in numbers attending. Should both proposals be successful, there will no dedicated ALN provision at the new 3-16 school for neither foundation phase pupils nor those in key stage 2. The proposer does not provide sufficient evidence as to how the needs of these pupils will be met in the new school.

The proposal includes appropriate community and equality impact assessments, which considers the impact of the proposal on vulnerable groups including those with a disability. However, the proposal does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with special educational needs.

Estyn's response to the proposal to change sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area

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.

Introduction

This is a proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to change sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area. The proposal forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary and secondary schools along with sixth form provision in the area. The proposal is to develop two post 16 centres of excellence in the area by closing three sixth forms currently located in three secondary schools. Pupils will transfer to either of the two sixth form centres, or in the case of those wishing to continue their Roman Catholic education, provision will be made available at a college in Cardiff for these pupils.

Summary

The proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council forms part of its larger 21st Century Schools proposal to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area. The proposal is to close the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic (RC) School and transfer the post 16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. The proposal notes that sixth form provision will be made available at St David's College, Cardiff for those pupils transferring from Cardinal Newman RC School who wish to continue their Roman Catholic education.

The proposer has also submitted separate proposals under its wider plan to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area. These include a proposal to close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School, replacing them with a new 3-16 all through school. Similarly, another proposal seeks to close Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn Primary to create a new English medium 3-16 all through school. Under a separate proposal, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton will close and a new Welsh medium school will be created to accommodate its pupils and those pupils currently receiving their

education in the Welsh stream in Heol y Celyn Primary School.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the present standard of education provision in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer have given a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits when compared with the status quo in relation to improvement in educational provision and the effective and efficient use of resources. They also explain clearly how the proposal fits with the local authority's broader plan for the review of school provision as part of its 21st Century Schools programme. The local authority has provided sufficient evidence to show that the plan is likely to at least maintain the standard of education in the local area.

The proposer notes appropriately the advantages of the proposal. These include efficient and effective use of resources, removal of duplicated courses and improving learning for pupils by creating larger sixth forms. The proposer also notes appropriately that the proposal is likely to have an impact on reducing the current level of surplus places across the local authority, including the current sixth form provision at Cardinal Newman RC School, Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School.

The proposer has identified suitably the disadvantages to the current proposal, which focus on the impact on travel arrangements for pupils currently attending the Sixth Form provision within their catchment. It also notes appropriately the impact on staff in terms of job security for staff currently employed at the three secondary schools should the Sixth Form curriculum be removed. The proposal also includes appropriately the advantages and disadvantages in relation to each of the alternative proposals including maintaining the status quo.

The proposal also includes proposed changes to the notional catchment areas for post 16 education for the purpose of managing home to school transport. RCT students that attend sixth form outside their catchment area are not eligible for home to school transport unless the Programme of Study of their choice is not available in the catchment school. The proposer notes amendments to the catchment areas of both Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools for post 16 provision, to place these areas in the sixth form catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School.

Pupils from Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School will have the option of attending another school's sixth form provision of their choice or Coleg y Cymoedd for their post 16 education. Pupils who wish to continue their post 16 education through the Catholic faith could choose to attend St David's Sixth Form College, Cardiff. The local authority will provide free transportation to the nearest provision that offers the chosen selection of courses for RCT-resident students, providing that they meet the initial qualifying distance criteria. However, the proposer has not provided sufficient information as how many pupils will have to travel further to their new school or college of their choice. In addition, the proposal does not provide sufficient details on the impact of the change to student travelling time on their wellbeing.

Pontypridd High School, Hawthorn High School and Cardinal Newman RC School does not provide education through the medium of Welsh. This arrangement will continue under the proposal. There would therefore appear to be no impact on the Welsh language arising from this proposal.

The proposer has considered reasonably well the impact of the proposals on the quality of the provision and management for the four schools included in the proposal. The proposal includes an appropriate summary of outcomes for the schools, which is concise and clear. The proposer has considered appropriately the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspection reports and school categorisation in relation to the National School Categorisation system for all four schools along with Coleg y Cymoedd and St David's College.

Estyn inspected Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School in February, 2016; Hawthorn High School in March 2014; Pontypridd High School in January 2014 and Coleg y Cymoedd in November 2017. All four were judged as adequate for current performance and good for prospects for improvement. Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School was inspected by Estyn in May 2018 under new inspection arrangements and were judged as 'good' for all five inspection areas. St David's College was last inspected in 2010 and was judged as excellent for both current performance and prospects for improvement.

The local authority has also evaluated each school's performance in relation to the National School Categorisation System. The system aims to provide a clear and fair picture of how well a school is performing compared with other schools across Wales and helps to identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve. Under the system, schools are categorised according to a four-point 'traffic light' system, with red being schools which require the greatest support and green requiring the least. However, the National School Categorisation System does not take into account Post 16 provision and outcomes. The proposer notes that Pontypridd High School, Hawthorn High School and Bryncelynnog are categorised as 'yellow' schools whilst Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School has been categorised as a 'green' school. The proposer believes that the proposal will have a positive impact on the quality of education outcomes and provision in the area. However, the rationale for locating the sixth form centre in Bryncelynnog as opposed to Cardinal Newman is not clear. Bryncelynnog is located near Y Pant which retains its sixth form provision.

The proposer has appropriately considered the likely impact of the proposals on standards and curriculum delivery including better learning experiences and a reduction in duplication of courses available. The proposal includes appropriate community and equality impact assessments, which considers the impact of the proposal on vulnerable groups including those with a disability. However, the proposal does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with special educational needs.

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Appendix 6

Hawthorn High School's letter to parents / carers

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21st CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE PONTYPRIDD AREA

A GUIDE for PARENTS and CARERS



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*(NB: Proposal 3 and 4 relate only to Pontypridd High School and Welsh medium education)

The Consultation process so far....

The Chair of Governors and Headteacher attended a meeting with the Chief Executive and other senior LA Officers on September 25th. At this meeting an outline of the proposals for the reorganisation of schools in Pontypridd was provided. This included 'background information' for Council members and a draft copy of the consultation document. A final copy of this document was released to schools and made public on October 15th.

Since receiving the document a number of different meetings have taken place in order to discuss the contents and form opinions on each of the three proposals. Important in forming such opinions has been to identify the information and rationale that gives justification for the Local Authority proposals based on the evidence provided and additional information available.

Meetings have taken place between:

- School Governors
- All teaching and non-teaching staff
- The Student Council and Senior staff and Governors
- The Headteachers of and Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School
- Headteachers, local Councillors and Politicians
- The Headteacher and parents/carers who have specific concerns about the proposals

A formal meeting has also taken place (November 12th) between the School governors, all staff and senior Local Authority Officers as part of the official consultation process (this included the Chief Executive of RCT - Chris Bradshaw and the Director of Education - Gaynor Davies). At this meeting the views of all people were presented in relation to each proposal and many questions were asked in particular in relation to Proposal 1 on changes to the Sixth Form. It is clear that much information presented in the proposal with regard to student outcomes, standards, class sizes and the overall comparison between Hawthorn High School (HHS), the Pontypridd Sixth Form (PSF), Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School (BCS) and Coleg Y Cymoedd (CyC) is inaccurate and misleading. Following this meeting and with all information considered the school is now able to present its view of the 3 proposals.

It is now essential that all parents and carers have the opportunity to read through the outcomes of such discussions and therefore have a fully informed view of all information available. *It is important to state that any comments about BCS or CyC are only made in reference to information which is readily available and commentary provided by the LA in the consultation document. It is in no way our intention to criticise the work of other schools/colleges but rather to redress an imbalance in the way performance has been portrayed in the Council's consultation document.*

The time has now come to present our views clearly to the Local Authority; the deadline for doing so is **January 25th, 2019**. Please use this information guide to inform your own opinion and I am sure that our considered responses will make a strong case for a 21st Century Sixth Form provision in Pontypridd that the children of this proud university town are entitled to.

PROPOSAL 1

Proposal 1 : Removal of the Sixth Form of Hawthorn High School with post-16 students attending an alternative school or college that offers the choice of courses they require.				
Agree with this proposal	YES	NO	NOT SURE	

About the Pontypridd Sixth Form

For 10 years we have operated a joint sixth form provision with Pontypridd High School (Cardinal Newman were in that partnership for the first 3 years). Together we call our partnership the 'Pontypridd Sixth Form' and we are developing ever closer links with the University of South Wales who support our provision in many ways. This operates by offering a choice of A Level subjects between the two centres and, in some cases, accessing courses at Coleg Y Cymoedd (CyC - Nantgarw). By working together we are able to offer students a broader range of subjects to choose from and we can maximise the use of staff and facilities across the two schools. Students travel the short distance between sites by bus, provided as required and free of charge. This is a well established provision and we continually review it and make changes to ensure it is successful and meets the needs of our students.

What is significant and right is that by working together we are providing a school based sixth form provision within and around the town of Pontypridd.

We are objecting to the proposal to close the Pontypridd Sixth Form and relocate our students to so called Sixth Form 'Centres of Excellence' at either Bryncelynog Comprehensive School (BCS) or Coleg y Cymoedd (CyC) for the following reasons:

REASON 1

The first reason is related to the Partnership working that has already been attempted with the BCS / Y Pant Sixth Form partnership

- i) The fact that links for the Pontypridd Sixth Form with BCS (and Y Pant CS) have been discussed in the past and they did not materialise because of the distance between the school sites.
- ii) LA Officers confirmed in a meeting at Pontypridd High School on November 12th that it is likely that Sixth Form students at BCS school in 2022 would also travel to Y Pant CS for their A Levels because they will continue to work in partnership with BCS. This will also lead to additional transport for those students with some being asked to travel from places like Ynysybwl as far as Llantrisant.
- iii) The fact that only 5 students in all of PHS when surveyed expressed any interest in making the proposed move to BCS. Almost no post 16 students at HHS have responded positively to this Sixth Form proposal.
- iv) Both points (ii) and (iii) above pose the question whether £10 million spent at BCS would ever be accessed by the number of students that the council projects are likely to attend

there beyond 2022. As a school we remain confused by the numbers being projected to attend the BCS Sixth Form from the Pontypridd area. The Council continues to try to argue the benefits of students attending Coleg Y Cymoedd for their A Levels and yet simultaneously bases its projections for attendance at the BCS Sixth Form on the presumption that every A Level pupil in the Pontypridd area would travel to Beddau to study.

v) In a meeting at Hawthorn HS on November 12th, it was confirmed by RCT that the £10 million in the proposal which is earmarked for the Bryncelynog site would at least partially be used to finance general improvements to poor building quality at BCS and not specifically to develop a 'Sixth Form Centre of Excellence'. This questions the accuracy of the consultation document and the commitment to our students if they were to attend a post-16 centre at BCS.

REASON 2

The consultation document makes a number of statements about standards up to and including Summer 2017 results at Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and the Pontypridd Sixth Form which are inaccurate and misleading. It appears that the intention of the document is to create an impression that standards are higher elsewhere and that, on that basis, a move to a Sixth Form Centre in another part of RCT should be welcomed by parents/carers and their children in our own community. This is evidenced by the following statements:

Firstly from Page 12 of the Consultation Document with regards to GCSE outcomes:

'The educational performance and pupil attendance of the 2 LA maintained secondary schools at Key Stage 4 is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales'

The two LA maintained schools referred to in this quote are Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High. Both schools feel extremely disappointed by this factually inaccurate analysis of performance and would point out that the Welsh Assembly has categorized them as being 'Yellow' schools for each of the last three academic years. The Welsh Assembly defines Yellow schools as being those that **"Have secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators."** WAG National School Categorisation Guide p19

It is important to understand the meaning of 'quartiles' and how such a reference is a negative rather than a positive statement. All secondary schools in Wales are divided into groups by the Welsh Government (WG) depending on the number of children in the school who are in receipt of free school meals. This is averaged out over a 3 year period to give a single figure. As a result, with 24.5% of our pupils currently being entitled to claim free school meals, HHS is in a group of Schools with a FSM entitlement of 20-30%). These are the groups in which comparisons are made of 'similar' schools' ('similar' does not necessarily mean local as they could be located anywhere in Wales). In effect scores are given to schools on the basis of whether their performance in a particular category places them in the top 25% of similar schools in Wales (quartile 1) down to performance in the bottom 25% (quartile 4).

BCS is placed in a group of schools with 10-15% FSM entitlement. **To that extent, by the**

Welsh Assembly’s own process, BCS is clearly not defined as being a ‘similar’ school to Hawthorn High and as such you should not compare outcomes between these two schools directly.

The following table shows GCSE outcomes at HHS for the previous three years in terms of whether performance was in either quartile 1, 2, 3 or 4:

Hawthorn High School

Welsh Assembly Indicator	2015	2016	2017
At least 5 GCSEs inc. Eng and Maths	3	1	2
At least 5 GCSEs A* - C	1	1	1
At least 5 GCSEs A* - G	3	1	3
Best 8 or 9 GCSE results	1	1	2
Best English GCSE A* to C	3	2	4
Best Maths or Numeracy GCSE A* to C	3	2	1
Numeracy GCSE A*-C			1
Maths GCSE A* - C			1
Science GCSE A* to C	3	3	1
Welsh Bacc Skills qualification			1

You will note that during the three years identified less than 34% of indicators have been in the third or fourth quartile for Hawthorn High School. **To draw the conclusion that HHS is ‘consistently in the 3rd or 4th quartile’ is therefore inaccurate and very misleading.** It would be more accurate to state the positive view that more than 66% of the time Hawthorn High has been in quartiles 1 and 2. It is very regrettable that the council has chosen to portray relative performance between schools in this fashion.

There are a number of negative references made in the consultation document to A Level standards at HHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form.

The following is taken from information provided to Council members prior to presenting the proposals for reorganization in the Pontypridd area:

‘The educational performance of the sixth forms has been mixed with two of the secondary schools (Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High) consistently being amongst the worst performing schools in respect of A Level performance’

‘The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 5 (in respect of the A Level results) of Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools are consistently below the Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in RCT and Wales.’

These statements are inaccurate and misleading because they do not reflect actual outcomes at A Level when measured and compared against different performance indicators. These performance indicators are as follows:

*Green = above RCT average performance

		L3	AWPS	3 A*/A	3 A*/C
2014/15	Pontypridd High	95.2	856	3.2	68.3
	Hawthorn High	98.2	773	1.8	59.6
	RCT lowest			0	27.0
	RCT average	96.9	730	2.9	57.5
	Wales average	96.9	799	7.9	67.5
2015/16	Pontypridd High	100	928	5.9	64.7
	Hawthorn High	97.6	772	0	61.9
	RCT lowest			0	40.2
	RCT average	97.0	765	4.0	65.2
	Wales average	98.0	823	6.7	70.6
2016/17	Pontypridd High	100	820	5.6	42.6
	Hawthorn High	100	739	2.1	41.7
	RCT lowest			0	16.3
	RCT average	96.3	678	5.5	45.1
	Wales average	97.1	731	10.5	54.7

The comparisons being drawn are also inappropriate in that the Welsh Average is being used as a 'like for like' comparison to compare performance between HHS, PHS and BCS. This is unfair as the Welsh average entitlement of a school's population to free school meals stands at 16.5%. BCS's entitlement is 14.5%, PHS is 19.5% and HHS is 24.5%. **Clearly it is unfair and inappropriate to suggest that the expectation for pupils to achieve Welsh average performance or better should be the same in all three schools.**

Thorough, impartial and accurate analysis of this data reveals that the term 'consistent' and 'below' are totally inappropriate, very negative and not a true representation of the actual outcomes within the Pontypridd Sixth Form; as the chart reveals there are very similar outcomes at BCS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form between 2015 and 2017 even when we do not consider that the latter has a significantly less affluent catchment area as defined by the Welsh Assembly.

The following is taken from Page 29 of the Consultation Document:

'The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough is well below Welsh averages and among the lowest in Wales.'

Each A Level grade that a student achieves is equal to a certain number of points (for example, an A grade at A Level is worth 270 points, a B grade 240 points and so on). All of these grades/points are added up to give a total points score. The Average Wider Points

Score is made up of the total points achieved by each student which is then divided by the number of A Level students in the year group. Points are awarded for A/S results in Year 12 and for the WBQ and Skills Challenge Certificate. They are one of the key factors in meeting the requirements of a successful University or College application.

Whilst this statement makes no specific reference to HHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form, it again implies that outcomes are not acceptable. More thorough and detailed analysis would show that:

- HHS, PHS and therefore the Pontypridd Sixth Form exceed both the Wales and RCT averages every year, on most occasions by more than 100 points which is very significant. This reflects the fact that each student is given quality learning experiences and a range of support and guidance which enables them to study different courses and complete them successfully.

The third aspect in relation to statements about standards relates to further information provided for the Council members prior to presenting the proposals for reorganisation in the Pontypridd area:

'However, Bryncelynnoq Comprehensive School is an improving school and has consistently performed above the Welsh average for A level provision.'

Despite recent year on year improvements in outcomes at HHS in many important indicators, there is no reference to HHS being an 'improved school' which again creates the impression that an unfair comparison is being made, justified by an inaccurate analysis and interpretation of data.

Finally, in relation to standards there is no reference at all to outcomes at Coleg Y Cymoedd (CyC) despite the fact that this institution is proposed to be an option for HHS students as a 'Sixth Form Centre of Excellence'. This is a concern because:

- The A Level provision at CyC has been in place since it was built as part of a £45million investment 8 years ago. It is intended to be a minimum of 350 students which is only 3% of the total student roll at CyC.
- Cardinal Newman Sixth Form was based at CyC for 5 years until 2015; they withdrew at that time over concerns about the quality of A Level provision.
- The consultation document contains no information on A Level standards at CyC. Despite requests at the meetings at both HHS and PHS with LA Officers on November 12th for an analysis of the previous four years' data re. A Level performance at CyC the Council were unable to present any information on outcomes which is interesting given they have committed our students to going there should this proposal be accepted.
- In the meetings on November 12th LA Officers referred to excellent results at CyC in 2018. This is apparently a reference to 98% 'pass rate' reported through a press release on exam results day in August 2018. It appears that they achieved 98% Level 3 threshold (those passing two A Levels). *The A Level results table on page 16 allows parents to consider how this compares to similar Level 3 pass rates in the Pontypridd Sixth Form for the previous four years.* The fact remains these proposals were

confirmed prior to the 2018 results being available and commentary in the document relates to data up to 2017.

- In 2017 an Estyn report on provision at CyC concluded that overall standards were **ADEQUATE**. This was because the majority of learning areas have success rates significantly below national averages. In addition, standards on academic programmes, including AS and A levels, were deemed by ESTYN to be “**well below national comparators**”. This is not referred to in the consultation document even though standards in HHS were referred to as ‘below average’ on more than one occasion.
- Estyn made the following recommendations following their inspection of CyC in 2017:
R1 : Improve standards and outcomes achieved by learners on AS and A level courses
R4 : Make sure that teaching strategies engage and challenge all learners
R5 : Make sure that all teachers support learners to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills
- In the meeting on November 12th, LA Officers were asked what action they had led in response to this inspection report. They confirmed that they have no significant role to play in managing and leading provision, other than some positions on the board, at CyC and as such the LA had not responded in any way to the Estyn recommendations. This is a concern because it shows there is no commitment from the Local Authority to any HHS students who could attend CyC if this Sixth Form proposal to be a Centre of Excellence is accepted.

REASON 3

The third reason why we object to the proposed removal of a Sixth Form from Hawthorn High is related to the inaccurate and misleading information provided in the consultation document in relation to the educational and financial viability of our present sixth form.

In relation to viability, Page 12 of the Consultation document states:

‘Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools combined have small sixth forms of less than 250 pupils (the national recommended minimum number for an efficient and effective sixth form), and with relatively poor educational performance.’

And on Page 14 of the consultation document:

‘A viable sixth form, both educationally and financially should, ideally, have at least 250 students; In January 2018 (source : PLASC return), Hawthorn High had 114 sixth form students attending and Pontypridd High 131, just 245 in total between the two schools. Bryncelynnoq Comprehensive had 147 sixth form students at the same point in time.’

It is recognised that both PHS and HHS are in a budget deficit situation and that BCS is presently in a surplus situation. However, we question these statements because:

- It is unclear where a figure of 250 for a viable Sixth Form has been taken from.

- Can it be assumed that BCS with only 147 in its Sixth Form is by the LA's own figures also unviable?
- The Pontypridd Sixth Form with 245 students is presently more viable and a good basis for a £10 million investment.

Number of A Level classes with 5 students or less

	2016	2017	2018
RCT Calculation (as presented in proposal)	28	25	n/a
Pontypridd Sixth Form actual number	17	8	3

The table above illustrates the advantages of working in partnership and how the Pontypridd Sixth Form of 245 students is more financially viable than the council's figures seem to be intended to suggest. The number of classes with less than 5 students has been reduced significantly in recent years by increasingly sharing provision between ourselves and PHS. RCT calculations presented in the consultation document only consider each school's provision in isolation and take no account of students from both schools in each class. As a result, they seem to have chosen to present figures which completely ignore the efficiencies which have been achieved for many years by working in partnership. This creates an unfairly negative picture of the Pontypridd Sixth Form.

Average A Level classes size

	2016	2017	2018
RCT Calculation (as presented in proposal)	5	5	n/a
Pontypridd Sixth Form actual number	11	14	14

The table above also shows the average A level class size which has grown over the three years, again as a result of sharing provision. RCT calculations only consider each school and take no account of students from both schools in each class.

And on page 14 of the consultation document:

'This proposal will create a school based sixth form at Bryncelynnoq of over 350 students (this will depend on student choice) and further enhance the sixth form and vocational offer at Coleg Y Cymoedd's Nantgarw Campus that already has 350 post 16 students studying traditional A Level subjects and over 1,000 post 16 students studying vocational subjects.'

Proposed Sixth Form Numbers

School	January 2019	January 2020	January 2021	January 2022	January 2023
Bryncelynnog	152	167	174	172	178
Cardinal Newman	65	70	73	83	93
Hawthorn	98	107	100	92	105
Pontypridd	111	112	112	108	105
Total	426	456	459	455	481

School	January 2023	January 2024	January 2025
Bryncelynnog Sixth Form	388	408	428

The table above shows the planned Sixth Form numbers should this proposal be accepted. We question the strategic value of this statement and its claim that significant numbers of students (110) from HHS and PHS will attend a sixth form at BCS because:

- Previous attempts at partnership workings with BCS have not materialised because of the additional travel time for students (especially those in the northerly parts of PHS' catchment).
- In a survey of all PHS students only 5 expressed any interest in attending a Sixth form at BCS.
- Experience of sixth form reorganisation in the Rhondda suggests that significant numbers of students do not transfer to another school for post-16, preferring instead to attend a college environment, an option already questioned in this document. If similar choices are made by Pontypridd students (as they are being encouraged to do in the Council's proposals) the projected numbers at BCS' 'Centre of Excellence' in 2022 will be nothing like the Council's projections.
- The LA also accept that should this proposal be accepted it is likely students will move elsewhere over the next 3 to 4 years to the extent that alternative post-16 destinations will already have been established should the new Centre of Excellence at BCS open in 2022
- For these reasons it is highly unlikely that the proposed figure of 388 Sixth Form students at BCS in January of 2023 will be reached through additional students from the Pontypridd Sixth Form.

REASON 4

The fourth reason is related to the equity of provision that our students will have access to if proposal 1 regarding the Sixth Form is accepted in its present format. Within Hawthorn High and the Pontypridd Sixth Form we are committed to:

- Giving learners from deprived backgrounds access to the highest quality learning and teaching so that the individual's learning pathway meets their needs and aspirations

- Providing the support and guidance to each student to ensure a seamless progression and transition from school to school and from school to further and higher education

We are very pleased that standards achieved by those students who are entitled to FSM have improved at GCSE level each year and as such the overall number who are and progressing into the Pontypridd Sixth Form is also increasing.

Our aims support Welsh Government priorities and the present proposal for removing Sixth Forms from PHS and other Pontypridd schools questions how this can be achieved in the future. Such priorities are outlined in two government reports:

1. ‘Prosperity for All – A National Strategy’ (2017) sets out a long-term aim to make Wales healthy and active, prosperous and secure, ambitious and learning, and united and connected. It aims to do this by:

- supporting young people to make the most of their potential
- building ambition and encouraging learning for life
- equipping everyone with the right skills for a changing world.

2. Education in Wales – Our national Mission (2017-2021) has two related objectives:

Enabling objective 1: Developing a high-quality education profession

To continue the 21st Century Schools and Education Capital Programme in order to deliver learning environments that meet the needs of all learners

Enabling objective 3: Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being

All learners must be supported to be emotionally and physically ready to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Equity requires that we ensure that the system, at school, local and national level takes account of and responds to the unique challenges that present themselves to individuals or groups of learners.

The proposal to remove the Sixth Form from Pontypridd does not fit with the priorities of the Welsh government as it reduces choice, builds barriers to extended learning options and therefore reduces the likelihood of a student progressing into a school based Sixth Form within the Pontypridd area. This becomes more relevant when consideration is given for the increasing number of children entitled to FSM at Hawthorn High.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
eFSM %	27.4%	30.6%	22.8%	23.6%	18.9%

This is a concern because the younger year groups will be those most directly affected by the proposed changes in Sixth Form from September 2022.

Our success in improving outcomes for such learners has been based on familiarity, specific roles for staff, family engagement and raising aspirations. The proposal for changes in Sixth

Form will not support this well established way of working and to that extent it questions whether the key government priorities can also be met.

PROPOSAL 2

Proposal 2: Create a new, 3-16 'all through' school for Hawthorn High				
Agree with this proposal	YES		NO	NOT SURE

We accept this proposal but recognise the views of those connected with Heol Y Celyn Primary School in particular who may have to experience a significant change should this proposal be implemented. We also only accept this proposal on the basis that suitable arrangements can be made for our post 16 students in the Pontypridd locality which are under the influence of RCT. **In agreeing with this proposal we do not by implication accept proposal 1 in its current incarnation.**

We understand that this proposal is very much in line with the strategic change across RCT and that the timescale for implementation sits alongside significant curriculum change and learning experiences planned across in Wales in 2022. The Governing Body has reservations that the level of investment proposed (£12 million) may not be sufficient to develop all aspects of the Hawthorn site to '21st Century' standards and note the level of investment recently made in other secondary school sites to this end (Y Pant - £23 million and Tonyrefail upwards of £40 million). To this extent we would accept this proposal whilst also recognising that all planning and delivery will be the responsibility of a new School in 2022. It will be for them to meet the demands of such a change as outlined in the following statements:

On Page 11 of the consultation document:

'A single workforce in a school reflecting on and jointly developing and designing what works for five-year olds, teenagers and young adults is capable of a wider range of points of reference and a wider range of practices that a smaller group of teachers with a one-phase window to consider. These changes to what pupils learn and how they learn it are easier to manage in an all-through environment than in a single-phase school or group of schools.'

And on Page 16 of the consultation document:

'Other partner/associated primary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal. Pupil transition is important and the Council, through its 21st Century Band A programme has instigated some innovative programmes to ensure the quality of integration at Year 7 was seamless regardless of where they have received their primary experience. No pupil will be disadvantaged when they join the new school at Year 7.'

Transition work with all cluster schools is essential so that all children have similar experiences and access to quality resources in a 21st Century learning environment. To

achieve this the LA must ensure sufficient funding exists that enables each child to make use of such resources at the new school from September 2022.

PROPOSAL 5

Proposal 5 : Amendment of the catchment area Hawthorn High School				
Agree with this proposal	YES	NO	NOT SURE	

We accept this proposal but recognise the views of those connected with the primary schools and parents/carers involved who may have to experience a significant change should this be the case.

On Page 36 in the consultation document:

'It is proposed that the 11-16 catchment areas will also change. The changes all directly relate to the new 3-16 School at Hawthorn High which will:

-include the catchment area of Gwauncelyn Primary School, Tonteg (which is currently in the catchment area of Bryncelynoq Comprehensive).

- exclude the Graig area of Pontypridd that is in the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School.

- exclude the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School, which will be included in the catchment area of the new Pontypridd 11-16 school....With surplus places in both new 3-16 schools for the foreseeable future, the choice of both schools will remain for pupils and parents.

We understand that this proposal is very much in line with the strategic change across RCT. The Maesycoed proposal is also a solution to a longer-term issue with the catchment boundaries between ourselves and PHS and primary liaison with the school has always been problematic for Hawthorn High.

We regret the reorganisation of Coedpenmaen Primary into the catchment for Pontypridd High School as relationships between Coedpenmaen and HHS have been strong historically. We recognise that surplus places are likely to provide a choice for parents for the foreseeable future and that transport issues to the two new schools may still need to be based on historical precedents.

We would be very pleased to welcome pupils from Gwauncelyn Primary school into the Hawthorn catchment but recognise that this proposal is, in our opinion, also likely to leave a choice of secondary schools for parents in the Tonteg area because, as we have made clear elsewhere in this proposal, we do not accept that the Council's Sixth Form numbers estimates beyond 2022 for BCS are accurate. If this is indeed the case, there are likely to be surplus places in Bryncelynog should the £10 million pound investment go ahead. This is a concern for projected numbers at the new Hawthorn 3-16 school should Coedpenmaen Primary become part of the catchment for the new Pontypridd school.

With the aforementioned reservations, we would accept this proposal and can give our full assurance to the transition process that will allow all children to be successful at Hawthorn High from 2020 in a new school from September, 2022.

Other considerations in relation to Proposals 2 and 5

We welcome the commitment to improved road safety measures where appropriate to any implementation of these proposals. This was made clear by the statement below:

On Page 9 of the consultation document:

'A review of the safe routes to school, and improvements to walkways, road crossings and road speed management measures will be made to ensure the required safety standards are met. This is the approach we have implemented in other communities in earlier school reorganisation proposals with significant improvements being made to safe routes to schools.'

LA Officers on November 12th acknowledged the cost of ensuring such measures are put in place and confirmed that the funding to undertake such work **will not be taken from the 21st Century schools funding already outlined as a commitment to our school.**

Conclusions

Hawthorn High School does not accept Proposal 1 to remove the Sixth Form provision because the two alternatives given in the consultation document are not acceptable for different reasons. These include:

- The tone through much of the consultation document appears to question standards achieved by HHS, PHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form. Unfair and statistically inaccurate comparisons are made in the consultation document about standards and outcomes between Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School, the Pontypridd Sixth Form and other schools.
- Performance data at both GCSE and A Level used does not justify the proposals. In fact outcomes alongside other schools are mostly as expected and to suggest one school is improving is as statistically sound as reporting that standards at HHS and PHS are amongst the worst in Wales.
- According to the consultation document, this is a plan for schools in Pontypridd and geographically a Centre of Excellence at BCS will not serve the majority of students from Pontypridd. Nor will such a distant provision encourage them to be aspirational about their own futures by furthering their studies at A Level.
- Evidence already shows that students are highly unlikely to take up the option of a Sixth Form Centre at BCS. Strategically this must question the allocation of £10million of funding and the fact that such funding will not be accessed by our students.
- It has been confirmed that the aforementioned funding for BCS will be used in a more general way to address the state of school buildings. Such a statement is at odds with the commentary in the document and the spirit of a 'Centre of Excellence' for post-16 students.
- The Pontypridd Sixth Form at present is a more viable solution through its partnership working. This is a foundation for further investment.
- It is not clear what pastoral, support and transition arrangements would be available through Sixth Form Centres of Excellence. This is important to all students and in particular the most vulnerable for whom a safe transition into post-16 in familiar surroundings and where staff know each individual and their family well.
- The Estyn report of 2017 would suggest that CyC is no better placed than the present Pontypridd Sixth Form partnership to become a Centre of Excellence.
- Cardinal Newman has already removed its 6th Form provision from CyC due to concerns about standards. The college's level of accountability to RCT is also a concern.

Hawthorn High School accepts Proposal 2 to become a 3-16 'all through' school

Hawthorn High School accepts Proposal 5 to amend catchment areas as outlined in the consultation document.

Further questions...?

- What is the justification for moving all Sixth Form provision out of the town area of Pontypridd? This is not clear from the document or from responses given in meetings with LA Officers.
- Should the £10million earmarked for BCS actually be used to develop a Sixth Form provision within the Pontypridd area, at a site appropriate to both PHS and HHS ?
- In what ways can a Centre of Excellence at Coleg Y Cymoedd be created when the LA has no significant input into how that is created, monitored or measured?
- How will the LA recognise the opinions of the students who firmly want a sixth form provision within the town of Pontypridd ?

And thoughts....

- Pontypridd is a university town and should be offering a vibrant Sixth Form provision. This is as much about standards as it is a matter of geography, fairness and an equitable location of a Sixth Form provision for children who grow up and live in Pontypridd.
- Within this proposal there needs to be new consideration for an appropriate and suitable location in Pontypridd using 21st Century funding to deliver post-16 provision which can be built around the 3-16 model and which is delivered by staff who are often known to students and who have A Level teaching experience.
- Such a Sixth Form provision should have a leadership and management structure which is accountable to the LA, meets the aspirations of students and makes use of facilities and future investment planned for this important and well serviced central location within RCT.

What happens next ?

- i) Following the deadline for responses in January 2019 all information will be recorded, reported and discussed.
- ii) A decision will be made by the Council Cabinet in March, 2019. Following this there is a period when objections can be heard.
- iii) If proposals are agreed then the initial stage, most likely in the Autumn of 2020 will be to appoint a temporary governing body for the new school and staff appointments will take place from that time.
- iv) Changes to catchment areas will take effect from September, 2020
- v). **Appendix 5 on page 17** shows a copy of the Consultation response form that needs to be used as part of this process. Please use:
 - information on pages 3 to 12 to answer question 1 on Proposal 1
 - information on pages 12 to 13 to answer question 2 on Proposal 2
 - information on pages 13 to 14 to answer question 3 on Proposal 5

Thank you for your support, it is very much appreciated.

The 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

21st Century Schools Team

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

or email schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

The Proposals

Proposal 1: Removal of the sixth forms of Hawthorn High, Pontypridd High and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive, with post 16 students attending an alternative school or college that offers the choice of courses they require.

1. Do you agree with proposal 1? YES / NO / NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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Proposal 2: Create a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Hawthorn

2. Do you agree with proposal 2? YES / NO / NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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Proposal 5: Amendment of the catchment areas of Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High Schools and the 6th form catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, as outlined in this document.

3. Do you agree with proposal 5? YES / NO / NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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4. Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account

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5. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

.....

6. Name (optional)

.....

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

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.....

Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than Thursday, 31st January 2019

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 and the Council's data protection pages here: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection.

Additional Information Sheet

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HAWTHORN HIGH SCHOOL

Health, Happiness, Success



School Lane, Hawthorn, Pontypridd, CF37 5AL Tel: 01443 841228 Fax: 01443 846464 Email: hawthorn@hawthornhs.co.uk

Headteacher / Prifathro: [REDACTED]

3rd December 2018

Dear parents/carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to convey to you the school's formal response to the Council's proposals for school reorganisation in the Pontypridd area in the hope that you will support us by expressing similar views in your written response before the end of January. We and Pontypridd High School have worked very closely together for many weeks in formulating our responses. Whilst both schools recognise that there are many benefits to aspects of the proposals, we are very disappointed by the arguments the council puts forward in an attempt to justify Cabinet thinking re. Sixth Form provision in Pontypridd; we would ask that the Local Authority gives further consideration to this aspect of reorganisation by identifying an appropriate and suitable location in Pontypridd for a Pontypridd Sixth Form using 21st Century funding. This should be one which:

- can be led and managed predominantly by staff working in our Schools
- is accountable to the LA for standards achieved by Sixth Form pupils
- meets the aspirations of students and makes use of facilities and future investment planned for this important and well serviced central location within RCT

On the school's website in the 'About us'/'21st Century Schools' you are able to read our **guide to the 21st Century Schools proposal for parents and carers**, which sets out our detailed response to the council's consultation document (*attached to this email is a summary of the arguments it puts forward*). We would encourage you to join the school in saying:

No to proposal one – to remove Sixth Form provision for all English medium schools

Yes to proposal two – to create a 3-16 school on the Hawthorn campus (as long as a suitable Sixth Form provision for Pontypridd can be found and the level of investment to create a 21st Century school campus is secured).

Yes to proposal five – to reorganise the catchment of the new Hawthorn school to include Gwauncelyn Primary School in Tonteg.

I hope that you can find the time to read the attached guide and summary document and consider their implications for your children's education. **I shall write to you again soon to tell you when you will have the opportunity to come to the school and discuss the attached documents** with myself, Governors and the Headteacher. You have until the last week in January to make your views known to the council.

Thank you for your continued support,

[REDACTED]
Chair of Governors

Ysgol Uwchradd Hawthorn, Lon Yr Ysgol,
Hawthorn, Pontypridd, CF37 5AL



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Hawthorn High School summary response to RCT's 21st Century schools proposals

Proposal 1 – The removal of Sixth Form provision from all English medium schools in Pontypridd

We do not accept this proposal for the following reasons:

- Previous attempts at linking our Sixth Form with Bryncelynnog (BCS) have not materialised because of the distance between the schools and areas students travel from
- Students have expressed clearly that they will not want to travel to a BCS sixth form
- Standards at GCSE at Hawthorn High School and at A Level in the Pontypridd Sixth Form are at a much higher standard than the consultation document suggests
- The Estyn report of 2017 would suggest that Coleg y Cymoedd is no better placed than the present Pontypridd Sixth Form partnership to become a 'Centre of Excellence'.
- Present partnership working within the Pontypridd Sixth Form enables a broad subject choice to be offered and class sizes to be significantly higher than the LA suggests
- Pontypridd is an important central place in RCT and a university town which should have a Sixth Form provision
- Equity of provision for our students is at the heart of Welsh Government policy for young people in Wales and the lack of a Sixth Form in Pontypridd town does not support this national priority.

Proposal 2 – to create a 3-16 school on the Hawthorn campus

As long as a suitable Sixth Form provision for Pontypridd can be found and the level of investment to create a 21st Century school campus secured, **in principle we accept this proposal** because:

- The Hawthorn site is in need of significant capital investment to bring it up to the standards required of a 21st Century school.
- We understand the benefits to both students and staff of access to improved facilities and the progression that can be made through such learning experiences
- However, if such a change is to benefit the whole Hawthorn High cluster then the LA will need to commit significant additional funding to ensure all 3-11 children have access to the same 21st Century facilities.

Proposal 5 – to reorganise the catchment of the new Hawthorn school to include Gwauncelyn Primary School in Tonteg.

We accept this proposal because:

- We have discussed a resolution to the historical problems of our catchment area caused by the relocation of both HHS and PHS for a number of years
- It will help to support better progression and transition into Year 7

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Appendix 7

Pontypridd High School's letter to parents / carers

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December 4th, 2018

Dear Parent / Carer,

As part of the Local Authority proposals to reorganise schools in our area of Pontypridd, I would like to present to you a formal response from Pontypridd High as part of the consultation process. On behalf of the Governors, staff and students, I trust you will support us by expressing similar views in your own written response before the end of January, 2019. I have included a brief summary of the School position and also a more detailed justification of our thoughts on the three proposals. The three proposals which could impact on Pontypridd High are:

1. To remove the Sixth Form provision from Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman and develop Post-16 'centres of excellence' based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd. **We do not accept this proposal**
2. Create a new 3-16 school on the site of Pontypridd High. **We accept this proposal if the Sixth Form proposal above can be agreed**
3. Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High. **We accept this proposal.**

We have worked very closely with Hawthorn High School in forming our responses and together we strongly challenge the arguments put forward by the Local Authority in an attempt to justify Cabinet thinking about Sixth Form provision in Pontypridd. **We are asking the LA to give further consideration to sixth form reorganisation by identifying an appropriate and suitable location in Pontypridd for a Pontypridd Sixth Form using 21st Century funding. This should be one which:**

- can be led and managed predominantly by staff working in our Schools
- is accountable to the LA for standards achieved
- meets the aspirations of students and makes use of facilities and future investment planned for this important and well serviced central location within RCT

The time has now come to present our views clearly to the Local Authority and I trust you can find the time to read the attached summary and the more detailed information guide on the school website. Please use this to inform your own opinion and complete a response to the consultation process by January 31st, 2019.

The consultation proforma that you can use is also attached. I am sure that through our responses we will make a strong case for a 21st Century sixth form education provision in Pontypridd that our children are entitled to and which gives them the opportunity to meet aspirations and enjoy a successful future.

Please contact me at school should you wish to discuss any of the information included or if you require further advice on completing the consultation response document.

As always thank you for your continued support.



Huw Cripps
Headteacher

It is important to state that any comments about Bryncelynnog CS or Coleg y Cymoedd are only made in reference to information available. It is in no way our intention to criticise the work of other schools/colleges, but rather to question and challenge the LA analysis and interpretation of this information as portrayed in the Council's consultation document and the contextual report to members.

Proposal 1 – To remove the Sixth Form provision from Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman and develop Post-16 'centres of excellence' based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd

We do not accept this proposal because:

- Previous attempts at linking our Sixth Form with Bryncelynnog have not materialised because of the distance between the two schools and areas students travel from
- Students have expressed clearly that they will not want to travel to a BCS sixth form
- Standards at GCSE and A Level in Pontypridd High School are at a much higher standard than the consultation document suggests
- The Estyn report of 2017 would suggest that CyC is no better placed than the present Pontypridd Sixth Form partnership to become a Centre of Excellence.
- Present partnership working within the Pontypridd Sixth Form enables a broad subject choice to be offered and class sizes to be higher than the consultation document suggests
- Pontypridd is an important central place in RCT and a university town which should have a Sixth Form provision
- Equity of provision for our students is at the heart of Welsh Government policy for young people in Wales and the lack of a Sixth Form in Pontypridd town does not support this national priority.

Proposal 2 – Create a new 3-16 schools on the site of Pontypridd High.

In principle we accept this proposal because;

- We understand the benefits to both students and staff of access to improved facilities and the progression that can be made through such learning experiences
- Good practise can be gained from 3-16 schools elsewhere in RCT
- If an acceptable Sixth Form option is agreed then the 3-16 proposal could be accepted.

Proposal 3 – Amend the catchment area of Pontypridd High.

We accept this proposal because:

- We have discussed a resolution to the historical problems of our catchment area caused by the relocation of both PHS and HHS for a number of years
- It will help to support better progression and transition into Year 7

We ask that the Local Authority gives further consideration to this aspect of reorganisation by identifying an appropriate and suitable location in Pontypridd for a Pontypridd Sixth Form using 21st Century funding. One which:

- can be led and managed by staff working in our Schools
- is accountable to the LA
- meets the aspirations of all students and makes use of facilities and future investment planned for this important and well serviced central location within RCT

REORGANISATION of SCHOOLS in PONTYPRIDD

AN INFORMATION GUIDE for PARENTS and CARERS



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(NB: Proposal 2 and 4 relate only to Hawthorn High School and Welsh medium education)

Documents referred to in this response include:

- 1. Local Authority 'Consultation on the reorganisation of primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area**
- 2. A report to Council members with the purpose of seeking their approval to begin the relevant and required statutory consultations for the proposals**
- 3. Welsh Assembly Government National School Categorisation Guide**
- 4. Prosperity for All – A National Strategy' (2017)**
- 5. Education in Wales – Our National Mission (2017-2021)**

PROPOSAL 1

Proposal 1 : Removal of the Sixth Form of Pontypridd High with post-16 students attending an alternative school or college that offers the choice of courses they require.			
Agree with this proposal	YES	NO	NOT SURE

About the Pontypridd Sixth Form

For 10 years we have operated a joint sixth form provision with Hawthorn High School Together we call our partnership the 'Pontypridd Sixth Form'. By working together we are able to offer students a broader range of subjects at either school and we can also maximise the use of staff and facilities across the two schools. Students travel the short distance between sites by bus, provided as required and free of charge. This is a well established provision and we continually review it and make changes to ensure it is successful and meets the needs of our students.

What is significant and right is that by working together we are providing a school based sixth form provision within and around the town of Pontypridd.

We are objecting to the proposal to close the Pontypridd Sixth Form and relocate our students to Sixth Form 'Centres of Excellence' at either Bryncelynog Comprehensive School (BCS) or Coleg y Cymoedd (CyC) for the following reasons;

REASON 1

The first reason is related to the Partnership working that has already been attempted with the BCS / Y Pant Sixth Form partnership

- The fact that partnership working with BCS has been discussed in the past and joint work did not materialise because of the distance between the school sites
- BCS works in partnership with Y Pant CS. LA Officers confirmed in the meeting on November 12th that it was likely students would also travel to Y Pant CS for their A Levels because they will continue to work in partnership with BCS. This will lead to additional transport for those students.
- The fact that only 5 students out of nearly 900 of the students at Pontypridd High have expressed any interest to make this move to BCS. A similar number responded in that way at HHS.
- In the meeting on November 12th, Officers were not able to guarantee that the £10 million proposed for BCS would actually be spent on a Sixth Form Centre of Excellence' but could be used to finance general improvements to poor building quality at BCS.
- Because of the points above, the question must be asked whether £10 million spent at BCS would ever be accessed by PHS students

REASON 2

The second reason we do not accept this proposal as it is presented is because the consultation document makes a number of statements about poor standards at Pontypridd High and the Pontypridd Sixth Form which are inaccurate and misleading.

It appears that the intention of the document is to give an impression that standards are higher elsewhere and that a move to a Sixth Form Centre in another part of RCT should be welcomed by parents / carers and their children.

Examples of such statements about standards at Pontypridd High include:

a). Firstly from Page 10 of the Consultation Document with regards to GCSE outcomes

'The educational performance and pupil attendance of the 2 LA maintained secondary schools at Key Stage 4 is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales'

The two LA maintained schools referred to in this quote are Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High. Both schools feel extremely disappointed by this factually inaccurate analysis of performance and would point out that the Welsh Assembly has categorized both as being 'Yellow' schools for each of the last three academic years. The Welsh Assembly defines Yellow schools as being those that **"Have secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators."** (Page 19 of the WAG National School Categorisation Guide)

What is meant by 'quartiles' and how such a reference is a negative rather than a positive statement ?

All secondary schools in Wales are divided into groups depending on the number of children who receive free school meals. This is averaged out over a 3 year period to give a single figure. For the years 2015 and 2016 the average for Pontypridd High School (PHS) was 20.8%. For 2016 and 2018 this average fell to 19.8%. Since September 2018 the figure for PHS is 20.2%

As a result, between 2015 and 2016 PHS was in a group of Schools with a FSM entitlement of 20-30%. Between 2017 and 2018 we have been in a group of Schools between 15-20%. These are the groups in which comparisons are made of 'similar' schools'. Similar does not necessarily mean local, as they could be located anywhere in Wales.

Between 2015 and 2016 you would expect PHS to be in quartile 1 or 2 for all performance indicators given the average FSM entitlement of 20.8%. As this figure decreased to 19.8% for 2017 and 2018 you would expect any comparison with similar schools to be more in quartiles 3 and 4.

BCS is placed in a group of schools with 10-15% FSM entitlement. To that extent BCS is not a 'similar' school to Pontypridd High and as such no direct comparisons in relation to student outcomes should be made between the two schools.

The table below shows GCSE outcomes at PHS over the period 2015 to 2017.

Welsh Government Performance Indicator	2015 Compared to schools who were 20-30% eFSM	2016 Compared to schools who were 20-30% eFSM	2017 Compared to schools who were 15-20% eFSM	2017 Compared to schools who were 20-30% eFSM
5 A* to C at GCSE (with Eng/Maths)	2	1	3	2
5 A* to C at GCSE or better	1	1	4	2
5 A* to G at GCSE or better	2	1	2	2
Capped 8/9 average GCSE points	1	1	3	1
Best English A* to C %	3	1	4	2
Best Maths A* to C %	1	1	2	1
Best Science A* to C %	4	3	3	2

You will note that PHS has been in the 3rd or 4th quartile on 8/21 occasions during this 3 year period. To draw the conclusion that PHS is consistently in the 3rd or 4th quartile is therefore inaccurate and very misleading. It would be more accurate to state the positive view that in 13/21 occasions, PHS has been in quartiles 1 and 2 but the consultation document did not do that. The figures for BCS are the same.

ii). Secondly, misleading and inaccurate contextual information was given to Council members through an initial report regarding A Level standards at PHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form. These include:

From the report to Council members paragraph 4.2

'The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 5 (in respect of the A Level results) of Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools are consistently below the Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in RCT and Wales.'

From the report to Council members paragraph 4.7

'The educational performance of the sixth forms has been mixed with two of the secondary schools (Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High ?) consistently being amongst the worst performing schools in respect of A Level performance'

These statements are inaccurate and misleading because they do not reflect actual outcomes at A Level when measured and compared against different performance indicators. Thorough and accurate analysis of this data which is shown in the table below reveals that:

Comparative A Level outcomes in Year 13

		L3	AWPS	3 A*/A	3 A*/C
2015	Pontypridd High	95.2	856	3.2	68.3
	RCT lowest			0	27.0
	RCT average	96.9	730	3.1	57.9
	Wales average	96.9	799	7.9	68.1
2016	Pontypridd High	100	928	5.9	64.7
	RCT lowest			0	40.2
	RCT average	97.0	765	4.0	65.2
	Wales average	98.0	823	6.7	70.6
2017	Pontypridd High	100	820	5.6	42.6
	RCT lowest			0	16.3
	RCT average	96.3	678	5.5	45.1
	Wales average	97.1	731	10.5	54.7

i). Between 2015 and 2017, PHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form achieved A Level outcomes that on 9/12 occasions were above the RCT average and 6/12 occasions above the Wales average. The term 'consistent' and 'below' are totally inappropriate, very negative and not a true representation of the actual outcomes within the Pontypridd Sixth Form. The figures for BCS are the same.

iii). In the meeting with senior LA Officers on November 12th these points were raised by the Student Council, staff and governors and not questioned. However, Officers raised the fact that BCS had achieved better results in 2018. It was noted that the document had been written and proposals agreed based on data up to 2017. If 2018 data was to be considered then PHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form would also have been seen to have improved.

The following is taken from Pages 13 and 28 of the Consultation Document

'The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough is well below Welsh averages and among the lowest in Wales.'

Please see the student outcome data for Pontypridd High in comparison with RCT and Wales below:

Average Wider Points Score in Year 13

Year		AWPS
2015	Pontypridd High	856
	RCT average	725
	Wales average	787
2016	Pontypridd High	928
	RCT average	765
	Wales average	823
2017	Pontypridd High	820
	RCT average	679
	Wales average	733

Each A Level grade that a student achieves is equal to a certain number of points. (For example, an A grade at A Level is worth 120 points, a B grade 100 points and so on). All of these grades / points are added up to give a total points score. The Average Wider Points Score is made up of the total points achieved by each student which is then divided by the number of A Level students in the year group. Points are awarded for A/S results in Year 12 and for the WBQ and Skills Challenge Certificate. They are one of the key factors in meeting the requirements of a successful University or College application

Whilst this statement makes no specific reference to PHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form, more thorough and detailed analysis would show that:

- PHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form exceed both the Wales and RCT averages every year, on most occasions by more than 100 points which is very significant.
- This reflects the fact that each student is given quality learning experiences and a range of support and guidance which enables them to study different courses and complete them successfully.

iii). Thirdly, in relation to contextual information which was given to Council members prior to presenting the proposals for reorganisation in the Pontypridd area

From the report to Council members paragraph 4.2

'However, Bryncelynog Comprehensive School is an improving school and has consistently performed above the Welsh average for A level provision.'

- The data presented would appear to show parity between PHS, the Pontypridd Sixth Form and BCS.
- Despite improvements in outcomes at PHS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form there is no reference to PHS being an 'improved school' which again creates the impression that an unfair comparison is being made, justified by an inaccurate analysis and interpretation of data.

iv). Finally, in relation to standards there is no reference at all to outcomes at Coleg Y Cymoedd (CyC) despite the fact that this institution is proposed to be an option for PHS students as a 'Sixth Form Centre of Excellence'. This is a concern because;

- The A Level provision at CyC has been in place since it was built as part of a £45million investment 8 years ago. It is intended to be a minimum of 350 students which is only 3% of the total student roll at CyC.
- Cardinal Newman Sixth Form was based at CyC for 5 years until 2015. They withdrew at that time over concerns about the quality of A Level provision.
- The consultation document contains no information on A Level standards at CyC. Despite requests at the meeting with LA Officers on November 12th they were unable to present any information on outcomes which is interesting given they have committed our students to going there should this proposal be accepted.
- In the meeting on November 12th LA Officers referred to excellent results at CyC in 2018. This is reference to 98% 'pass rate' reported through a press release on exam results day in August 2018. PHS achieved 98.5% for this indicator. The fact remains these proposals were confirmed prior to the 2018 results being available and commentary in the document relates to data up to 2017.
- In 2017 an Estyn report on provision at CyC concluded that overall standards were **ADEQUATE**. This was because the majority of '*learning areas have success rates significantly below national averages. In addition, standards on academic programmes, including AS and A levels, are well below national comparators*'. This is not referred to in either document even though standards in PHS were referred to as 'below average' and 'amongst the worst in Wales' on different occasions.
- Amongst others, Estyn made the following recommendations following their inspection of CyC in 2017;

R1 : Improve standards and outcomes achieved by learners on AS and A level courses

- In the meeting on November 12th, LA Officers were asked what action they had led in response to this inspection report. They confirmed that they have no significant role in managing and leading provision at CyC and as such the LA had not responded in any way to the Estyn recommendations. This is a concern because it shows there is no clear line of accountability from the Local Authority to any PHS students who could attend CyC if this Sixth Form proposal to be a Centre of Excellence is accepted.

REASON 3

The third reason why we object to the proposed removal of a Sixth Form from Pontypridd High is related to the inaccurate and misleading information provided in the consultation document in relation to educational and financial viability of our present sixth form.

a). In relation to viability, Page 10 of the Consultation document states that;

'Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools combined have small sixth forms of less than 250 pupils (the national recommended minimum number for an efficient and effective sixth form), and with relatively poor educational performance.'

And on page Page 13 of the consultation document;

'A viable sixth form, both educationally and financially should, ideally, have at least 250 students; In January 2018 (source : PLASC return), Hawthorn High had 114 sixth form students attending and Pontypridd High 131, just 245 in total between the two schools. Bryncelynnog Comprehensive had 147 sixth form students at the same point in time.'

It is recognised that both PHS and HHS are in a budget deficit situation and that BCS is presently in a surplus situation. However, we question these statements because;

- It is unclear where a figure of 250 for a viable Sixth Form has been taken. This could not be verified in the meeting with LA Officers on November 12th.
- The Pontypridd Sixth Form with 245 students is presently the most viable and a good basis for a £10 million investment.
- **The figures in the table below** illustrate the advantages of working in partnership and how the Pontypridd Sixth Form of 245 students is more viable. The number of classes with less than 5 students has been reduced significantly by sharing provision. RCT calculations only consider each school and take no account of students from both schools in each class and the efficiencies to be gained through such a partnership. This creates a misleading picture of the Pontypridd Sixth Form.

Number of A Level classes with 5 students or less

	2016	2017	2018
RCT Calculation	28	25	n/a
Pontypridd Sixth Form actual number	17	8	3

- **The table below** shows the average A Level class size which has grown over the three years, again as a result of sharing provision. RCT calculations only consider each school and take no account of students from both schools in each class.

Average A Level classes size

	2016	2017	2018
RCT Calculation	5	5	n/a
Pontypridd Sixth Form actual number	11	14	14

And on Page 26 of the consultation document

'This proposal will create a school based sixth form at Bryncelynnog of over 350 students (this will depend on student choice) and further enhance the sixth form and vocational offer at Coleg Y Cymoedd's Nantgarw Campus that already has 350 post 16 students studying traditional A Level subjects and over 1,000 post 16 students studying vocational subjects.'

The table below shows the planned Sixth Form numbers should this proposal be accepted.

Proposed Sixth Form Numbers

School	January 2019	January 2020	January 2021	January 2022	January 2023
Bryncelynnog	152	167	174	172	178
Newman	65	70	73	83	93
Hawthorn	98	107	100	92	105
Pontypridd	111	112	112	108	105
Total	426	456	459	455	481

School	January 2023	January 2024	January 2025
Bryncelynnog Sixth Form	388	408	428

We question the strategic value of this statement and its claim that significant numbers of students (210) from PHS and HHS will attend a sixth form at BCS because;

- Previous attempts at partnership workings with BCS have not materialised because of the additional travel time for students
- In a survey of all PHS students only 5 expressed any interest in attending a Sixth form at BCS
- Experience in the Rhondda suggests that significant numbers of students do not transfer to another school for post-16, preferring instead to attend a college environment, an option already questioned in this document. If similar choices are made by Pontypridd students (as they are being encouraged to do in the Council's proposals) the projected numbers at BCS' 'Centre of Excellence' in 2022 will be nothing like the Council's projections.
- The LA also accept that should this proposal be accepted it is likely students will move elsewhere over the next 3 to 4 years to the extent that an alternative post-16 destination will already have been established should the new Centre of Excellence at BCS open in 2022
- For these reasons it is unlikely that the proposed figure of 388 Sixth Form students at BCS in January of 2023 will be reached through additional students from the Pontypridd Sixth Form.

REASON 4

The fourth reason is related to the equity of provision that our students will have access to if proposal 1 regarding the Sixth Form is accepted in its present format. Within Pontypridd High and the Pontypridd Sixth Form we are committed to:

- Giving learners from deprived backgrounds access to the highest quality learning and teaching so that the individual's learning pathway meets their needs and aspirations
- Providing the support and guidance to each student to ensure a seamless progression and transition from school to school and from school to further and higher education

We are very pleased that standards achieved by those students who are entitled to FSM have improved at GCSE and A Level each year. Our aims support Welsh Government priorities and the present proposal for removing Sixth Forms from PHS and other Pontypridd schools questions how this can be achieved in the future. Such priorities are outlined in two government reports:

1. 'Prosperity for All – A National Strategy' (2017) sets out a long-term aim to make Wales healthy and active, prosperous and secure, ambitious and learning, and united and connected. It aims to do this by:

- supporting young people to make the most of their potential
- building ambition and encouraging learning for life
- equipping everyone with the right skills for a changing world.

2. Education in Wales – Our national Mission (2017-2021) has two related objectives:

Enabling objective 1: Developing a high-quality education profession

To continue the 21st Century Schools and Education Capital Programme in order to deliver learning environments that meet the needs of all learners

Enabling objective 3: Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being

All learners must be supported to be emotionally and physically ready to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Equity requires that we ensure that the system, at school, local and national level takes account of and responds to the unique challenges that present themselves to individuals or groups of learners.

The proposal to remove the Sixth Form from Pontypridd does not fit with the priorities of the Welsh government as it reduces choice, builds barriers to extended learning options and therefore reduces the likelihood of a student progressing into a school based Sixth Form within the Pontypridd area. This becomes more relevant when consideration is given for the increasing number of children entitled to FSM at Pontypridd High as shown below:

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
eFSM %	28%	26%	20%	12%	15%

The table shows that Years 9, 8 and 7 are almost double the % FSM for Years 10 and 11. This is a concern because the younger year groups will be those most directly affected by the proposed changes in Sixth Form from September 2022.

Our success in improving outcomes for such learners has been based on familiarity, specific roles for staff, family engagement and raising aspirations. The proposal for changes in Sixth Form will not support this well established way of working and to that extent it questions whether the key government priorities can also be met.

PROPOSAL 3

Proposal 3 : Create a new, 3-16 'all through' school for Pontypridd High			
Agree with this proposal	YES	NO	NOT SURE

We accept this proposal but recognise the views of those connected with Cilfynydd PS who may have to experience a significant change should this be the case.

We also only accept this proposal on the basis that suitable arrangements can be made for our post-16 students in the Pontypridd locality which are under the influence of RCT. In agreeing with this proposal we do not by implication accept proposal 1 in its current form.

We understand that this proposal is very much in line with the strategic change across RCT and that the timescale for implementation sits alongside significant curriculum change and learning experiences planned across in Wales in 2022.

The Governing Body has reservations that the level of investment proposed (£4.7 million) may not be sufficient to develop all aspects of the Pontypridd High site to '21st Century' standards

To that extent we would accept this proposal whilst also recognising that all planning and delivery will be the responsibility of a new School in 2022. It will be for them to meet the demands of such a change as outlined in the following statements;

On Page 8 of the consultation document;

'A single workforce in a school reflecting on and jointly developing and designing what works for five-year olds, teenagers and young adults is capable of a wider range of points of reference and a wider range of practices that a smaller group of teachers with a one-phase window to consider. These changes to what pupils learn and how they learn it are easier to manage in an all-through environment than in a single-phase school or group of schools.'

And on Page 16 of the consultation document;

'Other partner/associated primary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal. Pupil transition is important and the Council, through its 21st Century Band A programme has instigated some innovative programmes to ensure the quality of integration at Year 7 was seamless regardless of where they have received their primary experience. No pupil will be disadvantaged when they join the new school at Year 7.'

Transition work with all cluster schools is essential so that all children have similar experiences and access to quality resources in a 21st Century learning environment. To achieve this the LA must ensure sufficient funding exists that enables each child to make use of such resources at the new school from September 2022.

PROPOSAL 5

Proposal 5 : Amendment of the catchment area Pontypridd High School			
Agree with this proposal	YES	NO	NOT SURE

We accept this proposal but recognise the views of those connected with the primary schools and parents / carers involved who may have to experience a significant change should this be the case.

On Page 54 in the consultation document

'The catchment area of the new Pontypridd 3-16 school will be as follows:

- Admission for 3-11 pupils – the existing catchment area of Cilfynydd PS
- The Graig area of Pontypridd that is currently part of the catchment area of Maesycloed Primary School
- The catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School'

We understand that this proposal is very much in line with the strategic change across RCT. It is also a solution to a longer-term issue with the catchment boundaries between ourselves and Hawthorn HS.

To that extent we would accept this proposal and can give our full assurance to the transition process that will allow all children to be successful at Pontypridd High from 2020 and then on in a new 3-16 (or 3-18) school from September, 2022.

Other considerations in relation to Proposals 3 and 5

We welcome the commitment to improved road safety measures where appropriate to any implementation of these proposals. This was made clear by the statement below;

On Page 7 of the consultation document

'A review of the safe routes to school, and improvements to walkways, road crossings and road speed management measures will be made to ensure the required safety standards are met. This is the approach we have implemented in other communities in earlier school reorganisation proposals with significant improvements being made to safe routes to schools.'

LA Officers on November 12th acknowledged the cost of ensuring such measures are put in place and confirmed **that the funding to undertake such work will not be taken from the 21st Century schools funding already outlined as a commitment to our school.**

Conclusions

Pontypridd High School does not accept Proposal 1 to remove the Sixth Form provision because the two alternatives given in the consultation document are not acceptable for different reasons. These include:

- The tone through much of the consultation document appears to question standards achieved by PHS. Unfair and statistically inaccurate comparisons are implied in the initial report to Council members and in the consultation document about standards and outcomes between Pontypridd High School, the Pontypridd Sixth Form and other institutions, the LA and Welsh figures.
- According to the consultation document this is a plan for schools in Pontypridd and geographically a Centre of Excellence at BCS will not serve students from Pontypridd. Nor will such a distant provision encourage different groups of learners to be aspirational about their own futures by furthering their studies at A Level.
- Evidence already shows that students are highly unlikely to take up the option of a Sixth Form Centre at BCS. Strategically this must question the allocation of £10million of funding and the fact that such funding will not be accessed by our students.
- It has been confirmed that no guarantee can be given as yet that such funding for BCS will be used specifically for a Sixth Form Centre or in a more general way to address the poor state of school buildings. Such a statement is at odds with the commentary in the document and the spirit of a Centre of Excellence for post-16 students.
- The Pontypridd Sixth Form at present is a more viable one through its partnership working. This is a foundation for further investment.
- It is not clear what pastoral, support and transition arrangements would be available through Sixth Form Centres of Excellence. This is important to all students and in particular the most vulnerable for whom a safe transition into post-16 in familiar surroundings and where staff know each individual and their family well.
- The Estyn report of 2017 would suggest that CyC is no better placed than the present Pontypridd Sixth Form partnership to become a Centre of Excellence.
- In comparison to a School based Sixth Form, the level of accountability that CyC has to RCT is a concern.

Pontypridd High School accepts Proposal 3 to become a 3-16 (or 3-18) 'all through' school within the context of Sixth Form proposals being reviewed.

Pontypridd High School accepts Proposal 5 to amend catchment areas as outlined in the consultation document.

What happens next ?

- i). Following the deadline for responses in January 2019 all information will be recorded, reported and discussed.
- ii). A decision will be made by the Council Cabinet in March, 2019. Following this there is a period when objections can be heard.
- iii). If proposals are agreed then the initial stage, most likely in the Autumn of 2020 will be to appoint a temporary governing body for the new school and staff appointments will take place from that time.
- iv). Changes to catchment areas will take effect from September, 2020
- v). Below is a copy of the Consultation response form that needs to be used as part of this process. **Please use:**
 - **information on pages 6 to 14 to answer question 1 on Proposal 1**
 - **information on page 14 and 15 to answer question 2 on Proposal 3**
 - **information on page 15 to answer question 3 on Proposal 5**

Questions for the Local Authority

- Pontypridd is a university town and it should be offering a vibrant Sixth Form provision for children who grow up and live in Pontypridd. This is what the student voice says they want.

What is the justification for moving all Sixth Form provision out of the town area of Pontypridd ? This is not clear from the documents provided or from responses given in meetings with LA Officers.

- Within this proposal there needs to be new consideration for an appropriate and suitable location in Pontypridd using 21st Century funding to deliver post-16 provision which can be built around the 3-16 model and which is delivered by staff who are known to students and who have A Level teaching experience.

How can a Centre of Excellence at Coleg Y Cymoedd be created when the LA has no significant input into how that is created, monitored or measured ?

- Such a Sixth Form provision should have a leadership and management structure which is accountable to the LA, meets the aspirations of students and makes use of facilities and future investment planned for this important and well serviced central location within RCT.

Should the £10million earmarked for Bryncelynnog CS actually be used to develop a Sixth Form provision within the Pontypridd area, at a site appropriate to both PHS and HHS ?

The Consultation Response Form

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

21st Century Schools Team

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

or email schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

The Proposals

Proposal 1: Removal of the sixth forms of Hawthorn High, Pontypridd High and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive, with post 16 students attending a centre of excellence at Bryncelynnog CS or Coleg Y Cymoedd.

1. Do you agree with proposal 1? YES / NO / NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

[A summary of reasons why the school does not accept this proposal are included on the consultation response summary page which can be found on the school website](#)

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Proposal 3: Create a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Pontypridd

2. Do you agree with proposal 3? YES / NO / NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

A summary of reasons why the school accepts this proposal given agreement on the Sixth Form are included on the consultation response summary page which can be found on the school website

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Proposal 5: Amendment of the catchment areas of Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High Schools and the 6th form catchment area of Bryncelynog Comprehensive School, as outlined in this document.

3. Do you agree with proposal 5? YES / NO / NOT SURE

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

A summary of reasons why the school accepts this proposal are included on the consultation response summary page which can be found on the school website

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4. Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account

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5. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

.....

6. Name (optional)

.....

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

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Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than Thursday, 31st January 2019

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 and the Council's data protection pages here: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection.

Additional Information Sheet

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Appendix 8

Results of separate consultation of Owen Smith MP

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Consultation Response Pro-forma

The Proposals

Proposal 1: Removal of the sixth forms of Hawthorn High, Pontypridd High and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive, with post 16 students attending an alternative school or college that offers the choice of courses they require.

Do you agree with proposal 1? **No**

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

1. This proposal will curtail choice for post 16 students in the greater Pontypridd area. The consultation assumes that approximately two thirds (c.200 of c.300) pupils attending the three 6th Forms proposed for closure will transfer to Bryncelynnog, expanding the Bryncelynnog 6th Form to 428 pupils by 2025, from its current base of 147. Though the projections do not include Coleg y Cymoedd, the inference is that just 60-100 of the pupils who would have attended one of the three closing 6th Forms will choose to attend CyC. There is no evidence to support these assumptions. Indeed, elsewhere in the document it is stated, quite plausibly, that the small decline we have seen in 6th Form numbers is a direct effect of the creation of the College.

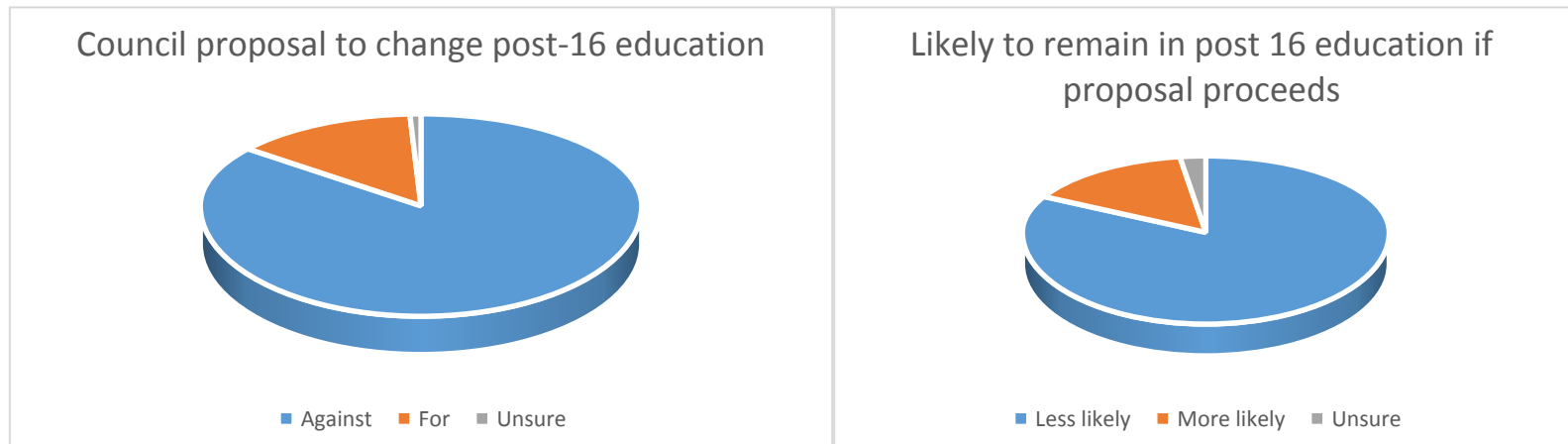
A far more realistic assumption is that the majority of students living between Cilfynydd and Taffs Well will, when presented with a choice between Bryncelynnog Comprehensive 6th Form and Coleg y Cymoedd, choose to attend the College. Geography and traditional patterns of travel and community connection will drive this pattern. People tend to travel up and down our valleys for work and education, rather than across valleys and there is no evidence to suggest that this pattern would change for these proposals.

In order to test public opinion about these proposals, I conducted a survey with affected schools in the catchment area and received responses from 542 families from the following schools:

- Pontypridd High
- Cardinal Newman
- Hawthorn High
- Hawthorn primary

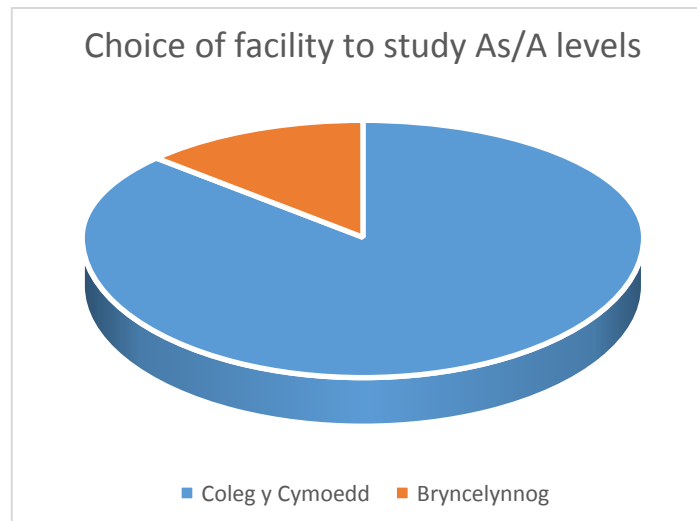
- Cefn primary
- Trehopcyn primary
- Trerobert primary
- Coed y Lan primary
- Parc Lewis primary
- Coedpenmaen primary
- Maesycoed primary
- Trallwn infants

Overwhelmingly, 84% of parents opposed the Council’s proposals as the best way to improve post-16 education in the Pontypridd area, with only 15% supportive of the proposals. Furthermore, 82% of parents clearly stated their children were less likely to remain in education after the age of 16 if the Council’s proposals were implemented. Only 16% thought their children were more likely to remain in post-16 education.



I also asked parents that if the changes were implemented, would your child be more likely to attend Coleg y Cymoedd or Bryncelynnog Comprehensive school to study for their As/A levels.

85% of parents answered that their child would be more likely to attend Coleg y Cymoedd compared with 15% who would choose to attend Bryncelynnog Comprehensive school.



The findings comprehensively support the conclusion that pupils will see their only 'real' choice as attending the college. It is therefore, essentially a false choice that is offered in these proposals, as the majority will attend the college.

There are several important issues that stem from this reduced choice:

a. Lesser pastoral care and structured learning for less mature or more vulnerable pupils, or for some with Learning Difficulties. Coleg y Cymoedd is an excellent FE college. It is, however, a very different learning environment to school, with a far greater, historic emphasis on vocational study and on student-led learning, with lesser structure in the learning day or week and greater churn in the teaching staff, with lesser continuity for students. There is less one-on-one management and knowledge of individual pupils, a function of the numbers of students and the culture of treating students more as adults and autonomous learners. For some, more mature or able students, this cultural change may prove stimulating and wholly positive. For others, however, who require greater nurturing, support or encouragement, it may prove a significant impediment to their achieving their full potential. That is why a true choice of options for students, with continuity pre-and post- 16 for those that require additional support, in an environment closer to their community, will remain a necessary condition for success for some students. In other words, the college will not be suitable for all at age 16, and Bryncelynnog, though an excellent school itself, may not be a realistic or viable alternative for those pupils who would fare better in a school 6th Form environment.

b. Lack of evidence that academic achievement will be improved by a concentration of pupils either at Coleg y Cymoedd or Bryncelynnog. The consultation document gives an impression that Bryncelynnog is significantly outperforming the other three schools in terms of performance at A Level. However, over a five year period all four schools have, in fact, performed similarly, with changes in cohorts delivering better results in Bryncelynnog in one year, Hawthorn in another, Ponty High in a third, Cardinal Newman in a fourth.

In 2015, for example, Bryncelynnog achieved just 34.7% success rate at grades A-C, whereas Cardinal Newman, Pontypridd High and Hawthorn achieved 73.4%, 68.3% and 59.6% respectively. A year later, in 2016, Bryncelynnog had boosted its performance to 67.2% while PHS, CN and HHS scored 64.7%, 68% and 61.9% respectively. These fluctuating patterns of similar performance are repeated across the period, and provide no strong evidence that any one school is 'out-performing' the others, nor that concentration of pupils in BCC would improve performance overall.

It is not ordinarily possible for parents to draw comparison between the academic performance of A Level students at Coleg y Cymoedd and that at our sixth forms, as the CyC data is not published. However, that data has been provided to me by the Welsh Assembly Government and it does not support the conclusion that performance would be enhanced by the transference of pupils to the college.

For comparison, in 2015, 61% of students at CyC achieved A-Levels grade A-C, out-performing the cohort at Bryncelynnog that year, on a par with Hawthorn, but a lesser percentage of success than at Ponty High or Cardinal Newman.

In 2016, 59% of students at CyC achieved A Levels grade A-C, performing less well than at any of our 6th Forms.

A level attainment Coleg Y Cymoedd (a)

	2016/17				2015/16				2014/15				2013/14			
	Number of A levels sat	% A*-A	% A*-C	% A*-E	Number of A levels sat	% A*-A	% A*-C	% A*-E	Number of A levels sat	% A*-A	% A*-C	% A*-E	Number of A levels sat	% A*-A	% A*-C	% A*-E
Applied ICT (Pilot)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Art and Design	30	16	66	94	40	*	50	97	50	14	59	100	40	22	76	95
Biology	20	*	53	84	15	*	46	77	15	*	62	92	30	*	50	96
Business	15	*	63	100	15	*	47	82	15	0	69	100	25	0	78	100
Chemistry	15	0	21	79	15	0	31	85	*	*	*	*	25	20	76	100
Computing	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Design and Technology	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Drama and Theatre Studies	*	*	*	*	10	0	80	100	10	*	92	100	*	*	*	*
Economics	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*
English Language and Literature	25	11	81	100	35	*	65	100	25	*	78	100	45	7	72	100
English Literature	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Film Studies	10	*	75	100	15	0	79	100	10	0	60	100	*	*	*	*
French	*	*	*	*	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	0	0	0	0

For completeness and transparency, please see the table below listing all Coleg y Cymoedd results across all A Level Subjects from 2013-2017.

Further Mathematics	*	*	*	*	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Geography	10	*	50	100	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	15	*	79	100
German	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Government and Politics	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
History	25	12	52	96	20	0	70	100	30	*	71	96	20	18	73	100
Law	25	24	68	92	30	10	74	97	25	12	60	92	20	26	79	100
Mathematics	35	18	64	88	20	36	68	86	15	25	81	94	30	16	63	97
Media Studies	25	0	72	100	30	10	90	100	30	*	71	89	25	*	60	96
Music	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Music Technology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*
Philosophy	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*
Physical Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*
Physics	10	*	60	90	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Polish	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Psychology	55	9	54	89	20	0	40	95	35	*	53	85	45	7	45	84
Religious Studies	25	17	58	92	15	0	54	100	*	*	*	*	10	*	67	92
Sociology	45	6	55	94	35	0	61	100	35	*	63	100	30	14	82	100
Spanish	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0	0	0	0
Statistics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	*	*	*	*
Welsh second language	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
All	405	11	59	93	350	7	61	96	355	10	65	95	425	11	67	97

(a) Data not shown for cohorts of less than 10, or individual cells for less than 3 pupils.

Number of A levels sat rounded to the nearest 5.

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

It is also worth noting that the breadth and nature of the A Level Subjects being undertaken at the College versus the 6th Forms may have some significant bearing on any analysis of their relative performance. The history and tradition of CyC is as a centre of

excellence for vocational learning, not as a 6th Form with its traditional emphasis on academic learning and progression to Higher Education.

This accounts for the fact that many traditional A Level subjects have NEVER been taught at Coleg y Cymoedd. For example, since the creation of the College, NO pupils have undertaken A Levels in English Literature, Further Mathematics, French, German, Spanish, Welsh, Music, DT, Government and Politics, Philosophy or Statistics..

The most popular A Levels at the College over the period are Psychology, Sociology, Art and Design, Media studies, Mathematics, History and Law. Of course these subject choices and mix would change if the College were effectively the post-16 choice for many across Pontypridd, but it does highlight a significant dearth of experience or expertise in the teaching of many academic subjects at Coleg y Cymoedd

c. Travel arrangements. It is a longstanding objective of the Welsh Government and RCTCBC to increase the physical activity of our children, including through the encouragement of walking to school along safe school routes. For the overwhelming majority of pupils transferring from one of the existing 6th Forms to either CyC or BCC, there will be no safe route and significantly increased distances to travel. The consultation acknowledges that fact and so proposes home to school bus transport for almost all of the pupils. This is at odds with the important objective of increasing physical activity. It is also environmentally detrimental. Questions also have to be asked about the sustainability of this guarantee of transport, in light of recent, later retracted, proposals to cut school transport routes due to budgetary restrictions.

d. Faith school provision. This would be the second time in five years that the 6th Form at Cardinal Newman has undergone significant change, including its abortive partnership with Coleg y Cymoedd, widely perceived by parents and pupils not to have worked, for a variety of reasons. These new proposals will see many pupils seeking a Catholic 6th Form education forced to travel out of county, to Cardiff. There is significant concern among parents and pupils at the school about the impact this will have on both the individuals concerned and on the long-term viability of the school, if denuded of its 6th Form.

Proposal 2: Create a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Hawthorn

Do you agree with proposal 2? **No**

Please let us know the reasons for your choice:

For the reasons listed in my response to Proposal 1, I believe retention of a 6th Form for Pontypridd is essential. I accept the arguments being made about size and the relative performance of the existing 6th Forms, and the logic of greater concentration on one or more sites. The logical site for an expanded 6th Form for the greater Pontypridd area is at Hawthorn, although that too would present some challenges in respect of traffic management and other important issues raised by parents.

There is nothing to stop the Council proposing a 3-19 school on the Hawthorn site. The proximity of Hawthorn Primary means that such a school already exists in spatial terms, though the management, governance, resourcing etc are currently all separate, of course.

Nor is there significant evidence from elsewhere in Wales, or the rest of the UK that 3-16 schools increase academic performance. Indeed some recent studies have illustrated the traditional benefits of having older, post-16 student role-models on site alongside younger pupils. I accept many of the arguments made in the document about the theoretical benefits in management and financial terms of the merger, but do not believe they are sufficient to any educational concerns.

Parents, as surveyed above, and in local public meetings have expressed other concerns, which the council must address. These include:

- That a 3 – 16 ‘all through school’ can be difficult to manage and younger pupils may be exposed to older pupils’ behaviour, i.e, swearing and smoking.
- That there could be an increase of anti-social behaviour due to the size of the school, which also raises the question about children who have difficulty settling into a new environment – a smaller school, with pupils from an appropriate age range can manage the transition into school easier, which then has a more positive outcome on their educational journey.

Proposal 3: Create a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Pontypridd

Do you agree with proposal 3? No

Please let us know the reasons for your choice:

For the reasons listed in my response to Proposal 1, I believe retention of a 6th Form for Pontypridd is essential. However, I accept the arguments being made about size and the relative performance of the existing 6th Forms, and the logic of greater concentration

on one or more sites. Pontypridd High School provides an excellent, nurturing education and environment for its pupils. It's location, however, significantly outside Pontypridd, in the Cynon Valley Constituency, and wedged between an industrial estate and the A470 has never been ideal. If the Council considers it financially and educationally unsustainable to retain all three existing 6th Forms, then a compromise proposal might be to concentrate the three 6th Forms at Hawthorn.

Alternative ideas that the Council should consider are either:

- a. The construction of a new 6th Form Centre of Excellence elsewhere in Pontypridd, with shared governance between the three local schools, and oversight by our Local Authority.
- b. Full amalgamation of Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High Schools on a shared site, with a 6th Form shared between all three schools.

Proposal 4: Close YGG Pont Sion Norton and relocate its pupils to a new Welsh Medium Primary School, to be constructed on the current site of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School (which will close as part of Proposal 2). Welsh Medium pupils attending Heol y Celyn will also transfer to the new school.

Do you agree with proposal 4? **Yes**

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

YGG Pont Sion Norton is another excellent local school, but its site, access and location are far from perfect, as described accurately in the Consultation Document. Welsh language pupils will benefit significantly from the construction of a new school, especially in the improved provision for outdoor learning and play.

Proposal 5: Amendment of the catchment areas of Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High Schools and the 6th form catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, as outlined in this document.

Do you agree with proposal 5? **Yes, in respect of Pontypridd High. No, in respect of Hawthorn and Bryncelynnog**

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

The changes to the catchment for Pontypridd High are sensible and largely supported by parents. The current catchments are anomalous consequences of previous decisions to relocate Secondary provision in Pontypridd from Glyntaff and Coed-y-Lan to the current sites at Hawthorn and Pontypridd High (Cilfynydd) respectively. Natural connections between areas and communities would be better reflected by the proposed changes. This is especially true for Coedpenmaen Primary. The case for Maes-y-Coed is more finely balanced, as reflected in the relatively even split of pupils transitioning from the school to Hawthorn and Ponty High.

However, the same cannot be said of the proposal to change the catchments for Hawthorn and Bryncelynnog through the change to Gwauncelyn Primary School.

Gwauncelyn is located in Tonteg, at one end of a 'natural' community that includes Church Village, Llantwit Fadre, Tynant and Beddau, all locations that have traditionally fed Bryncelynnog Comprehensive. Tonteg is geographically and culturally part of that community and wholly separate from the community of Hawthorn and Rhydyfelin. Geographically, they are several miles apart, with Power Station Hill, the River Taff, Treforest Industrial Estate and the exceptionally busy Upper Boat Roundabout separating them. There is clearly no safe route to school between Tonteg and Hawthorn but, more importantly, there is no shared community. Such a shift would involve moving pupils wholly outside their community of friends, neighbours, clubs and associations – only to ask them all to move back at age 16.

This is a decision clearly designed to accommodate anticipated growth of the communities along the Church Village by-pass corridor, and the consequent increase in pupil numbers at Bryncelynnog, but it cannot be right to ask parents and pupils in the community of Tonteg to sever their traditional, natural connection to Bryncelynnog in anticipation of other local population changes. Far better to plan additional, future primary school provision for those growth areas in conjunction with investment and expansion of Bryncelynnog as necessary.

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

Rhondda Cynon Taff Council has an excellent and enviable record of investment in, and support of local education with some outstanding performance and results as a consequence. I consistently hear praise from local parents at the quality of local education and the commitment of our teachers and local authority to maintaining and improving performance.

The recent capital investments across our county have also been exceptional – in effect the greatest investment we have seen since the Victorian era, with new schools across all areas. The proposals in this consultation also involve significant and welcome further investment. Bryncelynnog and Hawthorn schools, in particular, are in clear and pressing need of investment in the fabric of their buildings. We also have too many surplus places at Primary level, and too many failing buildings in need of constant and expensive repair. These proposals would be beneficial in addressing these financial issues.

However, these changes must, first and foremost, be about achieving improvements in educational standards, increasing educational engagement post-16, while creating a footprint for our local services which matches likely population growth and development into this century. And I am not convinced that these proposals are the best means of achieving any of those goals.

The consultation document suggests that pupils will have a choice in the greater Pontypridd area between attending Coleg y Cymoedd or Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School. I believe, in line with the more than 500 parents and pupils I have consulted, that the majority of pupils under these circumstances will attend Coleg y Cymoedd, thereby effectively denying meaningful educational choice to residents in Pontypridd. That cannot be right.

Nor is it right, in my view, for our Local Authority, with its proud tradition of overseeing excellent local education, to divest itself of responsibility for the provision of post-16 education for the hundreds of pupils whom this consultation anticipates will attend CyC in future, as CyC has no meaningful accountability to our Local Authority, only to the Welsh Government.

In conclusion, I do not support the proposals to change 6th Forms outlined in the consultation document, nor those to the catchment areas for Hawthorn and Bryncelynnog. I think it is imperative that the Council does invest in Bryncelynnog and Hawthorn as the fabric and suitability of the buildings on both sites is poor, and unequal to the excellence and commitment of pupils and staff at both schools.

I believe the Council should undertake a further study of the options for reform in greater Pontypridd, including an analysis of the possibility of Secondary School Mergers, as has been undertaken in Aberdare, for example. Or in the merger of 6th Forms at a site in Pontypridd to achieve the financial and educational excellence, sustainability and local accountability sought by the Council and supported by parents and pupils.

None of these alternative options should consider any changes, other than the required additional investment, to the excellent 6th Form provisions at Bryncelwynog Comprehensive.

In summary of the 542 submissions from parents and pupils that I received, here are some of their comments and concerns. For completeness and transparency, I will provide all of the survey data to the Council.

Parents are concerned about:

- Diminished parental and pupil choice
- Sense that these changes are driven largely by financial considerations
- Loss of high calibre teachers
- Lack of consistency and continuity of support for pupils
- Large impersonal class sizes
- Loss of teaching posts and other job losses
- Loss of community schools
- Affordability and sustainability of school transport
- Lack of affiliation between Pontypridd High and Bryncelwynog
- Traffic congestion at schools during peak times
- University town of Pontypridd should have a 6th form
- Significant difference between a secondary school and a college
- Reduced diversity in subjects
- Reduced aspirations for pupils

- No Catholic 6th Form for Pontypridd
- Lesser accountability to parents for performance at Coleg y Cymoedd
- Less pastoral care – especially for pupils with learning difficulties.

7. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

Constituency Member of Parliament

8. Name **Owen Smith MP**

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

10 Market Street

Pontypridd

CF37 2ST

Owen.smith.mp@parliament.uk

Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than Thursday, 31st January 2019

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 and the Councils data protection pages here www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21st MARCH 2019

EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES PLANNED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR J ROSSER

Authors:

Gaynor Davies, Director of Education & Inclusion Services - 01443 744001

Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools - 01443 744002

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides Members with details of the capital works for approval for 2019/20 as part of the Council's three-year Capital Programme.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the Education Capital Programme priority schemes for 2019/20 as outlined in Appendices 1-10 and to approve scheme commencement.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 An ongoing programme of work is required in school premises to deal with essential condition and health and safety issues across the school estate, to ensure school buildings are 'safe, watertight and warm'.
- 3.2 To continue to deliver the Council's long term school modernisation improvement programme supporting one of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities: 'Economy – Building a strong economy'.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members will be aware that an amount of £6.886M has been allocated to the planned capital programme (minor works) for 2019/20, as agreed by Council on the 6th March 2019.
- 4.2 The continuation of the three-year rolling Capital Programme and sustaining the

level of funding will continue to make significant enhancements to the quality of our school premises and has been a vital part of the Council school modernisation programme which has undoubtedly contributed to improved standards. The 2019/20 allocation includes £1.500M of additional resource allocated to schools and details are attached in Appendix 10.

4.3 In framing options for the planned capital works programme, the following factors have been taken into account:

- The results of the Property Condition Surveys and further investigation works by Council surveyors and engineers.
- Delivering priorities set out in the Service Asset Management Plan in line with the Corporate Asset Management Plan.
- ESTYN Inspection Reports.
- Health and Safety considerations.
- Reducing energy and carbon.
- Refurbishing classrooms to provide inspirational up-to-date modern learning environments.
- Investing in adaptations to schools to assist pupils with mobility and other accessibility needs to promote inclusion.

4.4 The programme has been divided into categories identifying the nature of the works considered to be a priority.

5. **CATEGORIES WITHIN THE PROGRAMME**

5.1 The table below sets out the proposed allocation of the planned capital programme funds now available to spend in 2019/20.

SPEND CATEGORY	£M
Kitchen Refurbishments/Remodelling	0.200
Window & Door Replacements	0.150
Essential Works	0.400
Electrical Rewiring	0.200
Fire Alarm Upgrades	0.100
Toilet Refurbishments	0.350
Equalities Act/Compliance Works	0.225
E&I Access Condition Surveys	0.075
Boiler Replacement	0.250
Roof Renewal	0.700
Asbestos Remediation Works	2.300
Schools Investment Programme	1.580
Improvements to Schools	0.100
Capitalisation of IT Hardware/Software & Licences	0.256
TOTAL	6.886

5.2 Appendices 1–10 set out programmes of work for each category included above,

with the exception of Education & Inclusion Condition Surveys, Asbestos Remediation Works, Improvements to Schools and Capitalisation of IT Hardware/Software & Licences.

5.3 The following narrative summarises the required investment and intended outcome of each Spend Category:

- **Kitchen Refurbishments/Remodelling**

A rolling programme of replacement kitchens is required to maintain the current capital asset of school buildings and assist with much needed improvements, contributing towards the implementation of the Welsh Government 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) 2013'. Appendix 1 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Window & Door Replacements**

A rolling programme of replacement windows and doors is required to improve the energy efficiency, and in doing so reduce energy costs, and maintain the current capital asset of school buildings. Appendix 2 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Essential Works**

Members will be aware of the amount and value of outstanding historical maintenance works required to the buildings in the Education & Inclusion Services portfolio. Appendix 3 provides Members with a list of priority works, considered essential to maintain a 'safe, watertight and warm' environment for all users.

- **Electrical Rewiring**

Appendix 4 provides Members with details of Education establishments that require electrical rewiring.

- **Fire Alarm Upgrades**

Appendix 5 provides Members with details of schools that require fire alarm upgrades from manual to automatic detection systems in order to comply with current legislation.

- **Toilet Refurbishments**

Appendix 6 provides Members with details of schools that require refurbishment to comply with The Education (School) Premises Regulations 1999, the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and to support the recommendations in the report 'Lifting the Lid on the Nation's School Toilets' produced by the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

- **Equalities Act/Compliance Works**

An allocation of funding has been set aside to continue with works as and when deemed necessary to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Appendix 7 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **E&I Access Condition Surveys**

Phase 2 access condition surveys to all Primary schools to improve

accessibility throughout the Education estate in order to comply with the Equalities Act 2010.

- **Boiler Replacement**

A significant number of systems are reaching the end of their useful life, therefore, it is considered prudent to fund a rolling programme of replacement to assist with the reduction in energy and carbon emissions. Appendix 8 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Roof Renewal**

Again it is considered prudent to allocate funding to ensure a rolling programme is maintained. Appendix 9 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Asbestos Remediation Works**

An allocation of funding has been earmarked to continue essential asbestos remediation works, following the results of recent asbestos surveys commissioned by the Council, and to progress a programme of replacement CLASP buildings affected by asbestos.

- **Schools Investment Programme**

A further investment programme in our school premises has been identified in Appendix 10 to reduce our ongoing revenue commitments and improve our capital asset and support school improvement where areas of concern have been identified in terms of upgrading of classrooms to ensure our pupils learn in high quality indoor and outdoor classrooms and play areas.

- **Improvements to Schools**

Under accounting regulations, certain expenditure that was previously charged directly to the revenue budget is now shown in the Capital Programme, whilst still being funded from revenue.

- **Capitalisation of IT Hardware/Software & Licences**

An allocation of funding has been committed for on going hardware, software and licences to support essential data systems such as SIMS (Schools Information Management System).

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed schemes have given due consideration to equality issues particularly in relation to access to our school premises. Schools are a key part of our communities and as such it is important that they are well maintained, accessible and 'fit for purpose'.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There are no consultation requirements arising from this report.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The funding allocation to support spend categories contained within this report was agreed by Council on the 6th March 2019 as part of the three year Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22. This report does not commit any additional spend over and above this agreed allocation.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

10 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 10.1 This investment programme forms part of the Council's larger school modernisation and 21st Century Schools Programme and supports one of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities 'Economy – Building a Strong Economy'.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The projects identified in the planned capital programme can be committed and delivered within the financial year and will have an immediate impact on improving schools and their surrounding communities. A coherent plan of expenditure over the three-year period will contribute to improvements in a wide range of physical environments benefiting pupils, staff, young people and members of the public.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People

Contact Officer: Andrea Richards (01443 744002)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21st MARCH 2019

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR J
ROSSER**

**Item: EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES PLANNED CAPITAL PROGRAMME
2019/20**

Background Papers

Council 6th March 2019: The Council's Three Year Capital Programme 2019/20 – 2021/22

Officer to contact: Andrea Richards (01443 744002)

Kitchen Refurbishments

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Porth Community School	Remodelling of Kitchen and Dining Facilities	100,000
Ysgol Nant-Gwyn	Remodelling of Kitchen and Dining Facilities	100,000
Total		200,000

Window & Door Replacements

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Llanharan Primary School	Replacement Windows	30,000
Alaw Primary School	Replacement Windows/ Installation of Vision Panels to Doors	40,000
YG Llanhari	Repairs to Windows First Floor of Secondary Building	30,000
Pontyclun Primary School	Cladding and Window Replacements	50,000
Total		150,000

Essential Works

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Park Lane Special School	Drainage	50,000
YGG Tonyrefail	Drainage/Reinstatement of Yard	50,000
Hendreforgan Primary School	External Cladding Phase 2	30,000
Hafod Primary School	Damp Proofing Remedial Works	35,000
Cwmclydach Primary School	Removal of Shelter and Installation of Canopy to Canteen	30,000
YGG Abercynon	Repointing Works, New Rain Water Goods and Fencing	60,000
Cwmbach Church in Wales Primary School	Structural Works to Lower Building	45,000
Trealaw Primary School	Structural Works to Window Reveals	30,000
Cwmlai Primary School	Structural Works and Window Reveals	40,000
Llantrisant Primary School	Land Drainage	30,000
Total		400,000

Electrical Rewiring

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Ty Gwyn PRU	Upgrade of CCTV	20,000
Various Schools	General Repairs Following Inspection & Testing	50,000
Various Schools	Lightning Protection - Repairs Following Inspection & Testing	10,000
Various Schools	Upgrade Emergency Lighting	30,000
Llwydcoed Primary School	Rewiring	40,000
Ton Pentre Junior School	Rewiring (Phase 1)	50,000
Total		200,000

Fire Alarm Upgrades

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Cwmbach Primary School	Fire Alarm Upgrade	20,000
YG Llanhari	Fire Alarm Upgrade	40,000
St Michaels Roman Catholic Primary School	Fire Alarm Upgrade	15,000
St Gabriel & Raphael Roman Catholic School	Fire Alarm Upgrade	14,000
YGGG Llantrisant	Fire Alarm Upgrade (Protocol Change)	11,000
Total		100,000

Toilet Refurbishments

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Cwmclydach Primary School	Toilet Refurbishment - Boys Toilets	30,000
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	Toilet Refurbishment - Phase 1 Boys Ground Floor	50,000
St Gabriel & Raphael Roman Catholic School	Toilet Refurbishment	30,000
Bodringallt Primary School	Toilet Refurbishment - Lower Building	60,000
Llwydcoed Primary School	Toilet Refurbishment Phase 1	50,000
Capcoch Primary School	Toilet Refurbishment	70,000
Trealaw Primary School	Toilet Refurbishment Phase 1	60,000
Total		350,000

Equalities Act/Compliance Works

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Various Schools	Additional Learning Needs Accessibility/Toilet Provision	105,000
Hafod Primary School	Reconfigure Area to Create Changing Room	50,000
Coedylan Primary School	New Toilet/Hygiene Facilities	70,000
Total		225,000

Boiler Replacement

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Dolau Primary	Boilerplant Replacement	75,000
Miskin Primary	Boilerplant Replacement	75,000
Mountain Ash Comprehensive	Boilerplant Replacement	100,000
Total		250,000

Roof Renewal

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Cwmclydach Primary School	Phase 1 Roofing Works and Replacement Fascias and Soffits	50,000
Park Lane Special School	Replacement Fascias and Soffits	30,000
Caegarw Primary School	Roof and Fascia Replacement and Structural Work	70,000
Darrenlas Primary School	Phase 3 Roofing Works	50,000
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	Roof Works	200,000
Penywaun Primary School	Roof Replacement 2 Storey Block	100,000
Aberdare Primary School	Replacement Roof and Rain Water Goods	80,000
Cwmdare Primary School	Replacement Roof Infant Block	120,000
Total		700,000

Schools Investment Programme

Property	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	3G Retention	34,000
Ferndale Community School	3G Retention	24,000
YG Rhydywaun	3G Retention	22,000
Gelli Primary School	Remodelling Junior Block	250,000
Llanharan Primary School	Internal Remodelling Infant Block	250,000
YG Garth Olwg	Modification to Block A	180,000
YGG Llwyncelyn	Phase 2 Infant Block Refurbishment	100,000
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	Toilet Refurbishment (Phase 1)	140,000
Cymmer Primary School	Phase 2 Car Park Drop Off Zone/Demolition of Canteen Building	200,000
YGGG Llantrisant	Replacement Roof to Hall	200,000
Trehopcyn Primary School	Refurbishment of Toilets	80,000
Llantrisant Primary School	Phase 2 Roof Replacement	100,000
Total		1,580,000

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21ST MARCH 2019

HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT CABINET MEMBERS, THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND COUNCILLOR A CRIMMINGS.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Further to the approval of the Council's Three Year Capital Programme 2019/20 - 2021/22 on 6th March 2019 (Council), this report sets out the detailed capital programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note and approve the Supplementary Capital Programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects as detailed within this report.
- 2.2 Note that the current allocations are part of a 3-year capital programme and delegate authority to the Group Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance and Digital Services, to extend activity to deliver additional projects during the financial year where capacity exists for accelerated delivery in accordance with the purpose of the wider programme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report considers the detail against the specific 2019/20 capital allocations of £15.032M in favour of Highways Technical Services and £10.934M in favour of Strategic Projects, in order to safeguard the long-term integrity of the highways and transportation network and to enhance the network to deal with ever increasing travel demands. Specific regard is given to promoting safer and more sustainable travel and to enabling economic activity. Detail for consideration by Cabinet is submitted under the following areas;

- Highways Improvements
- Land Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements

- Traffic Management
 - Car Parks
 - Transportation Infrastructure
 - Making Better Use Programme (MBU)
- 3.2 The Council has been allocated £1.249M Welsh Government Road Refurbishment Grant and has been invited to submit bids for Welsh Government Grants for transport projects related to;
- Road Safety (Capital and Revenue)
 - Safe Routes in the Community
 - Local Transport Network Fund
 - Local Transport Fund (including Active Travel)
- 3.3 The Council is also heavily engaged in the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. At the present time £734M is allocated to Metro which will deliver electrification of the Treherbert, Aberdare and Merthyr rail lines. Train frequencies will be increased to 4 trains per hour to the top of each line, which means 8 trains per hour south of Abercynon and 12 trains per hour south of Pontypridd. Services will be provided by new rolling-stock which will be powered by a combination of batteries and overhead cables. Cables will run to the top of each line with battery technology used to power the trains under low bridges, etc avoiding the cost and disruption of the major engineering works involved in raising bridges.
- 3.4 The Regional Cabinet has also agreed in principle to allocate up to £40M of City Deal funding towards Metro Central which involves redeveloping Cardiff Central Rail Station, creating an integrated transport hub capable of accommodating the significant passenger demand enabled by the wider Metro investment. Regional Cabinet has agreed in principle to support £15M of commitment towards a jointly funded (with Welsh Government) £30M Metro+ programme of ten transport projects, including Porth Transport Hub. Porth Transport Hub features in the adopted RCT strategy to regenerate Porth Town Centre.
- 3.5 Detailed engagement is ongoing with WG and TfW regarding the proposed maintenance depot at Taffs Well, a new station at Treforest/Nantgarw and numerous other facets of Metro.

4. SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

4.1 Highways Improvements

- 4.1.1 The Highways Network represents the most significant asset of the Council, valued in excess of £3.4Bn and comprises of carriageways, footways, structures (bridges, retaining walls, culverts, etc.), street lighting, traffic signals and signs, safety barriers, highway drainage, etc.
- 4.1.2 At its meeting of 6th March 2019, Council approved the budgets for the Highways Improvement Schemes.

- 4.1.3 The network has now benefitted from eight years of enhanced levels of investment and this critically important additional funding will continue into 2021/22, improving and protecting the fabric of the highways network and dealing with the impact of winter weather conditions.
- 4.1.4 The total allocation of capital resources for the Highways Improvement Schemes, as included in the Capital Programme for 2019/20, is £15.032M and is broken down into works packages in the table below. This includes previously reported slippage of £3.944M of Highway Structures funding. Spending plans for this programme of works are detailed in this report.

Works Package	Budget £M
Carriageways	6.301
Footways	1,512
Vehicle Restraint Barriers	0.100
Disabled Access Improvements	0.030
Highway Structures	5.794
Parks Structures	1.000
Street Lighting	0.250
Car Parks	0.045
Total (Including Slippage of £3.944M)	15.032

- 4.1.5 The works proposed to be carried out are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 4.1.6 **Carriageways**; An identified programme of carriageway resurfacing and surface treatment to the value of £6.301M will be funded in 2019/20. Schemes to the value of £4.976M have been identified to date and are listed in Appendix 1.
- 4.1.7 These schemes will be supplemented by a £0.600M allocation to carry out minor surface repairs (larger patches), a £0.550M allocation to essential highway improvement repairs to larger areas which are identified through inspection during the course of the period, a £0.075M allocation towards highway drainage repairs and £0.100M allocation for Project Management Costs.
- 4.1.8 **Footways**; are considered to be a high risk to the Council and it is proposed to allocate £1.512M to repairs which have been identified by inspectors or through specialist condition surveys.
- 4.1.9 **Street Lighting**; An ongoing programme of column replacement to the value of £0.250M will be implemented and a programme of replacement of the Council's network of supply cables. The proposed programme takes into account the results of structural tests undertaken to date. It is also proposed to replace the remainder of the 2-wire overhead network feeding steel columns that has previously been the target of cable theft, and also have the potential to become an electrical hazard to the general public.
- 4.1.10 **Safety Barriers**; An ongoing programme of renewal of vehicle restraint barriers and high priority repairs to damaged sections of barriers to the value of £0.100M will be implemented over the funding period.

- 4.1.11 **Highway Disabled Access Improvements**; an allocation of £0.030M has been made to a programme which is likely to comprise small scale works at 10 to 15 locations yet to be identified.
- 4.1.12 **Highway Structures**; There are significant challenges associated with maintaining highway structures with a number of structures in a critical condition. A total budget of £5.794M (including £3.944M of previously identified slippage from 2018/19) has been allocated for 2019/20. A full list of proposed schemes can be found in Appendix 1.
- 4.1.13 Structures schemes often have long scheme design / lead in periods and a high level of initial uncertainty over works costs as the scope of works often only becomes fully apparent during the design period. In order to progress design of schemes for inclusion in future capital programmes funding of £0.186M has been allocated to advance preparation.
- 4.1.14 As a result of the lead-times and slippage from 2018/19, there is a significant programme of structures works scheduled for delivery in 2019/20.
- 4.1.15 The previously funded schemes with significant previously allocated funds being carried forward into 2019/20 are discussed below:
- 4.1.16 A design and build contract for the replacement **Brook Street Footbridge**, adjacent to Ystrad rail station is currently ongoing. This footbridge forms a link between Ystrad and Nant-y-Gwyddon Road and provides the only access to the northbound platform of Ystrad railway station for disabled people. It is an extremely large and complex scheme with very difficult site access, works over both a river and railway, and a requirement to maintain access to the northbound platform of the station. Considerations on the design are being carefully evaluated. A funding allocation of £1.804M has been previously approved and £1.287M of this funding will carry forward into 2019/20.
- 4.1.17 The **St. Albans Bridge in Tynewydd**, which is one of only 2 routes providing access to the communities of Blaencwm and Blaenrhondda, requires replacement. A design and build contract for the replacement of the bridge has been awarded to Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd. A funding allocation of £2M has been previously approved and £1.698M of this funding will carry forward into 2019/20. Design is progressing and works are expected to commence in the summer of 2019.
- 4.1.18 The **Pont Rhondda Road Bridge in Llwynypia** has had a weight limit imposed for a number of years due to its structural condition and requires replacement. A sum of £1.5M has been previously allocated for the construction works. The project is currently ongoing and is due to be completed in July 2019. £0.357M of this funding will carry forward into 2019/20
- 4.1.19 The **Heol Gwrangron Bridge** which supports the C181 in Rhigos, an essential link for home to school transport, has been identified to require strengthening. A reduction of the carriageway to one lane has been put in place over the bridge to minimise loading and repairs are required to reinstate the full use of the carriageway. A sum of £0.275M has been previously allocated. Funding to the value of £0.234M will be carried forward to 2019/20.

4.1.20 A budget of £0.150M has been previously allocated to Phase 1 of repairs to **Hopkinstown River Wall**, which supports the A4058, to arrest deterioration and prevent future more disruptive works to this essential main link to the Rhondda valleys. £0.129M of this funding will be carried forward into 2019/20 along with a proposed further allocation of £0.250M for Phase 2 of the works. A contract has been awarded to Alun Griffiths to carry out Phase 1 with the option of bringing in Phase 2, and the works are programmed to commence in April 2019.

4.1.21 **Pontcynon River Bridge** requires repair works. A budget of £0.055M has been previously allocated to these works, which are now scheduled to be carried out in the summer of 2019. £0.024M of this allocation will carry forward into 2019/20 and a further allocation of £0.105M is proposed in 2019/20

4.1.22 A budget of £0.342M has been previously allocated towards the replacement of the **Tyntyla footbridge in Llwynypia**. During design, ground investigations identified that the embankment upon which the bridge is constructed, which is in private ownership, is affected by an active landslip. This would dramatically increase the costs associated with replacement of the bridge, and the scheme has been put on hold pending future consideration of the funding need. £0.215M of the budget will be carried forward into 2019/20.

4.1.23 **Parks Structures:** Responsibility for the maintenance of Parks and Countryside Bridges has recently been transferred to Highways and Streetcare. A programme of inventory collection and inspection has commenced and a number of schemes have been identified. Works to the value of £0.670M can be progressed in 2019/20, with advanced preparation work to the value of £0.250M on schemes for implementation in future years and Project Management Costs of £0.080M.

4.1.24 Schemes for works in 2019/20 are identified in Appendix 1.

4.1.25 Advance preparation work will include preparation of schemes at:

- Penydarren Tramroad Bridge, Aberdare
- Gelli Isaf Tramroad Bridge, Aberdare
- Penrhys Rugby Field Bridge
- Ty Mawr Bridge, Hirwaun
- Ynysangharad Park Cable Stay Bridge
- Abercynon Rec Bridge
- Barry Sidings / Colliery Street Bridge, Trehafod

4.2 Land Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements

4.2.1 The Capital Land Drainage Programme supports works on land drainage and flood alleviation schemes, which are of such scale that their cost places them outside the framework of routine maintenance supported by the revenue programme.

4.2.2 With regard to land drainage (Flood Alleviation) schemes, the Council is frequently able to benefit from Welsh Government (WG) grant support (85%) as

the Land Drainage Authority under Section 59 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. In support of this process the land drainage capital programme identifies a number of project appraisals targeted at attracting external funding support. These appraisals will be carried out on a rolling 3-year programme with 1-2 completed per year.

4.2.3 Progression of schemes will be dependent on successful application for grant following the Strategic Outline Business case process and on occasion attracting other third party contributions. An allowance has been made within the drainage improvements programme for progression of such schemes in order to provide the required match funding.

4.2.4 In addition, the Mynydd yr Eglwys landslip continues to require ongoing monitoring by specialist geotechnical engineers.

4.2.5 The details of the Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements Programme for 2019/20 with £0.348M of council funding allocated is provided in Appendix 2.

4.2.6 In addition to the above, the following will be progressed through initial feasibility/Strategic Outline Case (SOC).

- Cwmbach Canal, Cwmbach - Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOC).
- Tylcha Ganol, Tonyrefail - Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOC).
- A4061 Rhigos Mountaint Rd, Hirwaun - Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOC) including Asset Survey
- Nant Gwawr (Phase 2), Aberaman - Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOC) including Asset Survey
- Oaklands Terrace, Cilfynydd - Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOC).

4.3 **Traffic Management**

4.3.1 As part of its network management duties under the Traffic Management Act and the Highways Act the Council has the ability to implement improvements to the management of traffic within the County Borough. Finance for the programme is provided by an allocation of core capital funding of £0.160M.

4.3.2 The Council's capital allocation will enable the implementation of small scale schemes and provide safety aids such as warning signs, the introduction of traffic orders and the provision of residents parking. Details of the 2019/20 Capital Programme are included in Appendix 3.

4.4 **Car Parks**

4.4.1 An ongoing programme of repairs and upgrades to the Council's car parks with a £0.045M allocation in 2019/20.

4.5 **Transportation Infrastructure**

4.5.1 The total allocation for Transport Infrastructure for 2019/20 in the Capital Programme amounts to £10.364M.

4.5.2 In respect of the allocations it can be seen that the headline commitment varies from that allocated by Council towards the projects in October 2018. Whilst the situation will vary from scheme to scheme the broad overview position is that allocations were made against schemes and programmes in quarter 3 of 2018/19 for anticipated expenditure during 2018/19 by the year end. The residual balance of funding is therefore included at the headline of each project for 2019/20. It is likely there will be further variances on projected expenditure to the end of the year, as well as further in-year grant allocations for 2018/19 (mainly WG underspend), together with new grant yet to be awarded for 2019/20

4.5.3 The position will be continuously monitored throughout the financial year and updates to Cabinet will be provided in the quarterly performance reports.

4.5.4 The allocations are as follows;

1. Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link - £2.389M

Good progress is being made in respect of this project which has now been allocated over £13.324M including Local Transport Fund Grant from Welsh Government. The A4059 junction works are complete. The Council's design and build contractor (Walters Sisk) has completed the detailed design of the bridge link and construction commenced in Summer 2018. The project team is currently engaged in resolving challenges related to a Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Trunk Sewer diversion. Anticipated completion of this project is winter 2019/20.

2. Llanharan Bypass - £1.633M

Good progress is being made in respect of this project which has now been allocated £2M including Local Transport Fund Grant from Welsh Government. Preliminary design which includes ecological surveys and geotechnical investigation has commenced. This project will provide the eastern leg of the bypass as a continuation of the existing western leg and subject to completion of the central section which is required to be provided by developers of adjacent residential development and phased to accord with triggers attached to their planning consents. The eastern leg will connect with the A473 to the east of Llanharan and reduce the impact of traffic along the existing route, providing relief for affected communities, particularly around Llanharan Square. It is anticipated that significant developer contributions will be secured to assist funding delivery of this project in future years.

3. Dualling A4119 Coedely to Ynysmaerdy (known locally as Stinkpot Hill) - £2.611M

Good progress is being made in respect of this project which has now been allocated £4.684M including Local Transport Fund Grant from Welsh Government. Preliminary design has progressed to dual the existing single carriageway and substandard section of the strategic transport corridor linking the Rhondda Fawr with Llantrisant/Talbot Green and Junction 34 of the M4 motorway. The scheme proposes to extend the existing high quality dual carriageway from the M4 to Ynysmaerdy, right up to the Coedely roundabout which serves the strategic development site at Coedely. The current

substandard single carriageway is perceived by developers as being major barrier to development on this site. The scheme will therefore not only improve connectivity along this key corridor, but has the potential to act as a catalyst for development of this strategic site. The preliminary design is scheduled to be complete in Summer 2019 with a planning application to be submitted for a new entrance to the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters later in the summer. An exhibition / consultation has recently been held with over 80% of respondents in favour of the project.

4. A465 Cynon Gateway North (Aberdare Bypass) - £0.780M

Preliminary design has commenced on the project which continues on previous feasibility work undertaken. The bypass will link from the A465 (Heads of the Valleys) Croesbychan roundabout which will be constructed as part of the Welsh Government dualling project to the existing Aberdare Bypass north of Robertstown. This will provide an essential link from the trunk road to the Cynon Valley and will aid in relieving traffic from Llwydcoed as a result of the A465 dualling. The importance of this road has been recognised by the Welsh Government and in particular the Minister for Economy, Skills and Transport who has confirmed that WG will work with RCT towards early delivery of this project. The Council allocated £1m in October 2018.

5. Gelli Treorchy Relief Road - £0.200M

Feasibility studies have commenced on investigation of options to relieve traffic congestion in Treorchy. Stag Square is a major bottleneck causing congestion and delays to users of the road network including public transport. The study will look to identify potential options to reduce congestion. The Council allocated £0.250M in October 2018.

6. Park and Ride Programme - £1.440M

Successful delivery of Metro Phase 1 projects, yielding enhanced grant allocations, together with RCT commitments, has released £1.440M for investment in additional Park and Ride capacity. The Park and Ride programme is intended to create additional parking capacity at rail stations across RCT to enable car drivers to switch to rail travel encouraging modal shift in favour of more sustainable forms of travel that contribute to reducing congestion and harmful emissions.

Car parking demand at Pontyclun Station exceeds capacity and creates issues with overspill parking in the vicinity of the station. Phase 1 has been completed in Spring 2018 which has delivered 14 additional spaces. Phase 2 scheme development for the expansion of the existing Park and Ride facilities adjacent to the station has commenced with investigation of Network Rail apparatus and utilities. An allocation of £0.640M for Phase 2 has been allowed for.

£0.750M of this allocation will be invested in delivering phase 2 and phase 3 of Porth Park and Ride and follows the successful implementation of phase 1 and the rapid growth in usage. Phase 2 will involve creating additional parking to the north of the existing car park, incorporating additional land secured during phase 1 in association with the transport hub. Preliminary design has

commenced and a planning application has been submitted. Construction of phase 2 is anticipated later in 19/20.

Abercynon Park and Ride Phase 2 is scheduled for completion at end of March 2019 and has been totally funded via Welsh Government funding of £1M+. Over 300 extra spaces will be provided.

A sum of £0.050M will be allocated to continue work towards a wider strategy for development of delivery of enhancements to local park and ride opportunities at rail stations across RCT to further extend the reach of Metro.

Park and Ride is a key element to enable mode shift and promote accessibility to the Metro and opportunities to add value to Metro will be kept under review as the full scope and detail of the Metro project crystallises.

The proposed Park and Ride programme is included in Appendix 5.

7. Initial Scheme Development/Feasibility £0.180M

In addition to the above the following will be progressed through initial feasibility stage:

- Llewelyn St, Pentre - Pedestrian Crossing Initial Feasibility Study
- Cefn Coed Rd, Ynysybwll - Pedestrian Crossing Feasibility Study
- Old Llantrisant - Traffic Management Options Study

4.6 Making Better Use (MBU) Programme- £1.131M + £0.095M developer contributions)

4.6.1 During 2016/17 a Making Better Use (MBU) programme was introduced. The ethos of this programme was to identify low cost, high value improvements for congested sections of the Council's highways network, to improve traffic flows, ease congestion and have a positive impact on road safety.

4.6.2 The programme was continued and has effectively delivered a number of successful projects. A further programme into 2019/20 for which an allocation of £1.131M is proposed with £0.095M from third party contributions.

4.6.3 The proposed programme of investment in MBU projects is included at Appendix 4.

5. EXTERNAL GRANTS

5.1 At the time of drafting this report, over £5.790M of Welsh Government grants have been secured by RCT during 2018/19 via Local Transport Fund, Local Transport Network Fund, Road Safety Grant and Safe Routes to School Grant. The Council continues to explore the potential to accommodate any further potential 2018/19 WG budget underspends.

5.2 Bids were submitted during January / February for 2019/20 funding. It is anticipated that available grants will be confirmed during March 2019.

- 5.3 Bids have also been submitted for minor works and projects identified on the Welsh Government pipeline for capital investment in Land Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements for 2019/20 at £0.221M and is identified in Appendix 2
- 5.4 The Council has been allocated £1.249M as part of a Wales-wide £30M Welsh Government Roads Refurbishment Grant which will support our highways maintenance programme.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Equality and Diversity issues will be considered as part of determining the final detail of the proposed schemes.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There are no consultation requirements relating directly to the report but the proposed schemes will (or have) involve varying degrees of consultation, some of which will relate to statutory processes (such as Traffic Regulation Orders).

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The funding allocation to support schemes contained within this report was agreed by Council on the 6th of March 2019 as part of the three year Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22. This report does not commit any additional spend over and above this agreed allocation.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 10.1 This investment programme supports the Council's Corporate Plan Priority 'Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work'.
- 10.2 The programme is wide ranging. It deals with the maintenance and provision of transport assets created in order to meet travel demand. The programme supports enhanced connectivity to link homes with employment opportunities, education and health facilities, and to act as a catalyst for development and regeneration. In conjunction with grant applications, a range of sustainable and active travel opportunities are promoted.

10.3 The programme supports the Well-Being goals fostering prosperity and resilience with inclusive and sustainable transport options supporting more cohesive and vibrant communities.

11. **CONCLUSION**

11.1 The above programme continues the enhanced levels of investment under the RCTInvest initiative, delivering sustained improvements to the resilience and durability of our highways and transportation infrastructure, promoting sustainable transport opportunities and network efficiency.

11.2 Consequently, Highways and Streetcare Services will coordinate and deliver significant investment in a number of important areas during 2019/20 and the proposed programme is accordingly recommended for Cabinet approval.

11.3 The Welsh Government LGBI programme concluded in 2014/15 and combined with core capital resources totalled an unprecedented £68M highway maintenance investment programme over 8 years. This has enabled significant improvement in the condition of the highway network.

11.4 RCT is one of the few Councils that has been able to continue to make meaningful and significant investments in its highway network since the demise of LGBI funding. The table below demonstrates the level of progress that has been made.

Indicator	2010/11 Indicator	2018/19 Indicator
THS011a – percentage of A class roads requiring maintenance	16.2%	4.9%
THS011b – percentage of B class roads requiring maintenance	15.2%	6.5%
THS011c – percentage of C class roads requiring maintenance	15.3%	3.0%
THS012 – percentage of all classified roads requiring maintenance	15.7%	4.8%

11.5 The Council, in common with all LAs across the UK faces significant challenges in maintaining this enormous and complex asset. It is encouraging that WG has recognised these challenges and initiated a Local Government Public Highways Refurbishment Grant across Wales. The indicators above are directly impacted by the levels of funding available to maintain the asset. Whilst there is clearly a level of funding required in maintaining asset condition in a steady state, reducing funding below an optimum level creates greater challenges for the future. The ongoing level of investment respects that principle and should continue to see the highway network in RCT improving in comparison with other local authorities.

11.6 The condition of the Council's highways structures assets is recognised as a significant challenge with enhanced capital and revenue funding allocated during 2017/18 and 2018/19 continuing with £5.794M available to invest in 2019/20.

- 11.7 The commitment of the Council to invest in transport infrastructure enables the Council to be able to engage with Welsh Government and provide flexibility to accommodate WG underspend.
- 11.8 RCT is pro-active in securing WG funding arising from underspend across WG budget heads. In-year allocations were successfully secured under various grant headings during 2018/19 with total allocations now exceeding £5M. Further opportunities to accommodate in-year underspend have been highlighted and promoted.
- 11.9 The programme is as always subject to minor changes due to possible engineering difficulties or programming and coordination issues with statutory undertakers.

Appendix 1

Proposed Carriageway Capital Programme 2019/20

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget(£)
	Project Management			100,000
	Mini Planer Patching Programme	Various	Patching	600,000
	Emergency Repairs	Various	Various	550,000
	Drainage Repairs	Various	Various	75,000
A4058	Bute St	Treorchy	Microasphalt	52,000
B4512	Penrhys Road	Ystrad	Strengthen	265,600
A4058	Ystrad Road	Pentre	Strengthen	69,760
	Gelli Road	Gelli	Strengthen	124,840
A4054	Cardiff Road	Abercynon	Surface Dressing	60,200
	Cerdin Avenue	Pontyclun	Strengthen	51,150
	School Street	Pontyclun	Strengthen	25,575
	Smilog Lane	Ynysmaerdy	Composite	199,620
A4233	Ferndale Road	Ferndale	Strengthen	178,560
A473	Llanharan Road	Pontyclun	Strengthen	160,000
A473	Llanharan Road	Pontyclun	Microasphalt	110,000
	Eglwsilan Road	Pontypridd	Deep Recycling	158,100
	Regent St	Treorchy	Strengthen	73,470
	Hermon St	Treorchy	Strengthen	10,850
	Park Lane	Groesfaen	Microasphalt	16,250
	Wyndham St	Porth	Strengthen	41,881
	Eirw Road	Porth	Microasphalt	24,290
	North Road	Porth	Microasphalt	35,770
	Bryn Eirw	Trehafod	Strengthen	77,500
	River Terrace	Porth	Strengthen	29,760
	Middle terrace	Stanleytown	Strengthen	33,635
	Frederick St	Ferndale	Strengthen	33,635
	Collwyn Street	Coedely	Strengthen	45,942
	Heol Cynllan	Llanharan	Strengthen	35,000
	Surface Dressing of Lanes	Various	Surface Dressing	503,328
	Lower Margaret Street	Abercynon	Strengthen	35,000
	Milbourne St	Abercynon	Strengthen	21,700
	Halswell St	Abercynon	Strengthen	21,700
	Bagot St	Abercynon	Strengthen	21,700
A4093	Blackmill Road	Gilfach	Composite	127,925
	Heol Clwyddau	Beddau	Strengthen	54,808
	Fairmound Place Estate	Tonteg	Microasphalt	44,700
A4054	Cilfynydd Road	Cilfynydd	Microasphalt	75,000

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget(£)
A4054	Cilfynydd Road	Abercynon	Microasphalt	150,000
B4278	Penygraig Road	Williamstown	Strengthen	72,352
B4595	Llantrisant Road	Beddau	Microasphalt	48,750
	Fairways View	Talbot Green	Strengthen	23,250
	Southgate Avenue	Llantrisant	Microasphalt	28,000
	Buarth y Capel	Ynysybwl	Microasphalt	48,360
	Cowbridge Road	Brynsadler	Strengthen	30,000
A4059	A4059 Roundabouts	Aberdare	Strengthen	70,000
	Tesco Roundabout	Upper Boat	Strengthen	25,000
A4055	A4054 Nantgarw Roundabout	Nantgarw	Strengthen	50,000
A4119	A4119 Ty Elai Roundabout	Williamstown	Strengthen	30,000
	Nythbran Terrace	Llwyncelyn	Strengthen	56,544
	Hurford Crescent	Pontypridd	Strengthen	27,125
	HEOL PEN-Y-PARC	Llantrisant	Strengthen	29,450
	Battenburg St	Mountain Ash	Strengthen	18,600
	Heol Ceiriog	Wattstown	Strengthen	16,740
	Sycamore Road	Llanharry	Strengthen	27,900
	Brynhyfryd St	Clydach Vale	Strengthen	58,435
	Thomas St	Tonypandy	Microasphalt	32,620
B4278	Miskin Road	Trealaw	Microasphalt	50,800
	Holyrood Terrace	Llwynypia	Strengthen	9,600
B4278	Brithweunydd Road	Trealaw	Microasphalt	53,250
	Brynheulog / Herbert St	Treherbert	Microasphalt	28,660
	Gilfach Road	Tonypandy	Strengthen	54,208
	Maes Maelwg	Beddau	Microasphalt	11,000
	Main Road	Efail Isaf	Microasphalt	55,980
	Taffs Well industrial estate	Taffs Well	Strengthen	124,800
	Ceiriog Crescent / Glyndwr Avenue	Rhydyfelin	Microasphalt	38,350
	Cedar lane	Rhydyfelin	Composite	25,000
	Macefield Way	Rhydyfelin	Microasphalt	28,800
	Archer St	Ynysybwl	Strengthen	31,465
	Augustus St	Ynysybwl	Strengthen	53,165
	Aberffrwd Road	Mountain Ash	Strengthen	17,980
	Rheidol Close	Cwmbach	Strengthen	25,110
	Forest Road	Treforest	Strengthen	15,000
	Glamorgan St	Perthcelyn	Strengthen	15,000
	Granville Terrace	Mountain Ash	Strengthen	57,474
B4273	Clydach Road	Ynysbwl	Strengthen	41,000
	Meadow Lane	Hirwaun	Strengthen	45,539
	Tramway	Hirwaun	Microasphalt	18,110
	Jenkin St	Aberdare	Strengthen	29,822
	Stuart St	Aberdare	Strengthen	28,396

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget(£)
B4275	Gadlys Road	Aberdare	Strengthen	46,080
B4275	Gadlys	Aberdare	Microasphalt	33,000
	Francis St	Thomastown	Strengthen	90,272
	Duffryn Road	Rhydyfelin	Strengthen	151,900
	Caemawr Road	Porth	Strengthen	40,610
	Darren Road	Mountain Ash	Strengthen	30,500
	Forest Road	Treforest	Strengthen	40,000
	Edwards Street	Penrhiwceiber	Strengthen	22,754
			Total	6,301,000
	Development Pipeline			
A4233	Ffaldau Terrace	Ferndale	Strengthen	451,488
A4233	East Road	Tylorstown	Strengthen	150,000

Proposed Footway Capital Programme 2019/20

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget(£)
	Fairmound Place Estate	Tonteg	Slabs to Tar	150,000
A4058	Ystrad Road	Pentre	Tarmac	60,000
	Cerdin Avenue	Pontyclun	Tarmac	20,000
	Park Lane	Groesfaen	Tarmac	24,000
	Halswell St	Abercynon	Slabs	20,000
	Bagot St	Abercynon	Tarmac	20,000
	Main Road	Tonteg	Tarmac	37,500
	Pentwyn Road	Ton Pentre	Tarmac	175,600
	Nythbran Terrace	Llwyncelyn	Composite	49,000
	Yorkdale Estate	Beddau	Tarmac	60,000
	Southgate Avenue	Llantrisant	Tarmac	40,000
	Lower Maerdy Housing estate	Maerdy	Tarmac	180,000
	Upper Cae Fardre Housing estate	Church Village	Composite	80,000
	Penywaun housing Estate	Penywaun	Tarmac	100,000
	Hurford Crescent	Pontypridd	Composite	27,500
	Merthyr Road	Pontypridd	Tarmac	48,000
	HEOL PEN-Y-PARC	Llantrisant	Tarmac	34,500
	Battenburg St	Mountain Ash	Tarmac	10,900
	Primrose St	Tonypany	Composite	25,000
	Maes Maelwg	Beddau	Tarmac	30,000
	Ty Rhiw Footways	Taffs Well	Tarmac	25,000
	Ceiriog Crescent / Glyndwr Avenue	Rhydyfelin	Tarmac	125,000
	Cenarth Drive	Cwmbach	Tarmac	70,000

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget(£)
	Ty Isaf Road	Gelli	Tarmac	15,000
B4275	Aberdare Road	Mountain Ash	Tarmac	56,000
A4059	Newtown	Mountain Ash	Tarmac	29,000
			Total	1,512,000
	Development Pipeline			
A473	Llanharan Road	Pontyclun	Tarmac	213,000
A4233	Ffaldau Terrace	Ferndale	Tarmac	120,000
A4233	Duffryn St	Ferndale	Composite	30,000
	Kenry St	Tonypandy	Composite	25,000
	Oak St	Gilfach	Tarmac	71,800
	Graigwen Housing Estate	Pontypridd	Tarmac	20,000
	Gynor Place to Upper Gynor Place	Ynysir	Tarmac	9,000

Proposed Disabled Access Improvements Programme

Street No	Description	Budget(£)
	Continuation of the programme of disabled access improvements	30,000
	Total	30,000

Proposed Safety Barriers Programme 2019/20

Street No	Description	Budget(£)
	Various – Continuation of the rolling programme of repair renewal of vehicle restraint systems primarily on the A road network	100,000
	Total	100,000

Proposed Highway Structures Schemes 2019/20 (Including reported slippage)

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget (£)
	Advance Preparation	Various	Preparation of future schemes	195,000
	Heol Gwranon Bridge	Rhigos	Refurbishment	234,000
B4275	Pontcynon River Bridge	Abercynon	Masonry Repairs	129,000
A4058	Hopkinstown River Wall Ph1&2	Pontypridd	Masonry Repairs	379,000
	Brook St. Bridge	Ystrad	Replacement	1,287,000
	St. Albans Bridge	Tynewydd	Replacement	1,698,000
	Ponrhondda Bridge	Llwynypia	Replacement	357,000

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget (£)
	Castell Ifor Bridge	Hopkinstown	Strengthening	650,000
	Station Road Bridge	Hirwaun	Strengthening	250,000
	RCT Precinct Wall	Pontypridd	Repairs	50,000
A4119	Williamstown Footbridge	Williamstown	Repairs	200,000
	Confined Space Culverts	Various	Culvert Repairs	150,000
	Tyntyla Footbridge	Ystrad		215,000
			Total	5,794,000
	Development Pipeline			
B4275	Abercwmboi Rugby Club Wall	Abercwmboi	Repairs	250,000
	Gwawr Street Wall	Aberaman	Repairs	150,000
	Darren Ddu Bridge	Ynysybwl	Infilling	100,000
	Ynysallen Bridge	Ynysmaerdy		80,000
	Aberllechau Retaining Wall	Wattstown	Repairs	120,000
	Rhigos Rock Anchors	Rhigos	Retensioning / Renewals	200,000
	Taffs Well wall	Taffs Well		150,000
	Llwynypia Wall	Llwynypia		75,000
	Bwlch Rockface	Bwlch		75,000
	Eirw Rd Trehafod Wall	Trehafod		150,000
	Advance Preparation	Various	Preparation of future schemes	214,000
			Reserve	1,564,000

Proposed Parks Structures Schemes 2019/20

Street No	Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget (£)
	Maesyfelin Footbridge	Pontyclun		280,000
	Culvert Repairs (Various)	Various	Repairs	100,000
	Wooden Footbridges (Various)	(Various)	Repair / replace	160,000
	Mill Farm Footbridge	Cilfynydd		70,000
	Nant Lonydd Bridge	Upper Boat		60,000
	Advance Preparation	Various	Preparation of future schemes	250,000
	Project Management Costs			80,000
			Total	1,000,000

Proposed Street Lighting Programme 2019/20

Scheme	Activity	Budget (£)
Penrhys Estate	Replace life expired and maliciously damaged columns. In areas where vehicular access is not available, folding columns will be used.	95,000
River Terrace, Treorchy	Replace life expired columns and undergrounding of 2-wire overheads	30,000
Newbridge Road Llantrisant	Replace life expired columns	20,000
Llantrisant Road to Newbridge Road Llantrisant	Replace life expired columns	20,000
High Street, Tonyrefail	Replace life expired columns	15,000
Thomastown Roundabout, Tonyrefail	Replace life expired columns	35,000
Cross Inn Road Llantrisant	Replace life expired columns	20,000
Talbot Road Llantrisant	Replace life expired columns	15,000
	Total	250,000

Appendix 2

Proposed Land Drainage/ Flood Risk Management Capital Programme 2019/20

Scheme/Location	Activity/Work	RCT	WG Grant/ other	Total
		£	£	£
Land Drainage Improvements Allowance for progression of schemes after completion of Strategic Business Case Assumes WG Approval	OBC/JBC/FBC & Works (15% Match Funding)	35,000	221,000*	256,000*
Mynydd-Yr-Eglwys, Ystrad	Monitoring & Remedial Works	8,000		8,000
Small Works Budget	Small scales works <£10,000 to reduce impact of surface water flows affecting properties and the highway (approx 8 Locations)	60,000		60,000
Maes y Ffynon road, Aberdare.	Undertake replacement or Lining works to the culvert Network	65,000		65,000
Tudor Road, Ton Pentre	Undertake replacement or Lining works to the culvert Network	100,000		100,000
A4233 Porth Relief Road. Porth	Undertake replacement or Lining works to the Highway Carrier Drain	20,000		20,000
A4058 Cymmer Rd, by KFC, Cymmer	Highway Culvert line deformation (20%) Undertake replacement or Lining works to the Highway Carrier Drain	15,000		15,000
Ynysybwl Road, Glyncoch	New highway Carrier drain	15,000		15,000
Moy Road, Taffs Well	Undertake replacement or Lining works to the Highway Carrier Drain	10,000		10,000

Scheme/Location	Activity/Work	RCT	WG Grant/ other	Total
Ynyshir Cycle path, Ynyshir	Water flowing over cycle path from embankment New Land Drainage	20,000		20,000
Duffryn Road, Hawthorn	Undertake replacement or Lining works to the Highway Carrier Drain		62,000	62,000
Former Gene Metals, Treforest	Undertake replacement or Lining works to the Highway Carrier Drain		95,000**	95,000**
Brecon Road, Hirwaun	Undertake replacement or Lining works to the Highway Carrier Drain		30,000**	30,000**
Total		348,000	408,000	756,000*

*Assumes successful grant bids

**Potential third party contribution and total with contribution.

Appendix 3

Proposed Traffic Management Programme 2019/20

Traffic Management Programme 2019/20	Cost (£)
Disabled Persons Parking Permits	10,000
Minor schemes, signs and markings	55,000
Collision Cluster and Capital Programme Review	4,000
Small scale traffic regulation orders (Speed limit, Road Safety and community benefit)	30,000
Residents Parking Review	40,000
Speed Limit Review	6,000
Remedial works resulting from Safety Audits on previous schemes	5,000
Development of schemes for 2018/19 onwards	10,000
Total	160,000

In addition to the above the Traffic Management team will be responsible for delivering a number of Education and Lifelong Learning funded projects throughout the borough including the highway elements of the 21Century Schools programme.

Appendix 4

“Making Better Use” Programme.

Scheme/Location	Work Description	RCT (£)	Other (£)	Budget (£)
Highway Network Improvements				
Bridge Street R/About, Pontypridd.	Bus Priority Lane. – Completion of Construction	50,000		50,000
A4059 Asda R/About Aberdare and B4275 Aberaman	Capacity and Flow enhancements to SE approach to roundabout and right holding lane on B4275 junction with Industrial Estate. Construction	403,000		403,000
Abercynon Town Centre Traffic management Improvements	Implementation/construction	90,000		90,000
A473 Tonteg Road, Upper Boat	Traffic Flow Improvements Progress to stage 2 feasibility/Business case	10,000		10,000
A4059 Quarter Mile Jct, Abercynon	Traffic Flow Improvements Progress to stage 2 feasibility/Business case	50,000		50,000
A4058 Porth Traffic Signals	Reconfiguration of turning movements into Porth.		45,000*	45,000*
Taff Street, Pontypridd	Replacement of Town Centre Rising Bollard System		50,000*	50,000*
A473 Gwaun Miskin Junction	Creation of an extended left hand turn lane on east bound approach.	80,000		80,000
Various	Bus Corridor Improvements (4 Corridors). Study ONLY	40,000		40,000
A4119 Tonyrefail/Trebanog RAbouts	Scheme Development	60,000		60,000

Scheme/Location	Work Description	RCT (£)	Other (£)	Budget (£)
Road Safety/Active Travel/Traffic Flow Improvements				
B4275 Penrhiwceiber,	Pedestrian Crossing. Construction.	68,000		68,000
A4054 Cardiff Road, Hawthorn	Enhanced Pedestrian Measures	60,000		60,000
Holly Street, Rhydyfelin	Zebra Crossing	50,000		50,000
Birthweunydd Rd (B4278), Trealaw	Raised Zebra Crossing	60,000		60,000
A4059 New Road	Convert zebra Crossing to Puffin crossing.	80,000		80,000
Llantrisant Road, Tonyrefail.	Enhanced Pedestrian Measures. Development ONLY	10,000		10,000
A4119 Groes Faen	Enhance Pedestrian Measures Development ONLY	10,000		10,000
A473 Bridgend Road, Llanharan	Enhanced Pedestrian Measures. Development ONLY	10,000		10,000
Totals		1,131,000	95,000*	1,226,000

*Potential third party contribution and total with contribution.

Appendix 5

Proposed Park and Ride Programme.

Scheme/Location	Work Description	RCT (£)	Other (£)	Budget (£)
Porth P&R – Ph 2 & 3	Phase 2 – New Car park and Development of Phase 3	750,000		750,000
Pontyclun P&R – Phase 2	Phase 2- Development of extension of existing Park and Ride Adjacent to Station.	640,000		640,000
P&R Various	Scheme Development/Delivery	50,000		50,000
Totals		1,440,000		1,440,000



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21ST MARCH 2019

DIGITAL STRATEGY WORK PROGRAMME DATACENTRE RELOCATION

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FINANCE & DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)

AUTHORS: Tim Jones, Head of ICT (01443) 562271

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report sets out a proposal for the relocation of the Council's Datacentre facility, which forms part of a wider work programme to support the ongoing delivery of the Council's Digital Strategy 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- i. Agrees to the proposals set out in Section 6 for the relocation of the Council's Datacentre from Bronwydd to Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre.
 - ii. Approve the Head of ICT to work in conjunction with the Director of Estates to ensure that works are undertaken in the most economically advantageous way.
 - iii. Agrees to include the scheme in the capital programme utilising funding previously agreed and on the basis of the costs and resource requirements outlined in section 9

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As part of the Council's Digital Work Programme, Cabinet agreed to receive a future report on the relocation of the Council's Datacentre facility in response to agreed future plans for Extra Care delivery at the Bronwydd Site.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 On 21 November 2018 Cabinet approved changes at Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre, part of which was to utilise part of the building for Council office accommodation,
- 4.3 Business processes, enabled by ICT, are a crucial aspect of all organisational operations with business continuity being a key requirement to ensure the reliable delivery of services. Services rely on their information systems to run their operations and in the event a system becomes unavailable, these operations may become impaired or stopped completely. Therefore it is necessary to provide a reliable ICT infrastructure, in order to minimise any chance of disruption.
- 4.4 The key component of an ICT infrastructure to ensure effective business services is a Datacentre and or appropriate alternative / complimentary arrangements such as Cloud Computing.
- 4.5 A Datacentre is a specialised physical facility used to house servers/storage, networks and computer systems e.g. Financial, Education, Social Care systems. As such it is a highly critical facility and includes risk mitigation solutions to maintain continuity such as redundant or backup power supplies, redundant data communications connections, environmental controls (e.g. air conditioning, fire suppression) and physical security measures.
- 4.6 Cloud is a virtual infrastructure that is external in its location, storing computer systems and data on the internet. Within this environment, computing and storage services may be accessed on-demand with less requirement for physical infrastructure.
- 4.7 The Council's current Datacentre is located within a timber based building at Bronwydd, which needs significant investment to upgrade it to the standard provided by other data centres in the public and private sectors. Whilst, the current data centre has been improved and has served the Council well over the past 20 years, with the ever increasing reliance on ICT technology, aspects of the datacentre and in particular the building need to be upgraded as more and more staff have access to mobile devices.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 5.1 With the known requirement to vacate Bronwydd House, a number of potential options have been considered to ensure service continuity and for the relocation of the Datacentre facility. The options from a service delivery perspective were:
- A) Do Nothing
 - B) Migrate to a new facility at a Council location, creating a hybrid infrastructure with Cloud Services
 - C) Migrate all infrastructure to Cloud Services
 - D) Migrate to an external private sector location
 - E) Migrate to an external public sector location.
- 5.2 A full appraisal of all Data Centre options is shown at Appendix 1.
- 5.3 Due diligence in relation to all options has demonstrated that Option B is the recommended option, which would provide:-
- The lowest cost option over the medium & longer term, both revenue and capital
 - A reduction to the risk of any migration (internal or cloud)
 - Improved resilience for ongoing service delivery
 - An opportunity to gradually transition toward Cloud Services as part of hybrid infrastructure
 - The potential opportunity to host other organisations equipment in the future.

6. PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

- 6.1 Following the refurbishment of Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre an opportunity exists to create a new Datacentre facility and allow for the relocation of our computer systems, and infrastructure from Bronwydd.
- 6.2 Officers from Corporate Estates and ICT have undertaken a review and due diligence with regard to the opportunity and the outcome of this review has been used to inform the proposed way forward.
- 6.3 There are several identified benefits that the site provides for the creation of a new facility. These are:-
- Location is of suitable construction
 - Location can be securely separated from accessible areas
 - There is suitable surplus space at the location
 - The day to day property costs such as business rates are already funded;
 - Opportunity to develop office accommodation to optimise the delivery of Agile Working

- Sufficient power grid supply
- Sufficient space to meet requirements such as mechanical & environmental needs
- Independent entry access
- Location is above highest expected floodwater levels
- Ease of access and parking
- Reduce power consumption through use of more efficient equipment

In addition, the Centre has separate secure access along with the potential to create additional parking spaces so as not to be detrimental to users of the leisure facility and provide additional car parking for leisure centre users in the evenings and weekends when the Centre is at its busiest.

6.4 Subject to Members approval, phases of delivery have been identified for the various aspects of the overall project delivery.

Phase 1 – Construction of office accommodation and fit out, located on the 1st floor, formerly where the fitness suite was located. The works will incorporate agile work facilities and appropriate staff facilities, including a disabled toilet and lift.

Phase 2 – Construction of Datacentre and introduction of specialist support services to mechanical and environmental requirements including:-

- Emergency generator
- Primary and standby cooling system
- Fire suppression
- Fault detection/notification
- Fibre connection – incoming supplies

Phase 3 – Construction of car park to rear of site requiring drainage connection and the introduction of a petrol interceptor. This phase can be undertaken separately from the works within the main structure of the Leisure Centre.

Phase 4 – Migration of servers/storage and supportive infrastructure equipment into the new provision on the ground floor. The migration will require physical transfer, assembly and connection of systems with a period of testing before going fully live. Migration would be phased outside of normal work hours over a number of weekends.

Phase 5 – Ongoing assessment and review of local infrastructure opportunities that maybe migrated to Cloud Services.

6.5 Subject to approval the construction will be programmed as follows:

- Office accommodation to 1st floor (construction) – completion by August 2019
- Car park (construction) – November 2019
- Datacentre fit out ground floor (construction) – November 2019
- Data Centre configuration/operation (Live) initiate migration – January 2020

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. This exercise has shown that a full EqIA is not required. The screening form can be accessed by contacting the author of the report.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 In line with the Council's agreed procedures consultation will take place with any stakeholders impacted by the proposals.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

9.1 As part of the first phase of this work, known commitments have been summarised below in Table 1:

Table 1: Financial Commitments (where final costs known)

Scheme Phase	£M	Comments
Phase 1 & 3	0.504	Construction of office accommodation & car park construction
Phase 2	0.626	Datacentre facility construction
Phase 4	0.520	Specialist internal facility equipment, logistical move and hardware / infrastructure costs associated to enabling the migration i.e. temporary parallel running
Total	1.650	

9.2 It should be noted that with regards to Phase 4 £0.250m of the £0.520m total relates to infrastructure that would be required to be replaced naturally over the medium term.

9.3 The above commitments can be funded from existing resources which have already been identified and set aside as part of the agreed Digital Work Programme.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1 There are no legal issues to highlight at this time. The procurement processes would be undertaken in the most efficient manner if Cabinet decide to progress the proposal.

11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

11.1 The proposals are aligned to the Council’s Corporate Plan commitment of providing more flexible services through use of the web and self-service channels to support increased user satisfaction. The proposals also support the Well-being of Future Generations Act in the following ways:

- The well-being goals of: ‘a Wales of cohesive communities’ by enabling residents, businesses and visitors to be digitally connected and ‘a prosperous Wales’ through the efficient use of resources and the development of skills and a well-educated population; and
- The sustainable development principles of ‘involvement’ in helping us shape digital services and support in line with what stakeholders require and ‘prevention’ through supporting vulnerable clients.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 This report sets out actions that will support the ongoing transformation of Digital Services at Rhondda Cynon Taf. In addition to ensuring continuity of services for customers, actions identified will also allow for a key building block for the Council to deliver wider digital improvements in line with our Digital Strategy.



Datacentre Options Appraisal

Option		Advantages	Disadvantages	Recommended Option and Rationale	
A	Do Nothing			No	Not an option due to the need to upgrade and improve the Council's datacentre capacity with the existing building and facilities not providing modern 21 st Century facilities and the need to decant Bronwydd in response to agreed future plans for Extra Care delivery at the site.
B	Migrate to a new facility at a Council location, creating a hybrid infrastructure with Cloud Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated total costs over 10 years of £1.44M is the most economical option* • Ease of access & total control of facility • Council business & priorities are fully understood • Able to run partial services in event of internet failure • Built to meet requirement • Exploit & reuse existing infrastructure. • Able to co-locate staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial upfront cost to create • Need to maintain skills to maintain and support 	Yes	<p>Officers from Corporate Estates and ICT have undertaken a review and due diligence with regard to potential sites that may be able to accommodate our requirements.</p> <p>There is a requirement for services to continue to be provisioned as part of a Datacentre facility into the medium term, with this option allowing for greater certainty over the continuity of service provision, its improvement and the ability to exploit Cloud Services at a more managed pace. This will allow us to better maximise the use of our current hardware assets and allow for local infrastructure requirements to be reduced via the hybrid configuration over time.</p>

	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages		Recommended Option and Rationale
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus space available and so no additional property running costs • Hybrid configuration allows for ease of transition to Cloud Services 			
C	Migrate all infrastructure to Cloud Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No requirement to create a facility. • No requirement for hardware. • Flexibility for change i.e. storage / server increases or decreases • Ease of Accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated total costs over 10 years of £4.3M is higher than the recommended option** • Totally dependent upon an internet connection. • Any increases to services would cost additional money • Certain line of business applications may not be supported in this model • Accountability & responsibility may diminish • Cloud incidents or outages cannot be controlled 	No	Not considered a viable option. Detailed work has been undertaken with Microsoft and concluded that whilst there is an opportunity to transition toward Cloud Services overtime, the wholesale migration could not be achieved as it represented unnecessary risk and would realise an overall increase to our medium to longer term costs, predicated on a requirement for ongoing annual revenue model.

	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Recommended Option and Rationale	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council environment is not easily capable of migration. • Current Council hardware assets would be redundant • Staff required to learn new skills quickly 		
D	Migrate to an external public sector location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to be Cost effective against private sector, although pricing details were not available. • Shared Service Public Sector Collaboration • Opportunities to potentially expand collaborative model • Facility is maintained on behalf of the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security issues may arise due to 3rd party dependency. • Neighbouring local authorities may not have the capacity in their current data centres to accommodate our needs. • Timely access to facility maybe difficult. • Migration activities are dependent on the supplier. • Subject to sustainability of local organisations facility • Not able to co-locate RCT staff 	No	Opportunities were explored for the provision of an off-site external facility with two local authorities and a public sector shared service provider. None of these organisations were able accommodate our requirements within their own facilities.

	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages		Recommended Option and Rationale
E	Migrate to an external private sector location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No requirement to create a new facility • Pay for what you use Model • Facility is maintained on behalf of the Council • Any legal or regulatory requirements are the responsibility of supplier • Use of supplier staff for certain operational tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated total costs over 10 years of £2.35M is not the most economical option** • Not able to co-locate RCT staff. • Timely access to facility maybe difficult. • Subject to commercial market forces. • Security issues may arise due to supplier dependency. • Accountability & responsibility may diminish • Migration activities are dependent on the supplier. • Public Sector Network infrastructure required to be recreated. 	No	<p>Opportunities were explored for the provision of an off-site external facility with specialist private sector suppliers. Providers were able to accommodate our requirements, however their services would realise an overall increase to our medium to longer term costs and increase the requirement for ongoing annual revenue.</p>

- * Estimated total costs over 10 years includes one off costs for any construction work, project management and logistical move costs as well as ongoing annual revenue running and associated facility refresh costs for the 10 year period. This model does not include any storage or server refresh.
- ** Estimated total costs over 10 years includes annual revenue costs for Cloud Services and provides datacentre facility, storage and servers. This model is very different to all other options. As such it is not a direct cost comparator for a facility alone.
- *** Estimated total costs over 10 years includes annual revenue costs for rental of space within a private sector facility, project management and logistical move costs.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21st MARCH, 2019

PRE SCRUTINY – PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER COUNCILLOR T LEYSHON.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the Play Sufficiency Assessment following Pre-scrutiny by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 13TH March, 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the comments and observations of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee referenced in section 5 of the report.
- 2.2 Subject to any further comment by Cabinet Members, endorse the recommendations outlined within the Play Sufficiency Assessment report as attached as Appendix B of the report (and for ease of reference as listed below):
- i. Consider the PSA for 2019-20 and the supporting action plan.
 - ii. Endorse the PSA and action plan and agree for it to be submitted to Welsh Government.
- 2.3 Subject to agreement to 2.2, to endorse the publication of the play sufficiency to the Welsh Government by the 31st March, 2019.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need for Members to be aware of the comments and observations of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee prior to their consideration of the Assessment as attached as Appendix B.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In February 2017 the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee considered the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan following a national workshop.
- 4.2 Following the meeting it was deemed appropriate and a form of good practice to undertake pre-scrutiny on any future assessments prior to Cabinet consideration.
- 4.3 The Scrutiny Committee met on the 13th March to pre-scrutinise the Assessment and the main comments highlighted by the Committee are outlined below.

5. PRE-SCRUTINY OF THE STRATEGY

- 5.1 At the meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Members discussed the Assessment and provided comments in respect of:
- Highways Issues in respect of parking at play areas
 - Importance of play area developments within the LDP
 - Raising Awareness of play schemes within School holidays
 - To receive a progress review in a twelve month time

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The report contained within appendix B has been presented to scrutiny for pre scrutiny before consideration by Cabinet.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 Any financial implications are outlined within Appendix B of the report.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 Non applicable – the report is identifying the scrutiny arrangements that have taken place.

10 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 10.1 Making Best Use of Our Budget – Pre scrutiny can improve cost effectiveness.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 It is recognised that scrutiny is a vital component of good governance and improves Councils' decision making, service provision and cost effectiveness.
- 11.2 The undertaking of pre-scrutiny by the Children & Young People Committee in this area will strength accountability and assist Cabinet Members in taking any future decisions on these matters.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

Emma Wilkins – 01443 424110

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21st March, 2019

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER COUNCILLOR T LEYSHON.

Item: **PRE SCRUTINY**

Background Papers

Children & Young People – 13th March, 2019.

Officer to contact:

Emma Wilkins – 01443 424062

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21ST MARCH 2019

PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2019-20

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON, CABINET
MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Author: Zoe Lancelott, Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To gain approval from Cabinet for the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) and action plan to be submitted to the Welsh Government by 31st March 2019, as per statutory obligation placed upon the Council in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 and the Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the PSA for 2019-20 and the supporting action plan.
- 2.2 Endorse the PSA and action plan and agree for it to be submitted to Welsh Government

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The preparation of the Play Sufficiency Audit is a statutory duty of the Council. As well as establishing a baseline of provision, the Play Sufficiency Assessment enables the following:
- Identification of gaps in information, provision, service delivery and policy implementation
 - Support the establishment of evidence to give an indication of distance travelled in relation to play sufficiency
 - Highlight potential ways of addressing issues relating to partnership working
 - The input and involvement of all partners increasing levels of knowledge and understanding

- A monitoring system which will involve and improve communication between professionals
 - The identification of good practice examples
 - Increased levels of partnerships in assessing sufficient play opportunities
 - The identification of actions for the Securing Play Sufficiency Action Plan which accompanies the Play Sufficiency Assessment
- 3.2 Submission of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) and action plan to the Welsh Government by 31st March 2019 has been endorsed by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 13th March 2019.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most universally recognised human rights treaty and recognises that every child has the right to play. This right has been recognised and promoted for many years in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 4.2 Our vision is that all children and young people should be able to: have fun; enjoy their childhood and youth; pursue learning; and develop life skills through participating in a range of high quality play, leisure, sporting and cultural opportunities, thus ensuring we meet the interest and needs of each individual child or young person. The Council continues to work collaboratively with partners from across all departments of the Council, as well as third sector and national organisations. Wherever possible we endeavour to ensure that Welsh medium play opportunities are given the same priority as English medium provision.
- 4.3 2018/19 is the fourth year of the investment programme into children's play areas. There are more than 200 children's play areas in Rhondda Cynon Taf, many of which were in need of a complete refurbishment. The programme has been informed by annual independent play area condition surveys, which ensures that investment is targeted at the most deserving facilities. As well as modernising play equipment, improvements have also been made to increase accessibility in and around play areas, with considerable focus on enhancing the play experience that these valuable community assets offer.
- 4.4 To date more than £3.2 million has been invested, and 97 of the Council's 215 play areas upgraded. Not only is there a visual difference to how these play facilities look, but it is evident that the play areas are being used differently. It is now not uncommon to see facilities being used as a destination for families to meet and socialise together, and in some cases, host local events which have included Teddy Bears Picnics and community barbecues.

- 4.5 Under the statutory obligation placed upon the Council in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 and the Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012, a full Play Sufficiency Assessment must be completed every three years.
- 4.6 This 2019 PSA has been compiled over the last 6 months and has involved a range of partner services that make up the PSA Working Group, including Early Years and Family Support, Resilient Families Service, the Youth Engagement and Participation Service, Sport, Leisure, Parks, Transport, Planning, Education, Disabled Children’s Team, Family Information Service, the third sector and Officers working on Community Zone developments in RCT.

5. KEY FINDINGS OF THE 2019 PLAY SUFFICIENCY AUDIT

- 5.1 Completion of the Play Sufficiency Audit involves an evidence based self-assessment of the local authority’s position in relation to a set of criteria within each of the nine sections or ‘matters’. Full details of each of the “matters” and subsequent criteria can be found in Appendix 1 of this report. For each criteria the PSA requires the Council to RAG its progress using the following definition:

Green – criteria fully met
 Amber – criteria partially met
 Red – criteria not met

- 5.2 The table below offers an overview of the RAG status of each of the matters within the 2019 PSA:

Matter A – Population

Matter B – Providing for diverse needs

Matter C – Space available for children to play: Open space and Outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces

Matter D – Supervised provision

Matter E – Changes for play

Matter F – Access to space/provision

Matter G – Securing and developing the play workforce

Matter H – Community Engagement and Participation

Matter I - Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas

- 5.3 The findings of the PSA will inform the Action Plan for 2019-20 to ensure that work undertaken next year addresses the shortfalls in provision identified by the 2019 PSA. Our key priority areas for 2019-20 are to improve the gathering and use of data to target play opportunities; to review the use of access audits; to develop a quality assurance framework; and to promote play opportunities across the County Borough. The full Action Plan can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 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.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 As part of the 2019 PSA, the Council were required to carry out a consultation exercise with a range of children and young people. Using the questions in the PSA toolkit, provided by the Welsh Government, an on-line questionnaire was developed and utilised to gather the views of children and young people. A total of 504 children and young people completed the questionnaire from 24 schools and 12 play schemes, running over October half-term. The sample of schools were chosen as representative of primary and secondary schools across RCT and included Welsh medium schools and special schools. Private sector businesses, such as after school clubs, childminders and education providers also contributed to the consultation and workforce development elements of the PSA. The full report can be found in the main body of the PSA, and at Appendix 3a and 3b of this report.
- 7.2 Children and young people said they preferred to play and hang out in their school yard or play areas best, with 95% of children saying they felt safe most if not all of the time. 51% of children said that they access play spaces by walking or cycling on their own. 75% of children said that they play with their friends with 15% saying they play with siblings. When asked about what they thought were the good things about playing and hanging out in their area, children said things like:

- Quiet
- Nice park
- You can do whatever you want
- Lots of grass
- Lots of stuff there
- Always food nearby
- Safe to run around and do what we like to do
- It's fun
- Fun and lots of room to play
- Nice and big

- That we get to play gymnastics and do cartwheels.

7.3 Among the list of things children identified as not good in their area when playing and hanging out were:

- Dog mess
- Dangerous
- Strangers
- Stones and litter
- Graffiti and litter
- Lots of cars
- Rusty and dirty
- Mostly concrete
- People can be too aggressive and moody against us children

7.4 79% of children stated that they preferred to speak English with a number of other languages being identified, such as Welsh, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Polish. 87% of children identified as not having a disability.

7.5 In addition to the 504 responses from children and young people, 164 adult responses were also received as part of this consultation. Adult respondents identified that children go out to play or hang out with their friends most days, preferring to play locally than go elsewhere, using play areas with swings or staying in the back garden. Parents/carers who identified that they go further afield to access play areas said they do so because facilities are better elsewhere or facilities are not suitable for their child due to not being age appropriate, poorly maintained, vandalised or not appropriate to meet the needs of children with disabilities. The dark was identified as the main reason children do not go out to play. Having more attractive places was identified as the main method of helping children to play outside and hang out more often.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 The PSA is not a business case, however, the majority of actions noted in the Assessment where standards fall below green (i.e. amber and red) require funding to implement improvements. This funding will be sought from both the Children and Communities Grant and Council Core funding for Play as well as any other monies that may become available during the financial year.

8.2 The creation of the new Children and Communities Grant will provide far more flexibility than the Council has previously had to resource current provision and future initiatives to meet identified gaps. Should Welsh Government allocate a discreet play grant to the Council during the year, the PSA action plan will be key to its allocation and spend.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 In 2012, the Welsh Government placed a duty on all local authorities to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children in their areas. The first Play Sufficiency Assessments and Play Action Plans were submitted to Welsh Government in March 2013.
- 9.2 In 2014, the Welsh Government commenced the second part of the duty on local authorities to secure sufficient play opportunities, having regard to their assessments. This put into effect the complete Section 11, Play Opportunities of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 10.1 The PSA will contribute to the Council's corporate priorities:
- Economy – building a strong economy through resilient children able to manage risk and develop innovative solutions to challenges
 - People – promoting independence through social interactions with other children and self-management in play situations, such as team games
 - Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work and where children are encouraged to play safely and respectfully
- 10.2 The PSA has been developed in full consideration of the sustainable development principles. The proposal will also support the Council to contribute to all of the seven well-being goals:-
- **A prosperous Wales:** children who learn to manage risks and socialise with others are more prepared for the demands of functioning in the adult world.
 - **A resilient Wales:** children who play learn to manage risks and recover from accidents in safe, supported environments that challenge them and allow them to grow, giving them the tools to build resilience throughout life.
 - **A healthier Wales:** children who play outside benefit from exercise and the wellbeing effects of being closer to nature.
 - **A more equal Wales:** children who play together learn to socialise and accept other children with different skills and abilities, making them tolerant, helpful and inclusive children, young people and adults.
 - **A Wales of cohesive Communities:** children who play with others benefit from understanding about turn taking and cooperation, preparing them for adult interactions, team working and leadership roles.

- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language:** children who are given the freedom to play in the language of their choice learn to be tolerant and accepting, preparing them for a multi-racial, globalised adult world.
- **A globally responsible Wales:** children who have access to play equipment and furnished with the skills and techniques to use it properly, preparing them for an adult world of finite resources.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report has provided Members with details of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) for 2019-20 and the supporting Action Plan for their consideration and approval to be submitted to Welsh Government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21ST MARCH 2019

PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2019-20

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON, CABINET
MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Background Papers

Children and Young People Scrutiny – 13th March 2019

Officer to contact: Zoe Lancelott, Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience

Play Sufficiency Assessment Form



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Name of Local Authority: Rhondda Cynon Taf

Name of responsible officer: Gail Beynon

Job title: Children Centre and Information Manager

Date of completion: January 2019

Please note that the Play Sufficiency Assessment must be received by the Welsh Government by 31st March 2019



Conducting the Assessment – Play Sufficiency Assessment

As well as establishing a baseline of provision, the Play Sufficiency Assessment will enable the following:

- Identification of gaps in information, provision, service delivery and policy implementation
- Support the establishment of evidence to give an indication of distance travelled in relation to play sufficiency
- Highlight potential ways of addressing issues relating to partnership working
- The input and involvement of all partners increasing levels of knowledge and understanding
- A monitoring system which will involve and improve communication between professionals
- The identification of good practice examples
- Increased levels of partnerships in assessing sufficient play opportunities
- The identification of actions for the Securing Play Sufficiency Action Plan which accompanies the Play Sufficiency Assessment

A template has been produced to support a corporate appraisal of the matters that need to be taken into account as set out in the Statutory Guidance. The indicators listed within each matter are provided as sample indicators which should be amended to meet local issues as appropriate.

The Play Sufficiency Assessment must demonstrate that the Local Authority has taken into account and assessed the matters set out in The Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012 and Statutory Guidance.

As well as providing baseline information, the Assessment can include examples of current practice that the Local Authority wishes to highlight.

Local Authorities might consider structuring the Play Sufficiency Assessment in the following way and as a minimum address all the identified sections.

Principle Statement

This section should be used to articulate the Local Authority's acknowledgement of the value and importance of play in the lives of children.

Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most universally recognised human rights treaty and recognises that every child has the right to play. This right has been recognised and promoted for many years in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Our vision is that all children and young people should be able to: have fun; enjoy their childhood and youth; pursue learning; and develop life skills through participating in a range of high quality play, leisure, sporting and cultural opportunities, thus ensuring we meet the interest and needs of each individual child or young person. The Council continues to work collaboratively with partners from across all departments of the Council, as well as third sector and national organisations. Wherever possible we endeavour to

ensure that Welsh medium play opportunities are given the same priority as English medium provision.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the demand for play for disabled children and young people (C&YP) throughout the school holidays via the Council's Care2Play (C2P) programme. The aim of the C2P programme is to provide the relevant and package of support for C&YP to access open access play provision within their local community. The C2P programme and Open Access Play provision is continuously being improved.

By March 2019 RCTCBC will have made a a capital investment of over £3.2m into children's play areas, over a four year period. This capital investment programme has seen improvements being made in 97 playgrounds which is almost half of the council's play facilities. The investment has been used in a number of different ways. In some facilities it has been used to add new and interesting equipment that better meets the play needs of service users, whereas in other other areas the investment has been used to target maintenance or safety issues, with the focus being on improving overall access. This has included the installation of tarmac footpaths to the play areas; improvements to the entrance ways, or creating and renewing surfaces within the play area to link and create freeflow to the play equipment.

Whilst the focus of the investment has been on improving opportunities for all children, greater consideration has been given to the general principles of inclusivity, by ensuring that as many children and young people as possible have the opportunity to meet and play in a safe well maintained environment.

The provision of play, culture, leisure and sporting opportunities cannot be considered in isolation from formal childcare services or youth services. A range of CIW registered holiday care schemes who provide supervised full time play and leisure opportunities for the children of working parents and youth providers offering open access play and youth opportunities have been given due regard throughout the PSA.

The Council will strive to develop and deliver efficient, effective and high quality play, cultural, leisure and sporting opportunities for C&YP and ensure that the Council and its partner organisations continue to build on the strong foundations that already exist. We will continue to work collaboratively to develop, plan, co-ordinate and deliver local services effectively and efficiently.

Context

This section should describe the methodology used to undertake and approve the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan and any consultation with partners on the Assessment/Action Plan. It should also list the key; partners that engaged with the process And identify any challenges in undertaking the Assessment. It should describe the mechanism that the Local Authority proposes to use to take forward the identified actions for the action plan.

The starting point to undertake the 2019 Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) has been to via the PSA working group. The group membership consists of representatives from a range of services, including Early Years and Family Support, Resilient Families Service (undertakes the Team Around the Family function in RCT), Youth Engagement and

Participation Service, Sport, Leisure, Parks, Transport, Planning, Menter Iaith, Education, Disabled Children's Team, Family Information Service and the Community Hub Team. In order to ensure that the Action Plan of the 2019 PSA continues to be addressed and reviewed the PSA group will continue meet on a termly basis.

Partnership working

This section should demonstrate to what extent the following (and others) were involved in the undertaking of the Assessment and the development of the action plan:

- Town and Community Councils
- Third sector organisations, particularly play associations and play providers
- The private sector if appropriate
- Community groups

There are a number of third sector organisations commissioned to deliver play, leisure, cultural and sport provision across the County Borough. 'Interlink' is the organisation supporting voluntary sector organisations and representatives from this organisation and the play sector are also active members of the PSA working group.

Private sector businesses, such as after school clubs, childminders, and education providers have contributed to consultation and workforce development elements of the PSA. The lead officer with responsibility for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) also sits on the PSA Group which serves to link the two assessments.

The Training Team have undertaken a Play Workforce audit as part of their Childcare training audit. However as there has been a very limited response to the audit and further work will be carried out during 2019 / 20 as part of the PSA Action Plan. Information gathered will then be used to assess the training needs of the sector and develop a training programme to meet these identified needs.

Consultation and participation

This section should describe how the Local Authority has:

- Obtained the views of children with regards to the play opportunities they currently access, how they would like the community to better support them to play and what barriers stop them from playing
- Obtained the views on play provision from parents, families and other stakeholders
- Analysed the information and how it has been used to inform future plans

As part of the 2019 PSA we were required to carry out a consultation exercise with a range of C&YP. Therefore, using the questions provided in the PSA toolkit we worked with the Local Authorities consultation team to compile an on-line questionnaire. With support from a number of colleagues from the Family Information Services and Universal Childcare team, a total of 504 C&YP took part from 24 schools and 12 playschemes over the October half-term holiday. The full consultation report can be found at Appendix 1a and 1b.

The Soft Outcomes Toolkit for RCT open access play continues to be used. The main aims of the toolkit are: to consult with the C&YP on how the play space can be improved, support

providers to evaluate and reflect on their own practice and capture statistical information, to ensure play provision is being commissioned in areas of need.

It also supports the monitoring of the quality of play opportunities being delivered across the County Borough.

Maximising resources

This section should provide an overview as to how partners currently use their existing budgets to support children's access to play opportunities. It should identify how budgets have been reprioritised as part of the 2019 Play Sufficiency Assessments and subsequent plans.

Please use this section to highlight what has changed since the 2016 Play Sufficiency Action Plan in terms of how resources are allocated.

Please also highlight how Welsh Government programme have been used locally for the provision of play and how they have addressed priorities from your 2016 play sufficiency assessment:

The withdrawal and changes in various funding streams both within the public and voluntary sectors since the 2016 PSA has had a significant impact on play, leisure, culture and sporting opportunities across the County Borough and we find ourselves in a position where there is no longer a Play Association, Scrap Store or Play/Toy Library operating in RCT.

The use of the Welsh Government Childcare and Play grant has been prioritised for the delivery of inclusive play opportunities for children and young people facing barriers to accessing play through the delivery of the Care2Play Service and the continuation of free open access play provision across the County Borough. In order to maximise resources over the last 12 months we have developed a more integrated approach to delivering play opportunities including the development of Youth Play activities for 9-11 year olds across the RCT. These sessions run 52 weeks a year and are delivered by RCT's Youth Engagement and Participation Service, who also meet the delivery costs.

It is envisaged that the new Children and Communities Grant when utilised alongside Council core budget will provide the level of flexibility needed to not only maintain provision but to support the development of new play initiatives.

The Play Sufficiency Assessment and local Well-being Plans

This section should identify how the Play Sufficiency Assessments form part of the local needs assessment and to what extent the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan are integrated into the Well-being Plan and Public Service Board.

The golden thread of the PSA is discernible through the organisation's plans all the way through to the Cwm Taf Well-being Plan. The PSA is used to inform the local needs assessment and as a priority for the Public Service Board, one of the three objectives of the Cwm Taf Well-being Plan states, ***“To grow a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf.”*** This demonstrates that play sits at the highest strategic position of the organisation's direction. The Cwm Taf Well-being Plan is [accessible here](#)

Monitoring Play Sufficiency

This section should identify the lead director and lead member for children and young people's services. It should also describe the Play Monitoring Group or equivalent. Along with a list of members, please describe how the group has been facilitated and the benefits and challenges of the group.

The lead Director for the PSA is the Group Director for Community and Children's Services, supported by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

Membership of the PSA Group includes representatives from a range of services, including Early Years and Family Support, Resilient Families Service (undertakes the Team Around the Family function in RCT), Youth Engagement and Participation Service, Sport, Leisure, Parks, Transport, Planning, Menter Iaith, Education, Disabled Children's Team, Family Information Service and the Community Hub Team. The group meetings on a needs led basis to monitor actions and review plans. The biggest challenge for this group has been the capacity for it to be as pro-active as it could be. Whilst members of the group are fully committed to the delivery of play opportunities and have been delivering against actions within the plan, there has been little capacity to facilitate the work of the group as a collective.

Following internal Service changes, from April 2019 responsibility for the management of the PSA and the subsequent monitoring of play sufficiency will sit with the Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service. This will ensure that the statutory responsibilities for the monitoring of the PSA and the monitoring of Youth Support Services provision will be undertaken together, providing a more comprehensive assessment of service provision, gaps and areas of development required. It will also enable the gathering of routine data and service mapping activity to inform the monitoring role of the RCT PSA Group.

Criteria

This section contains the “matters that need to be taken into account” as set out under section 10 of the Statutory Guidance.

The Criteria column: sets out the data that needs to be available and the extent to which Local Authorities meet the stated criteria.

The RAG status column: provides a drop down box, whereby the Local Authority can show its assessment of whether that criterion is fully met; partially met; or not met. These have been given Red, Amber Green markers, which appear as words in the drop

down boxes. (In the “RAG status column” ,Double click on the word STATUS – this will bring up drop-down form fields options, use the arrow down key until the status required RED, AMBER or GREEN- is at the top then press ok)

Red, Amber Green (RAG) status is a tool to communicate status quickly and effectively.

RAG status

Criteria fully met.	Fully met
Criteria partially met.	Partially met
Criteria not met.	Not met

The 2019 column enables the local authority to indicate the direction of travel with the insertion of arrows.

The Evidence to support strengths column: should be used to provide the reason for the chosen criteria status and how the evidence is held.

The Shortfall column: should be used to explain the areas in which the Local Authority does not fully meet the criteria.

The Identified Action for Action Plan column: should be used to show the Local Authority action planning priorities for that Matter.

The Comments section: asks some specific questions for each matter that should enable you to give a clear overview of how the Local Authority complies with the intention and implementation of this matter as set out fully in the Statutory Guidance. It also provides the opportunity to identify challenges and how they might be overcome.

Matter A: Population

The Play Sufficiency Assessment should provide an overview of population and demographic data used locally to plan for play provision. Information should also be included regarding:

- Ages of children
- First language Welsh speaking children
- Cultural factors (such as other language)
- Gypsy Traveller children
- Disabled children

What has changed in terms of population and demographic trends since Play Sufficiency Assessment 2016?

In Rhondda Cynon Taf, no significant changes have been reported to the population or demographic data since the development of the Play Sufficiency Assessment in 2016. However, the more significant changes have and continue to be in relation to how we use data to identify individuals, families and communities in need. We are currently in the process of developing profiling models for individual children and young people, for families and for communities. These models will utilise both local and national data sets and intelligently analyse them to ensure we are targeting our services where they are needed most. This modification of our systems and processes takes account of national developments such as our involvement in the Flexible Funding Pathfinder Programme, the Early Years Co-construction work in Cwm Taf, the Children First Pioneer and the roll out of Community Hubs/Zones.

How has/will the Local Authority use its population data to plan for sufficient play opportunities locally?

Working in conjunction with colleagues from across the play sector we will be moving towards commissioning and delivering play provision in areas of identified need through using a range of data sources including vulnerability profiling information, community profiles, children's services data, youth services data and community safety / anti-social behaviour data. Priority areas for the delivery of provision will also include evidence of need within the Community Hub areas as and when they are developed.

Have there been challenges?

A number of organisations which would have been commissioned to deliver play provision are no longer operating, due to a lack of funding. This lack of organisations from which to commission play provision has been the greatest challenge for the play service.

How can these be overcome?


It is envisaged that through working with colleagues across other council departments we can plan and deliver a range of play opportunities to

ensure there is no duplication of service provision. We are also looking to consolidate Service Level Agreements with external third sector providers delivering services commissioned via the new Children and Communities Grant to support their long term sustainability and improve the integration of joint service delivery.

Comments

From April 2019 the new Service Planning and Transformation Team will produce robust and live profiling data from a range of sources with which the PSA group will be able to ensure that moving forward all play opportunities will be targeted to meet the emerging needs of our communities, whilst ensuring that there is an equitable spread of provision across the local authority as far as reasonably practicable.


RAG Status for Matter A

Criteria partially met. 

Matter B: Providing for Diverse Needs

The Play Sufficiency Assessment should present data about how the Local Authority and partners aim to offer play opportunities that are inclusive and encourage all children to play and meet together.

RAG Status:

Criteria partially met. 

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MB 1	The play requirements of children living in isolated rural areas are understood and provided for	AMBER	RED	In previous years data from the 2011 WIMD was used to identify the play requirement of children in isolated areas. As this data is now 8 years old, work is ongoing to produce up to date data	Work is ongoing and limited data is readily available at this time.	MB1. The data is to be analysed and used to develop and deliver appropriate levels of play opportunities.
		GREEN	AMBER	YEPS 'Your Voice' survey consults with more than 6,000 young people in a robust range of settings, ensuring young people aged 11-25 years have the opportunity to express their views and shape service improvement. This information is used at a	Information will not be available in time to be included in the body of this report.	MB1. Outcomes from the Your Voice report to be included in the PSA action plan, to inform service delivery.

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
		GREEN	RED	<p>local level to identify gaps, needs and to inform the planning of youth provision. The 'Your Voice' survey will be rolled out across all secondary schools, colleges and communities; from 1st of November 2018 until the 31st of December 2018. Reports will be complete by February 2019.</p> <p>The Arts Service provides arts and cultural opportunities for children within the professional theatre programme and targeted universal art workshops on an outreach basis. They provide art and cultural opportunities that are accessible by public transport or can in certain circumstances arrange for transport for the individual to the provision.</p> <p>The two RCT Theatres (Coliseum Theatre,</p>	<p>Funding for this service has been cut and transport is limited and only made possible via securing external funding and is, therefore, short-term(Families First funding)</p>	<p>MB1.To secure external funding to enable opportunities to be created locally for children to engage with and participate in the arts.</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				<p>Aberdare, and the Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy) are in or close to the town centres.</p> <p>RCT Arts Service remains in Arts Council of Wales Portfolio client, which is in receipt of revenue funding.</p> <p>Arts Services is commissioned by Families First to deliver a youth arts and music industry programme.</p>	<p>This will be reviewed during Autumn 2019.</p> <p>The service is commissioned on an annual basis.</p>	
MB 2	The play requirements of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for	AMBER	RED	<p>The local authority currently commissions a limited amount of Welsh language Open Access Play provision.</p> <p>The YEPS ‘Your Voice’ survey is rolled out across all four Welsh medium secondary schools ensuring the requirements of Welsh language speaking young people are understood and</p>	<p>2 out of the 10 provisions commissioned are carried out through the Welsh Language.</p> <p>Shortage of suitable Welsh speaking providers.</p>	<p>MB2. Additional Welsh Language providers to be sourced and commissioned to deliver provision.</p> <p>MB2. Identify external providers to deliver sessions through the Medium of Welsh</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
		GREEN	GREEN	<p>inform service development and delivery.</p> <p>YEPS have a clear and robust commitment to the delivery of youth provision through the medium of Welsh. The service provides provision during lunchtimes and after school hours (up until 8pm) in the welsh language. All the staff based at the Welsh medium schools are fluent welsh speakers, which allows Young people to communicate through the language of their choice.</p> <p>YEPS have established and maintained strong partnership working with the Urdd and Menter Iaith to provide further provision.</p>		<p>MB2. To secure external funding to enable opportunities to be created locally for children to</p>
		GREEN	AMBER	<p>The Arts Service provides arts and cultural opportunities for children with diverse needs within</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
		<p style="text-align: center;">GREEN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RED</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GREEN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AMBER</p>	<p>the professional theatre programme (including bilingual productions and relaxed screenings/performances) and as targeted arts workshops at the theatres and on an outreach basis.</p> <p>A Welsh language performing arts group meet weekly at Gartholwg Lifelong Learning Centre. RCT Theatres programme Welsh language product for families as appropriate.</p> <p>Sport RCT in partnership with the Urdd provide after-school and community club provision through the medium of Welsh. All Urdd clubs are led by a Welsh speaking coaches / volunteers.</p> <p>The partnership continues and has seen an increase in the delivery of swimming</p>	<p>Lack of Welsh speaking staff and a lack of demand makes provision difficult to sustain financially.</p>	<p>engage with and participate in the arts through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>MB2. Continue to work in partnership with the Urdd. Undertake a workforce audit and actively seek to recruit Welsh speaking delivery staff</p> <p>MB2. Identify suitable staff to deliver sessions through</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				lessons through the medium of Welsh		the Medium of Welsh. Promote the sessions to increase uptake of the service.
MB 3	The play requirements of children from different cultural background are understood and provided for	GREEN	AMBER	Section MB1 above data will also be used to meet this requirement.		
		GREEN	GREEN	The YEPS 'Your Voice' survey is rolled out across all 17 secondary schools, the 4 special schools, colleges and the community to ensure the requirements of all young people regardless of background are understood and the feedback is used to inform service development and delivery.		
			GREEN	YEPS held a BAME consultation event to in March 2018 to give young people an additional opportunity to express the issues they face in RCT. A BAME youth forum was established following this.		MB4. Identify new ways of commissioning provision to

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MB 4	The play requirements and support needs of disabled children are understood and provided for.	GREEN	GREEN	<p>The Care2Play programme provides C&YP with access to a range of play opportunities over the holiday periods. It also meets the support needs of individuals to access either care or play provision locally within their community.</p>	Current commissioning processes require review to ensure they are efficient	stream line the processes of the Care2Play programme
		GREEN	GREEN	<p>YEPS staff coordinate and deliver support for young people who are disabled and/or have additional learning needs to access play and youth provision in their local communities.</p> <p>The Arts Service provides arts and cultural opportunities for children, young people and their families with diverse needs, ranging from professional theatre programme (including bilingual product and relaxed screenings/performances) through to targeted arts</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
		GREEN	AMBER	<p>workshops at the theatres and on an outreach basis. The service is an Arts Council of Wales Arts Portfolio Wales client. Evidence to support this matter for Culture Services can be found in MB1 above.</p> <p>RCT is one of 3 Local Authorities working in partnership with Dragon Sports Wales to deliver the Get out and Get Active scheme (GOGA) focusing specifically on people with a disability.</p> <p>There is a full time Disability Sport Wales Development Officer in post to provide support to C&YP to access recreation.</p> <p>(STARS) Coordinators provide both inclusive community provision in community sports clubs and school holiday programme.</p>	<p>The GOGA Delivery Plan is in its second year of a 3 year funding programme</p>	<p>MB4. Identify additional funding to continue to deliver the GOGA scheme.</p> <hr/> <p>MB5. Develop a catalogue</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MB 5	Play projects and providers have access to a range of resources which support inclusion	GREEN	AMBER	The children centres have sensory rooms that providers and the public can use free of charge.	There are very limited physical resources available to the play sector that enables them to adapt play opportunities that support inclusion.	of specialist resources within the local authority that providers can borrow to enhance children and young people’s play opportunities
		GREEN	GREEN	YEPS coordinate and deliver provision for young people who are disabled and/or have additional learning needs.		
		GREEN	GREEN	RCT Theatres offer accessible art performances for disabled young people to attend. In addition to this art services are also members of the HYNT scheme – the national access scheme for theatres.		
		AMBER	GREEN	Sport RCT in partnership with Disability Sport Wales is working with sports clubs and private sports providers		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				to achieve 'InSport Accreditation. 'This is a quality assurance scheme designed to upskill coaches/volunteers and ensure sports clubs are inclusive to all. RCT is on track to achieve Silver InSport accreditation in 2019.		
MB 6	There is a well known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for disabled children	GREEN	GREEN	This is carried out through the Care2Play programme	More providers are required from which to commission Care2Play	MB6. Work with colleagues from the statutory and voluntary sector across RCT to identify the need and develop for specialist play provision for disabled children.
		AMBER	GREEN	Where possible integration is encouraged and supported within YEPS provision however where required YEPS ensure provision for disabled young people is developed and delivered separately from mainstream provision		
		GREEN	GREEN			MB6. To secure external funding to enable opportunities to be created

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
		GREEN	AMBER	<p>The Arts Service provides specialist arts and culture provision for children with diverse needs e.g. young carers, looked after children, and disabled children, utilising the theatres and community venues.</p> <p>The Art Service also commissions the provision of a community dance pathways programme accessible to all. Signed performances take place in RCT Theatres. These are made possible through our revenue funding received from ACW.</p> <p>Sport RCT through support from Disability Sport Wales are able to categorise disabilities and appropriately provide exclusive and inclusive sporting opportunities for all children.</p>	<p>Due to the lack of demand and take up of this service it is no longer sustainable for the local authority.</p>	<p>locally for children to engage with and participate in the arts.</p> <p>MB6. Identify new funding to ensure sustainability of new opportunities created by the end of the funded programme.</p> <p>MB6. Exploring the possibility of working regionally to support the development of disability sports clubs and community sessions. (Sport RCT)</p>
		GREEN	GREEN			
			AMBER			

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				The GOGA project has focused the development of developing new sustainable exclusive and inclusive opportunities within RCT.		
MB 7	Access audits for all play provision as described in the guidance are undertaken	GREEN	AMBER	A playscheme premises access form has been developed. The information captured within the form aims to inform service users of the accessibility of the building for service users.	Due to limited resources this work has yet to be completed.	MB7. Access audits of all provision to be carried out. Data to then be collated and publicised on the council website alongside the playscheme timetable. Thus supporting families to make an informed choice of which play provision best suits their need.
						MB8. Review of Gypsy traveller sites required.
MB 8	Designated play space is provided and well maintained on gypsy traveller sites	RED	RED	There are currently no council maintained play spaces on gypsy traveller sites	There are currently no council maintained play spaces on gypsy traveller sites	
MB 9	The requirements of young carers are understood and provided for	AMBER	GREEN	YEPS have established a Young carer's support group at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School, to support and consult with the Young carers at the school.		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
		GREEN	GREEN	Leisure centres provide a subsidised Leisure for Life (LFL) leisure pass for young carers. The subsidised LFL membership scheme continues.		
MB 10	The requirements of lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) children are understood and provided for	RED	GREEN	YEPS support the 'Bridges' Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) Project and have a designated member of staff who raises awareness of this.		

Providing for Diverse Needs

How has data been used (or how will the data be used) to address the barriers that children with diverse needs face in accessing inclusive and accessible opportunities for playing?

We have used the relevant data available to us to ensure that the children and young people referred to our flagship Care2Play programme are placed in settings to support their individual needs. Further work is on-going to analyse individual needs based data on a geographical basis to ensure that children and young people are fully supported to access play provision locally within their local community. We will also assess the needs of other cohorts of disabled children and develop more specialised play provision as required.

Have there been challenges?

Over the past 2 years with the loss of voluntary sector funding and re-profiling of various Welsh Government programme, such as, Families First and Communities First has been challenging. There has been a steady increase in the closure of voluntary sector play providers and play organisations across the County Borough.

How can these be overcome?

Play services is now working with various internal departments to stream line the processes and delivery of a number of services for children and young people. This will include the development and implementation of integrated service delivery opportunities facilitated by the flexible use of the new Children and Communities Grant alongside Council core budget. These developments will take into consideration new Welsh Government programmes of work and local government initiatives, which will include, The Cwm Taf Early Years Co-construction Project the Children First Pioneer work, the Resilient Families Service and the establishment of Community Zones across the County Borough.


Comments:

It is envisaged that through partnership working across all council departments and both, the voluntary and private sector, the quality and quality of play opportunities for all children throughout the County Borough will flourish.

Matter C: Space available for children to play: Open Spaces and Outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces

The Local Authority should recognise that all open spaces within their area are potentially important areas where children can play or pass through to reach other play areas or places where they go.

RAG Status

Criteria fully met. 

Open Spaces

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MC 1	The Local Authority has undertaken an Open Space Assessment (OSA) that maps areas that are used, or might be used for playing as listed in the Statutory Guidance	GREEN	GREEN	The Council has undertaken an Open Space Assessment. This forms an up to date assessment of accessible open space in the County Borough.	The open space assessment is only a snapshot in time.	
MC 2	The Local Authority has undertaken an Accessible Green space Study that maps areas that are used for playing	GREEN	GREEN	The Council has a Green Space assessment, which was conducted in 2007. The Open Space Assessment also builds on the 2007 report.		
MC 3	The Local Authority undertakes access audits at all open spaces and implements proposals to improve access and safety	AMBER	AMBER	The Open Space Assessment looks at elements of accessibility as part of its remit.	The assessment is a snapshot in time and there is no assessment on a more regular basis	MC3. Keep the Open Space Assessment up to date (Planning)
MC 4	The Local Authority has developed its own Open Space Standards in accordance with the advice and requirements of Planning Policy Wales	GREEN	GREEN	The Council has an open space study which sets standards for provision.		
MC 5	The Local Authority undertakes and actions play value assessments in public open spaces	NEW	RED	There is no evidence available to support this.	There is no current mechanism in place for this work to be undertaken.	MC5. Work with the wider Play sector and planning department to identify and agree a process to

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MC 6	Brownfield sites owned by the Local Authority are assessed for the potential for the site to be reclaimed to provide for children's play	GREEN	GREEN	With Corporate Estates officers being based within Leisure, Parks and Countryside they are requested to comment on any planned disposals or development of land.	Not all Brownfield sites are suitable locations for play. Other sites maybe designated sites of important nature and conservation (SINC) and therefore may require sensitive management	undertake play value assessments in public open spaces.

Outdoor Unstaffed Designated Play Spaces

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MC 7	The Local Authority has undertaken an Accessible Green space Study that maps areas that are used for playing	NEW	AMBER	The Local Authority has an up to date record of all fixed equipped play spaces and has carried out an accessibility audit.	This mapping does not include all Green spaces as the geographical area is too vast and would require additional resources across a number of service areas to carry it out fully.	MC7. Undertake a review of the accessibility audit.

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MC 8	The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of all designated play space as described in the Statutory Guidance	AMBER	AMBER	The Play Facilities team has an up to date record of all designated play spaces that fall within the ownership of the Local Authority.	There is limited information held on non-council owned facilities. With reducing physical resources, opportunities to source this information is challenging.	MC8. Contact Community Councils and Housing Associations to develop a fuller picture of existing designated play spaces not in Council ownership.
MC 9	The Local Authority assesses play spaces for play value and potential to increase in play use as set out in the Statutory Guidance	AMBER	GREEN	The Local Authority has an annual inspection undertaken on all fixed equipped play spaces, which takes into consideration and measures play value. Any identified shortfalls in provision are added to the Play Facilities development plan. Furthermore the Council is in year four of a 5 year investment programme, which has allocated over three million pounds worth of funding for improvements	The funding is only allocated for capital works	MC9. Continue with the use of the development plan to influence capital spend in future years

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				to fixed equipped play spaces.		
MC 10	The Local Authority undertakes access audits at all designated play spaces and implements proposals to improve access and safety	AMBER	AMBER	The Local Authority has undertaken an access audit on all fixed equipped play spaces following the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act now Equality Act.	The study only considered access limitations in terms of disability, further studies are also required to identify physical limitations like busy roads, the proximity of safe crossing points etc.. Limited revenue funding for commissioning a new audit	MC10. Continue to work with partners in Planning and Highways so that appropriate access to play and open space are not overlooked. MC10. Work with the Diversity and Equality team to gain a snapshot of generic access issues. Obtain costs to commission a new access audit to update existing information
MC 11	The Local Authority has developed and agreed a new fixed play provision standard	AMBER	GREEN	.RCTCBC uses the supplementary planning guidance note (TAN 16) and a play space design brief to ensure that all new provisions are in line with the standards required.	There are difficulties around getting housing developers to provide facilities that meet these standards.	MC11. Work with colleagues in Planning to ensure the wording in Section 106 documents supports the use of the play standard (play space design brief)
MC 12	The Local Authority undertakes and actions play space assessments in	AMBER	GREEN	The Local Authority has an informal for accessing play spaces which utilises local		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	designated play spaces			knowledge, maintenance records and visual observational techniques.		
MC 13	The Local Authority has introduced smoke-free playgrounds	GREEN	AMBER	All new signage within Children’s Play Spaces makes reference to the prohibition of smoking.	Some play spaces/parks have old signage which does not state that smoking is prohibited. The act of not smoking in a Children’s play space is currently not enforceable	MC13. Continue to renew signage
MC 14	The Local Authority has removed ‘no ball games’ signs to encourage more children playing in the community	GREEN	GREEN	In suitable play spaces – signage prohibiting ball games has been removed.	Some spaces may not be suitable for playing ball games due to the limited space available or for safety reasons	MC14. Continue to review signage to support increased play opportunities.
MC 15	The Local Authority has erected signs, such as Play Priority Signs to encourage more children playing in the community	AMBER	AMBER	The Local Authority currently has nine non equipped designated play spaces, and signage has been erected to identify these sites as play spaces	Damage to signage. Limited funding for erection of signage	MC15. Review signage and replace where possible, subject to funding.
MC 16	The Local Authority includes a recognition of the importance	GREEN	GREEN	Through the planning process officers based		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	of playing fields to children's play when any disposal decisions are made			within Leisure, Parks and Countryside (LP&C) are given the opportunity to comment on any planned disposals.		
MC 17	The Local Authority includes children and their families in any consultations regarding decisions to dispose of playing fields	RED	AMBER	Equality impact assessment and consultation information now required in all Cabinet reports	Lack of staff capacity to carry out consultation with children and families.	MC17.PSA group to review current process with Coporate Estates.
MC 18	The Local Authority refers to guidance around creating accessible play space when refurbishing or developing new playgrounds	NEW	GREEN	Through the Capital Investment programme for play areas the local authority has provided 28 additional wheelchair accessible roundabouts, 65 basket swings, 30 accessible rotators, 27 spring see saws and many sensory play items. Improvements have also been made to entrance and exit points and tarmac pathways linking the equipment have been increased.		

How has the Local Authority ensured collaboration between Open Space Assessments / Green Infrastructure Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments to improve spaces for play?

The Local Authorities Play Faculties Manager works closely with and regularly contacts key colleagues within the Play and Planning department on developments that include the disposal and or development of land that may impact on play opportunities for C&YP.

Have there been challenges?

There have been no major challenges at this time.

How can these be overcome?

N/A

Comments:

The Local Authority officers from various departments will continue to work together in this area.

Outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces

The local authority's Play Team has engaged with disability groups, parents and carers and has undertaken accessibility audits

Have there been challenges?

There are many challenges and the key issues faced include resources – physical and financial. Accessibility usually requires physical work to be undertaken from lowering kerbs to creating pathways to play spaces, these often require expertise from different service areas. In terms of providing accessible equipment e.g. a roundabout or swing that can be used by wheelchair users, these are substantially more expensive than a standard item not deemed as inclusive or accessible.

How can these be overcome?

The majority of challenges can be overcome with additional funding and ensuring that wider partners have a better understanding of play considerations and its importance.

Comments

The Council has over 200 designated play spaces and to ensure that these play facilities better meet the play needs of ALL children and young people living in RCT. Over £3 million has been invested over the past four years, with a further commitment of additional funding to come in the next financial year (2019-20). Accessibility has been a fundamental part of this work. Whilst increasing accessible opportunities within the play space itself has been relatively easy to achieve, the greater challenge has been facilitating improvements to the old infrastructure like access paths and routes.

With the emphasis on changing needs has come a greater use of the phrases ‘accessibility’ of ‘inclusive play’. Whilst the concept has long been engrained in certain aspects of the play industry it relatively new in others and with this has come confusion and an expectation that all play equipment should be adapted for wheelchair users. As a provider of play opportunities it has sometimes been difficult to relay a message that shifts the emphasis from adapted equipment to providing spaces that enable children no matter what their ability to play together.

Matter D: Supervised provision

The Local Authority should aim to offer a range of supervised play provision.

RAG Status

Criteria partially met. 

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Playwork provision

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MD 1	The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of all supervised play provision as	GREEN	GREEN	Play services collate and publicise on the Council website and Family Information Services		MD1 Extend the use of the Capita One system to capture information on supervised play provision in

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	described in the Statutory Guidance			facebook page, a timetable of commissioned open access play provision. The Youth Engagement and Participation Service keep accurate and detailed records of all provision through our Capita One Management Information System (IYSS)		one place
MD 2	The Local Authority offers play provision which offers a rich play environment as described in the Statutory Guidance	GREEN	AMBER	The Play Soft Outcomes tool is used by commissioned play providers to reflect on the play environment created for the children and young people to use.	Processes for ensuring regular monitoring of the outcomes tool requires improvement.	MD2. Carry out monitoring visits to all play providers to ensure that they are using the data from the outcomes tool to inform their planning.
MD 3	The Local Authority ensures that partners are supported to offer rich play environments as described in the Statutory Guidance	GREEN	GREEN	A Development Officer post is funded by the LA with Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Clubs. This officer supports out of school and play settings in RCT to deliver high quality play environments and to seek additional funding and training opportunities to		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				further improve their practice.		
MD 4	Staffed play provision that the Local Authority provides meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards	AMBER	GREEN	<p>All YEPS staff have qualifications relevant for the roles that they are employed to do. As a minimum, all staff have Disclosure and barring (DBS) checks which are renewed every 3 years, Youth Work Level 3, Child Protection Level 2 and Level 2 in Playwork Practice.</p> <p>All Sport RCT and Leisure Services staff have qualifications relevant for the roles that they are employed to do. Coaches have qualifications relevant to their specific activity e.g. swimming teachers, sports specific course or if coaching football a qualification from the relevant national governing body. All staff and volunteers have Criminal</p>	Currently undertaking a Workforce audit to identify additional training needs above the minimum requirements.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				Record Bureau (CRB) checks.		
MD 5	Staffed play provision that the Local Authority funds meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards	AMBER	AMBER	All commissioned open access play provision, is either registered with CIW or working within the under 2 hour rule, meet the required national minimum standards.	Number of play providers has reduced in recent years. Much work has been done to encourage providers to become CIW registered	MD5. Work with voluntary and private sector to support and develop community groups to deliver play provision in local communities.
MD 6	Staffed play provision that the Local Authority's partners provide meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards	AMBER	AMBER	Please see MD 5 Sport RCT offers a Play Your Part calendar which includes courses to obtain minimum qualification by community delivery people. I.e. Safeguarding, 1 st Aid.		MD6. Use the relevant data collected from workforce audit to inform the training needs of the sector to maintain regulated requirements. The PSA group to work collaboratively to create joint training opportunities for staff.
MD 7	Staffed play provision across the Local Authority works to a recognised quality assurance programme	GREEN	RED GREEN	Each YEPS provision has clear quality assurance processes in place through the Dynamic Purchasing System	No joint quality assurance mechanism currently in place	MD7 Joint QA mechanism to be developed to cover registered and non-registered provision

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				<p>All sports clubs in Rhondda Cynon Taf are encouraged to either gain a NGB club accreditation of Sport RCT Safe Sport accreditation. This aims to ensure all sports clubs operate with correct DBS, qualifications, ratios and policies.</p> <p>Launched a new membership scheme for all organisations providing physical activity (not just sports clubs) which requires the essential minimum qualifications and promotes the continuous development of delivery standards.</p>		
MD8	The Local Authority prioritises quality issues when engaging with/ commissioning the private sector to deliver recreational activities for children.	GREEN	<p>AMBER</p> <p>GREEN</p>	<p>Number of providers have reduced and therefore provider options are limited</p> <p>YEPS quality assures provision through robust quality assurance and procurement frameworks to ensure all commissioned</p>	<p>Provider options are limited</p> <p>Limited number of providers tendering to deliver provision.</p>	MD8. Need to attract more play providers to register with the Council's procurement framework to be eligible to bid for tenders via the Dynamic Purchasing System

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				<p>third sector providers offer excellent support in response to local identified needs.</p> <p>The Dynamic Purchasing System consists of numerous providers that have tendered to deliver provision to young people through YEPS. The tenders are evaluated on the basis of price and quality. The ratio applied is 40/60 Price/Quality. Providers have to have a DBS dated within the last 3 years, insurance and specific qualifications and experiences to deliver the activity.</p>		
MD 9	The Local Authority provides council premises and space free of charge to organisations which provide free (at the point of access) play provision for children	GREEN	GREEN	All commissioned play provision is free (at the point of entry)		

Structured recreational activities for children

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MD10	Local authority sport, physical activity, and active recreation plans are contributing to increasing free play and recreational activities	GREEN	GREEN	<p>YEPS contributes to the aims for play, education, Culture and Leisure by offering young people the opportunity to participate in numerous activities such as Football and Drama taking place out of school; hours on school site, Leisure Centres etc. A YEPS team leader has the responsibility for Sport Leisure and Culture.</p> <p>The Streetgames initiative links with Voluntary Sector organisations across RCT. A couple of local youth projects continue to be commissioned through the WG Legacy fund and have</p>		<p>MD10. Street games continue to link with the Communities For Work Central Team to look at opportunities for closer working in the future and support to develop links with</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
		GREEN	GREEN	<p>been given the opportunity to be part of the network with with this initiative.</p> <p>Sport RCT continues to deliver a comprehensive sports and physical activity development programmes detailed in the RCT Sport and physical Activity Plan. The plan focuses on supporting increased sustainable opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity for wellbeing and progression. A key focus is the development of physical literacy skills at Foundations level (pre-birth to 16) and supporting the creation of environments where young people can develop the motivation, confidence, skills and responsibility to be aware and engage in community opportunities to be active, as part of a lifestyle choice.</p>		partners in RCT.

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MD 11	The sports agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children	<p>GREEN</p> <p>RED</p> <p>AMBER</p>	<p>GREEN</p> <p>AMBER</p> <p>AMBER</p>	<p>YEPS coordinate and deliver sport and physical activity for young people across the 17 Secondary Schools in RCT, the 4 Special Schools and wider community. These sessions take place during after School hours.</p> <p>A new structure within the service has been implemented to deliver the Sport and Physical Activity Plan. In addition to this a new measurement framework is under development in conjunction with Sport Wales, to capture impact on wellbeing and sustainable outcomes, as well as outputs (opportunity take-up).</p> <p>Continued partnership working with a collection of agencies to assess the needs of children and young people to improve provision.</p>		<p>MD11. To use the PSA</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				The national funding has seen a reduction in the last 2 years and is projected to further decrease. This has necessitated a shift in focus from direct provision to supporting community organisations to developing and increasing their offers, to ensure sustainability.	Resource limitations to engage with the under 17 year old population.	working group to improve joined ways of working to plan and deliver provision across the sector to maximise current and future funding.
MD 12	The cultural and arts agenda, is contributing to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children	GREEN	GREEN	<p>YEPS provides arts and culture activities for young people aged 11-25 years across the 17 Secondary Schools in RCT and the 4 Special Schools, and the wider community. These sessions take place during after school hours. For specialised Art projects external providers are sourced from the YEPS Dynamic purchasing System such as animation.</p> <p>The local authority has an Arts Service with an Arts & Creative Industries</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				<p>Development Team that provides and supports communities to provide recreational activities for C&YP.</p> <p>They also provides art and culture focused structured recreational activities for children and young people through its Families First commissioned programme such as – Youth Arts and SONIG Youth Music Industry and Rock and Pop workshops.</p>		
MD 13	The Local Authority Youth Service provides for children’s opportunities for leisure and association	GREEN	GREEN	<p>YEPS activities are delivered during after school hours up until 8.00pm. Activities offered to the young people have been coordinated and organised through consultation with young people. Young people also have the opportunity to gain advice and guidance from YEPS Staff.</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
			AMBER	<p>With the ending of the Communities First grant on the 31st March 2018, the Welsh Government (WG) legacy fund continues to commission four organisations to provide local youth drop in facilities in Hirwaun, Fernhill and Mountain Ash and Blaenllechau.</p> <p>Continue to discuss and agree plans with Sport Wales through the local authority's sports partnership board. (Sport RCT) Free swimming Initiative is currently being reviewed nationally, with recommendations being submitted for governmental decisions.</p>	Some local community based youth provision lacking due to lack of suitable premises.	MD13. Identify funding to sustain provision once the WG legacy fund comes to end.

Supervised play provision

Where the Local Authority has assessed settings as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSAs), how have these settings been assessed in respect of the quality of play opportunities they provide and offer?

A Development Officer is funded, via Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Clubs, to offer support and advice to play and out of school childcare settings to ensure that they offer quality play opportunities. This includes business assessments to identify areas of improvement, as well as signposting settings to training and funding opportunities that can further improve their practice.

How has provision that is not part of the CSA been assessed in respect of the quality of play opportunities they provide and offer?

The same level of support, as detailed above, is provided to all play and out of school childcare settings.

Have there been challenges?

There is a limited capacity to offer an intensive level of support to all settings in RCT.

How can these be overcome?

The level of support, and how this can be improved, will be reviewed early in 2019.

Comments:

We will continue to work collaboratively with colleagues across the childcare and play sector to ensure that any emerging themes or areas of identified support needs are being met.

Matter E: Charges for play provision

The Local Authority should consider which play opportunities involve a charge and the extent to which the Local Authority takes these charges into account in assessing for sufficient play opportunities for children living in low income families as set out in the Statutory Guidance.

RAG status

Criteria fully met. ■

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
ME 1	The Local Authority keeps records of the number of children living in low income families	GREEN	GREEN	YEPS use Vulnerability Profiling to target young people identified as Amber/Red and ensure they are offered support from YEPS staff. These indicators include young people in receipt of free school meals and the LSOA data pertaining to the area in which they live. Vulnerability Profiling has been developed to identify families at risk of requiring future support from statutory services as a result of the issues they face	Continue to support other departments to use vulnerability profiling methodology to support planning	ME1. PSA working group to use this data to plan, commission and deliver provision in areas of identified need.
ME 2	The Local Authority keeps records of the number of children living in areas of deprivation	GREEN	GREEN			
ME 3	The Local Authority keeps records of the number of children living in rural areas	GREEN	GREEN			

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
ME 4	The Local Authority keeps records of the number of disabled children and those with particular needs.	GREEN	GREEN	<p>YEPS use Vulnerability Profiling to target young people identified as Amber/Red and ensure they are offered support from YEPS staff. One of the indicators for this is young people with Additional Learning Needs.</p> <p>The Capita One Management Information System also stores all records of children with additional learning needs therefore service data is able to reflect how many young people have engaged with the service who have Additional Learning Needs</p>		
ME 5	The Local Authority records the availability of no cost provision	GREEN	GREEN	Leisure Centres record participation in free provision available during weekends (Free Swimming) and during the holidays (Free Swimming)	Continues, although currently under national review.	ME6. Establish mechanisms

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
ME 6	The Local Authority records the provision of no cost / low cost premises used for play provision	GREEN	RED	The Council's Estates department has good mechanisms in place to monitor premises leases and there is a potential to link premises options to this work	There is no information currently recorded for no cost / low cost premises across the area	for recording no cost / low cost premises.
ME 7	The Local Authority records the provisions where grants or subsidies are available for play providers	AMBER	AMBER	The Family Information Service is best placed to record this information, in liaison with the Council's Regeneration Department	There is very limited information about grants for play providers.	ME7. Establish mechanisms to record and share this information with play providers. ME8 Assess need for transport using provision mapping data
ME 8	The Local Authority provides subsidised transport for children travelling to play opportunities	GREEN	AMBER	The Council's fleet management and transport department is ready to commission transport provision when funding becomes available	Due to funding constraints, limited transport to play opportunities	

Charge for play provision

Most of the play / leisure opportunities commissioned or delivered by the local authority are either free or heavily subsidised for C&YP and their families.

How is the Local Authority ensuring that children have access to no or low-cost provision?

The LA continues to invest in developing provision in areas of identified need. It also continues to review and re-profile the services to meet the changing needs of communities and in line with the most up to date research and Welsh and National Government initiatives.

Have there been challenges?
 Due to the recent changes in how some of the WG anti-poverty programmes are being funded and delivered across Wales, the LA is currently going through a period of change to ensure that the services being delivered are meeting the identified needs of families across the County Borough.

How can these be overcome?
 We will use emerging data to ensure that all play opportunities are being commissioned and delivered in areas of identified need.


Comments:
 Play Services will over the coming months be working much closer with colleagues within the YEPS service to streamline processes to commission play provision alongside youth provision and deliver joined up provision as a result of the service changes to the Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service.

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Matter F: Access to space/provision

The Local Authority should consider all the factors that contribute to children’s access to play or moving around their community.

RAG Status

Criteria partially met. 

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MF 1	The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of the number of 20 mph zones/school safety zones in residential areas	GREEN	GREEN	Traffic Management hold information on all 20mph zone locations which is regularly updated		
MF 2	The Local Authority has an identified mechanism for assessing the impact of speed reduction and other road safety measures on the opportunity for children to play outside in their communities	AMBER	AMBER	Before and after speed surveys are made at sites where traffic calming / 20 mph zones are introduced. This provides evidence of the effectiveness of the measures in reducing speeds.	This does not relate to opportunities for play.	MF2. Consider how opportunities for play can be included in the assessment. (Transport)
MF 3	The Local Authority has a plan(s) to reduce the negative effect of busy roads and junctions through the introduction of speed reduction measures and provision of safe crossing points/routes for pedestrians and cyclists	AMBER	AMBER	Bids for schemes are submitted to Welsh Government for funding via the Road Safety grant.	Schemes are subject to funding, which is allocated towards road safety measures across Wales to reduce the incidence of personal injuries	MF3. Continue to bid for schemes and seek other opportunities of funding. (Transport)
MF 4	The Local Authority has a plan(s) to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas	AMBER	AMBER	Bids for Active Travel and Safe Routes in Communities schemes are submitted to Welsh Government via the Local Transport Fund (LTF) and Safe Routes in	Active Travel and SRIC schemes aim to improve connectivity and health and wellbeing, access to leisure facilities is	MF4. Continue to bid for LTF and SRIC funding to enable further walking and cycling schemes to be implemented. (Transport)

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				Communities funding (SRIC).	an associated benefit and not a key outcome.	
MF 5	There is potential for the Local Authority to take further action to reduce traffic speed and improve road safety to promote play opportunities	AMBER	AMBER	The Council can continues to introduce traffic calming measures at locations where there is identified need. The necessary legislation is in place.	Traffic calming is subject to funding, which is allocated towards road safety measures across the region to reduce the incidence of personal injuries	MF5. Agree traffic calming policies and procedures to introduce traffic calming measures. (Transport)
MF 6	The Local Authority uses road safety grants and/or other funding to support delivery of cycling training for children to national standards	AMBER	GREEN	National Standards cycle training delivered to approximately 800 pupils in 2017-2018.		MF6. Continue to bid for WG Road Safety grant funding to enable continuation of National Standards cycle training. (Transport)
MF 7	The Local Authority uses road safety grants and/or other funding to provide pedestrian safety training for children	AMBER	GREEN	Kerbcraft / Child Pedestrian Training delivered to approximately 1,200 pupils in 2017-2018	Only a minority of children can be accommodated by the training	
MF 8	The Local Authority has an accessible and well-known way of arranging temporary road closures, to support more children to play outside their homes	GREEN	GREEN	There are currently no applications for temporary road closures to support children to play outside.		MF8. Continue to bid for WG Road Safety grant funding to enable continuation of Kerbcraft / Child Pedestrian Training.
MF 9	The Local Authority refers to <i>Manual for Streets</i> when	GREEN	GREEN	RCT Residential Design Guide is based on Manual		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	considering new developments and changes to the highway network/urban realm			for Streets <i>TAN 18 and RCTCBC's Design Guide for Residential Streets</i>		
MF 10	The Local Authority works to nationally recognised good practice guidelines when developing walking and cycling facilities	GREEN	GREEN	The Welsh Government's Design Guidance: Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 must be considered when designing and maintain active travel routes and related facilities.		
MF 11	The Local Authority uses child pedestrian road accident casualty data to inform the location and design of interventions which help children get around independently in their communities	RED	RED	There is no evidence currently available to support this.	Nationally, Wales to reduce the accident of personal injuries.	MF11. Further consideration on how the Local Authority can use child pedestrian road accident casualty data to inform interventions.
MF 12	The Local Authority considers children's needs to access play opportunities when making decisions about public transport planning and expenditure	AMBER	AMBER	This is currently not a significant consideration. Welsh Government has not increased public transport funding since 2013. Funding currently available will be used to focus on social inclusion; which will support	Limited access to play opportunities	MF12. Further consideration on how the Local Authority can address this once National information has been made available.

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				C& YP to access leisure opportunities.		
MF 13	The requirements of disabled children are understood and provided for within traffic and transport initiatives	Moved from Matter B	GREEN	All traffic and transport initiatives are designed to be inclusive for all service users.		MF.13 Further consideration will be given should additional funding become available

Information, publicity and events:
For children and families to take part in play opportunities, recreational activities and events it is necessary for them to know what is available in their area.

MF 14	The Local Authority has a clearly identified section on its website which gives information about play opportunities as described in the Statutory Guidance (play areas, play provision, clubs and their accessibility)	GREEN	GREEN	YEPS has a local website, www.WICID.tv , which has been designed by young people for young people. The site was developed as a result of young people stating that they currently look for information they want on the internet, YEPS has invested to develop www.wicid.tv as needs led information portal for young people in RCT. The site is managed by a Wicid Editor and has on average 30,000 views each month. The		MF14. Further promotion through school's social media platforms
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				<p>website is linked to a network of youth websites across Wales. The website aims to give young people opportunities in new media and offers help, advice and information on a vast range of topics, ranging from the latest local gig information to what provision, is offered to young people in RCT. The site is also linked to the RCT Council Website and the Family Information Service Website</p>		
		RED	AMBER	<p>Sport RCT undertook consultation with families in partnership with Merthyr Tydfil CBC. Based on the feedback, Sport RCT are developing new web-based information services for families to encourage activity and the development of physical literacy skills in informal settings.</p> <p>Sport RCT (www.sportrct.co.uk) has a designated tab / hyperlink 'Find a Club' which</p>	<p>Web site information has been developed to improve access information.</p>	<p>MF14. PSA Working Group to establish mechanisms for sharing and promoting all opportunities for C&YP.</p>

				showcases over 380 sports clubs available in RCT. Leisure Centres also provide detailed timetables for each centre on the clubs, classes and sessions available		
MF 15	The Local Authority provides information on access to play opportunities and contact for support if required	GREEN	GREEN	<p>YEPS provide information on all activity timetables on www.wicid.tv, which all young people can access. Information is also shared on individual secondary school websites and the local authorities Family Information Service website. Information is also displayed in the secondary schools via display boards and plasma screens.</p> <p>YEPS provide information and updates through Social media, via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat.</p>		
MF 16	The Local Authority supports and publicises events which encourage play opportunities and events for children and families	GREEN	GREEN	All YEPS programmes are advertised extensively on the WICID, social media platforms and RCT corporate website.		

			GREEN	The Arts Service produces a bilingual seasonal brochure 3 times a year and has a website which includes provision in the theatre programme for children and young people. Activities are also promoted through websites and social media networks. The service is also publicised on the Council's website, and via other relevant means, such as printed posters/flyers and social media.		
MF 17	The Local Authority publicises information which contributes to positive community attitudes to play	GREEN	GREEN	YEPS produces press releases to showcase and celebrate young people's achievement gained from attending YEPS provision. This information is also put on Wicid YEPS hold an annual Celebration Event to celebrate the achievements of young people and the wider community.		
MF 18	The Local Authority publicises information and support for	RED	AMBER	Sport RCT is currently developing a project that will		MF18. PSA Working Group to establish mechanisms for

	parents to help them encourage their children to play			be rolled out across the local authority to encourage family physical activity and active play, with web based resources and information to support parents. RCT parenting and Talk and Play encourage parents to play with their children. Formal programme include the importance of play and discuss development opportunities / milestones. While informal groups demonstrate how to play, looking at the fun element and helping parents to play at home and in the community.		sharing and promoting play opportunities via Community Zones and Hubs.
MF 19	The Local Authority widely uses on-site signposting to safeguard and promote play	AMBER	RED		There is very limited information currently available on the council website to promote play.	MF19. PSA working group to develop and share relevant information to promote play utilising the Council's website and social media platforms.
MF 20	The Local Authority engages with the media to encourage the positive portrayal of children playing in the local area	GREEN	GREEN	YEPS produces press releases to showcase and celebrate young people's achievement gained from attending YEPS provision.		

				<p>This information is also put on Wicid</p> <p>YEPS holds an annual celebration Event to recognise the achievements of young people and the wider community.</p> <p>Cultural events run by the Arts Service and by the 3rd sector arts organisations in RCT - such as the Hot Jam Bootcamp and SONIG Young Promoters Network music nights, promote the creativity of young people.</p>		
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Access to space/provision

How has the Local Authority ensured collaboration to ensure children can move around their communities to increase access to opportunities for playing?

The local authority continues to deliver a package of road safety initiatives to thousands of school children every year, which includes school road safety sessions. The aim of the road safety sessions is to equip C&YP with the necessary skills they will need to travel safely to and from school and their local play space. Other safety initiatives include 20 mile calming measures, dropped kerbs etc.

Safe routes in communities' schemes are also being developed locally in consultation with CYP and their parents, through school surveys and workshop sessions to ensure that the proposed measures meet the needs of the community.

Have there been challenges?

There have been no challenges at this point.

How can these be overcome?

N/A

Comments

We continue to work closely with the 21st Century Schools team as and when new schools are being built to ensure we take account of the new routes C&YP will need to take in order to get to school safely.

Information, publicity, events

How has the Local Authority positively used information to support access to play provision?

The LA continues to use information to positively promote access to all provision for C&YP.

Have there been challenges?

There have been no challenges at this point.

How can these be overcome?

N/A

Comments:

PR and Tourism department continues to support all other council departments to advertise and disseminate a range of information, publications and up and coming events in line with council policy.

Matter G: Securing and developing the play workforce

The Local Authority should provide information on the organisational structure of the policy area which manages the play agenda and the play workforce.

RAG status

Criteria fully met.

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Note – These criteria are specifically about Playwork: Playwork is a highly skilled profession that enriches and enhances play. It takes place where adults support children’s play but it is not driven by prescribed education or care outcomes. This includes both open access and out of school childcare settings						
MG 1	The Local Authority keeps up to date information regarding the Playwork workforce across the Local Authority (this should include the number of play workers, Playwork management structure, qualification levels, training opportunities and volunteers)	GREEN	GREEN	All YEPS training is recorded on the ‘Training manager’ system. Relative training is organised for staff to attend throughout the year covering areas such as child protection/safeguarding, Restorative training, First Aid in Mental Health		
MG 2	The Local Authority supports all of the workforce to achieve the qualification	RED	GREEN	YEPS workforce planning informed by annual audit and QA framework. All		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	level required by the Welsh Government's National Minimum Standards	AMBER	AMBER	<p>workforce meets the standards requirements</p> <p>As part of the PSA review a workforce audit has been undertaken. It is envisaged that all information gathered will be used to populate the new FIS training module. The aim of the training module is to identify the training needs of the sector at specific times, when statutory training is due for renewal. As this is part of the National FIS database, there will also be opportunity to sell or buy places to/from other local authority training departments.</p>		MG2. Information on the training needs of the workforce to be shared with members of the PSA working group, who will then identify funding to meet the training needs of the workforce. Where there is an opportunity
MG 3	The Local Authority supports the workforce to achieve the accepted qualification levels set out by SkillsActive	GREEN	GREEN	To ensure that all activities are being delivered to a high standard Sport RCT are undertaking a workforce audit and developing		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				physical literacy training for activity providers.		
MG 4	The Local Authority has a staff development budget ring fenced for play, including Playwork	GREEN	GREEN	Funding from the Out of School Childcare Grant is ring fenced to provide training for the workforce.		MG4 Play remains a priority within the wider remit of the new Children and Communities Grant
MG 5	There is a comprehensive range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities available for play workers in the area	GREEN	GREEN	YEPS staff is regularly offered CPD opportunities in response to emergent and identified needs and interests. CPD is also discussed in all 1-2-1's which take place every 6-8 weeks with staff.		MG5. PSA Working Group to ensure CPD opportunities are promoted
MG 6	Training is available for volunteers and parents to develop their knowledge on skills in Playwork	GREEN	GREEN	All volunteers are able to access various training delivered by the local authority and the local voluntary council Interlink		
MG 7	The Local Authority includes Playwork within its Workforce Development strategies	GREEN	GREEN	The Early Years and Family Support Service (EYFSS) provide learning and development opportunities for childcare, play and early year's professionals through the Flying Start Training and		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				<p>Development Team. The primary focus of the training delivered is the up-skilling of the Flying Start Childcare workforce to ensure practitioners are suitably qualified and trained to provide high quality childcare to the children of RCT. To promote high quality provision across RCT and the wider area, the courses are open to all childcare and play practitioners. This provides a wide range of practitioners the opportunities to develop their skills and broaden their knowledge. Practitioners working at a non-Flying Start setting are required to pay a course fee</p>		
MG 8	The Local Authority supports partners to deliver appropriate training to	GREEN	GREEN	RCT parenting work alongside partner organisations such as valleys kids, Homestart		MG8 Community Zone developments to include opportunities for community groups and

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	community groups, parents and volunteers			and Challenging Behaviour Group to signpost and support families to access appropriate groups in their community.		local residents to access training opportunities
Note – these criteria are about the Play workforce: This encompasses anyone employed whose role has an impact on children playing – those who may either directly facilitate their play, design for playing, or those with the power to give permission for children to play, or not.						
MG 9	The Local Authority has undertaken a comprehensive training needs analysis for the play workforce as defined in the toolkit glossary and above	AMBER	AMBER	All play settings in RCT were asked to complete a training audit to detail relevant staff details including qualifications and training achievements.	Due to the limited number of Play providers in RCT we have had a limited response to the workforce audit.	MG9. Develop a new process to gather and analyse the data needed to inform an annual training programme for the play sector workforce.
MG 10	The Local Authority takes action to expand the variety of learning and development opportunities that are offered to staff	GREEN	GREEN	The Flying Start training and development team welcome feedback from training events to assist with the future planning of courses. Practitioners are provided with an opportunity to suggest learning and development opportunities. In addition the feedback from the training audit is used to		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				fill in identified training gaps in provision		
MG 11	There is a comprehensive range of CPD opportunities for a range of professionals who work with children	GREEN	GREEN	The variety of courses offered to practitioners is vast. In addition bespoke training is organised to meet new training needs or to broaden staff knowledge and skills. In addition termly conference days are held which provides further learning opportunities for practitioners as well as providing an opportunity to discuss training requirements and delivery patterns.		
MG 12	Training awareness sessions are available for professionals and decision makers whose work impacts on children’s opportunities to play	GREEN	GREEN	Members of the PSA group have a wealth of knowledge and understanding of all aspects of play for C&YP, who are able to deliver tailor made training awareness sessions as and when the need arises.		

Securing and developing the play workforce

How has the Local Authority met the requirement to undertake or secure the managerial and delivery functions necessary to achieve sufficient play opportunities?

We have delivered training to the play sector to support them to move towards CIW registration, however attendance was limited. Also, within year we allocated Play Opportunities Grant monies to elements of the PSA where achievement was funding bound. Open Access Play and Care2Play services have been delivered against a backdrop of reducing Council budget and third sector funding, which is a credit to play providers.

How has the Local Authority ensured it understands and provides for the workforce development needs of the play workforce (as defined in *Wales: A Play Friendly Country and above*)?

Relationships with play providers are building and their workforce developments needs are identified through direct liaison. More will be done in the coming year to pinpoint and prioritise workforce development and training needs as a means of moving the sector forward to ensure it is future sustainability.

How has the Local Authority ensured it understands and provides the playwork workforce (as defined in *Wales: A Play Friendly Country and above*)?

The Local Authority has a designated Play Officer who is responsible to ensure that the training needs of the play workforce are identified and met on an annual basis. The local Authority provides free / subsidised training for childcare, play and youth providers to ensure that they are meeting their legal requirements and are kept up to date with the outcomes of research or new practices. All training delivered is done so in partnership with local colleges and reputable training providers and is on the SkillsActive Framework.

Have there been challenges?

Over the past two years there has been a lot of changes to the levels of training staff have had access to and what their training requirements are.

How can these be overcome?

Through using the PSA working group meetings to develop and agree an annual training programme for key staff, commissioned providers or any organisation delivering provision on behalf of the service area.


Comments

It is envisaged that carrying out annual audits on the training needs of the sector, we will be able to target individuals to attend relevant training, whilst maximising budgets across the departments.

Matter H: Community engagement and participation.

The Local Authority should consult widely with children, their families and other stakeholders on their views on play provision. It should also promote wide community engagement in providing play friendly communities.

RAG Status

Criteria fully met. 

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MH 1	The Local Authority promotes initiatives to engage relevant groups in enhancing play opportunities for children in its area.	GREEN	GREEN	The aim of the annual Teddy Bear Picnic is to engage with parents and children to promote the importance of play within the Early years. We see over 3000 visitors attend the event on an annual basis. This is also used as an opportunity to consult		MH1. Consultation with community members in relation to Community Zone to include play opportunities

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				<p>with children and their families.</p> <p>We also deliver a number of free family fun days over the holiday periods from our children centres. An example of some of the activities we offer can range from a climbing wall to storytelling, silent discos, clog dancing, junk modelling and much more.</p> <p>RCT parenting held several engagement events across RCT to promote universal parenting services. Play opportunities for children of all ages and abilities were available including music making with ASD rainbows, soft play, magic demonstrations, climbing wall and crafts.</p>		
MH 2	The Local Authority promotes community engagement in:	GREEN	GREEN	Through close working relationships with a number of council and		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - making space available and suitable for play - organising play events - positive attitudes towards children and play - training on the importance of play. 			<p>voluntary organisations, we promote free usage of the children centres to organisations who want to deliver play opportunities for C&PY.</p> <p>The venues are also used to deliver various play training and with prior notice we can arrange for the centres to be open in the evenings and weekends.</p>		

Community Engagement and Participation.

How has the Local Authority effectively used existing mechanisms for children’s participation and family consultation processes with regards to play?

Throughout this section there is a clear indication that a range of community engagement activities are taking place; from formal consultations to customer satisfaction. There have been a number events held to capture the views of specific cohorts of children and young people service users and community members in the development and delivery of specific projects and programme

Have there been challenges?

There have been no challenges in this area.

How can these be overcome?

N/A

Comments

The Local Authority will continue to consult and engage with CYP and communities to ensure that the provision being commissioned and delivered meets the individual needs of the service user, their families and communities.

Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas

The Local Authority should examine all its policy agendas for their potential impact on children’s opportunities to play and embed targets and action to enhance children’s play opportunities within all such policies and strategies.

RAG Status

Criteria partially met. 

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 1	There is a named person on the Local Public Service Board who champions children’s play and ensures that the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to and are incorporated within the Well-being Plan	GREEN	GREEN	The Group Director for Community and Children’s Services as named person for Play sits on the Cwm Taf Strategic Partnership Board that acts as an advisory working group for the PSB. Any considerations for the PSB in relation to children’s play are fed up via the SPB		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 2	The Well-Being Plan recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities	NEW	GREEN	Play is referred to in one of the key objectives of the Well-being Plan		

Education and schools

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 3	Schools ensure that children are provided with a rich play environment for breaks during the school day	GREEN	GREEN	<p>The YEPS programme has been successfully developed in 17 secondary schools and provides activities for young people every day, including 2 evenings per week. Activities are arranged according to young people's needs and include homework support, art and craft, sports and leisure, adventurous activities, etc.</p> <p>Support for Primary and Secondary Schools to</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				develop and increase their physical activity opportunities are included within the new structure and current plan. A new Primary School service has been launched which enables schools to choose the support package(s) most relevant to their particular school.		
MI 4	Schools provide play opportunities during out of teaching hours	RED	AMBER	Out of school childcare clubs are being developed in more of our schools. Although predominantly childcare based, these settings also provide a rich play environment for children.	More work can be done with schools to promote the benefits of free play opportunities for children.	MI4. PSA Working Group to engage with schools to promote play opportunities
MI 5	Schools provide access to school grounds for playing out of school times	AMBER	AMBER	School grounds across the 17 schools are utilised every day for YEPS after school and two evening per week	Work is ongoing to encourage schools to make their school grounds available for play opportunities out of school hours, particularly during school holiday periods.	MI5. Work with 21 st Century Schools Team to ensure community access to and use of school grounds out of school hours

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 6	Schools encourage children to walk and cycle to school	AMBER	GREEN	<p>Schools are required to develop a sustainable travel plan. Within this, they identify areas of development to encourage children to use more sustainable modes of transport to school, such as walking and cycling.</p> <p>As part of our 21st Century Schools’ investment we ensure that scooter and bicycle shelters are a part of the new school build. It is also a condition of Planning Consent that schools review their Travel Plan to incorporate any additional sustainable transport initiatives that have been included in the new school builds.</p> <p>Alongside this, Traffic Impact Assessments are undertaken as are</p>		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				assessments of the safe walking routes. Where these assessments recommend improvements to the walking routes these works are implemented.		
MI 7	The Local Authority offers guidance to ensure schools understand and ensure that regular outdoor play is not curtailed	AMBER	GREEN	Welsh Government Foundation Phase guidance supports schools to design and develop engaging and appropriate outdoor play spaces for Foundation Phase pupils. This is supported through the 21st Century Schools investment programme as the ability for 'free-play' is designed into all of our Foundation Phase classrooms and associated external areas. There is guidance contained within the Welsh Government Building Bulletins, specifically 98 and 99, which advises on what type of external spaces are		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				required for schools, and the associated areas of each. We use this guidance to inform the design of all of our 21 st Century Schools. The Cwm Taf Well Being Plan 2018-23 encourages all schools to make the most of opportunities to engage pupils with the outdoors to support their health and mental well-being.		

Town and Country Planning

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 8	The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children of various age groups and abilities	AMBER	AMBER	The Local Development Plan (LDP) contains the following policies which recognises the importance of open space/play space and access to natural green space:		MI 8. A review of the policies will be carried out as part the next LDP review

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				AW4- Community Infrastructure and Planning obligations AW6- Design and Place making AW7- Protection and enhancement of the Built Environment.		

Traffic and Transport

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 9	The local Transport Plan recognises the importance of local streets, roads and walking and cycling route in offering play opportunities for children of different ages and abilities	GREEN	GREEN	One of the LTP's core interventions is to develop programme for innovative walking, cycling and Smarter Choices, to deliver Active Travel schemes that improve walking and cycling links to key services and facilities and, to improve accessibility within and between communities.		
MI 10	The local Transport Plan identifies ways of assessing and addressing the needs of all groups including those which are often marginalised.	GREEN	GREEN	Social inclusion and equality is promoted in the LTP, through the provision of a transport system that is safe, accessible and affordable to all sections of the community. The needs of vulnerable groups are understood and taken into Account in the overall direction of the LTP and in the design of individual		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				transport schemes that are delivered through the Plan.		

Early Years Plans

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 11	Early Years and Flying Start plans and services recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich play opportunities for younger children	GREEN	GREEN	All strands of FS emphasise the benefit of learning through play. This is evidenced across all four strands and the role of the adult in scaffolding learning through play is evident.		

Family policy and initiatives

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 12	Family support initiatives provide up to date information and support for parents to enable them to support their	GREEN	GREEN	Parenting programmes and early language programmes encourage parents to play with their children and to		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	children to play			<p>support learning through play</p> <p>YEPS promotes physical activity across the service, as part of their enrichment programme and holiday provision, including outdoor and adventurous activity. Mental health and wellbeing are supported through information advice and guidance sessions</p>		
MI 13	The local implementation of the Families First programme recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities	NEW	AMBER	<p>Families First currently commissions a variety of providers to deliver sport and cultural activities to CYP across RCT but no direct play provision, as previously there was no strategic fit with the Families First program guidelines.</p> <p>However, the Families First programme indirectly contributes to the provision of play opportunities for those children identified as most in need of these</p>		MI13. Identified gaps in play provision will be addressed from April 2019 and will reconfigure our current Families First contracts with various providers to include play provision in areas of identified need within the PSA. This will now be made possible through the realigning of the Families First and Childcare and Play Grants in the new Children and Communities Grant

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				opportunities. Referrals for Care2Play are accepted from the Families First funded Resilient Families Service when it is identified that parents would benefit from additional support to enable their child(ren) to access play opportunities		
MI 14	Plans to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities	NEW	AMBER	A comprehensive ACE's awareness training schedule is underway across schools, youth service and communities as part of the Community Zone work. The protective factors of engaging in play opportunities is highlighted as an important aspect of reducing the impact on ACE's	Workforce ACE training audit currently underway across the County Borough to support Community Zone developments	MI14. Community Zone Plans to include play approaches to reduce the impact of ACE's

Inter-generational policy and initiatives

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 15	There are a range of play based approaches to inter-generational activity		AMBER	Consultation with community members as part of the Community Zone developments have been intergenerational in nature to ensure feedback covers all aspects of the community. Using interactive approaches to gathering feedback has proved an accessible feedback for participants of all ages. The Community Hubs have been planned to include a range of activities available from both the Hub and the 'spoke' organisations to cater for the needs of all groups within the community		MI15. Community Zone Plans to include play opportunities
MI 16	There is a creative approach to inter-generational activity which encourages better interaction between children of different ages	AMBER	GREEN	The introduction of Youth Play sessions by the YEPS Service has encouraged better interaction between children of different ages and supported the smooth transition between playwork and youthwork for children and young people		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
			<p>GREEN</p> <p>AMBER</p>	<p>Chwarae Plant have delivered family play workshops because a common barrier to play is parents not allowing their children to participate due to lack of understanding of the benefits. Family workshops help with this because parents, grandparents and children are enjoying experiencing activities together. The adults begin to tap into their more playful selves and have more confidence to let their children play.</p> <p>Over the past 3 years a number of Family Fun Days have been delivered across the local authority in partnership with anti-poverty programmes</p>	<p>No committed funding for the events at the start of the financial year.</p>	<p>MI16. Funding secured to ensure the events are being delivered in an identified area of need.</p>

Health and Safety	
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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
MI 17	The Health and Safety policies explicitly recognise the value of children being able to experience risk and challenge	GREEN	GREEN	YEPS offer young people the opportunity to participate in numerous activities such as climbing and canoeing along with the DoE programme All off site activities have to comply with EVC and AALS licences protocol and all staff taking young people on 'risky' activities are experienced, have up to date DBS checks and are aware of Safeguarding procedures.		
MI 18	The Health and Safety policies and procedures incorporate the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	RED	RED	Training could be identified with appropriate funding	There is limited evidence available across the play sector that supports this. In 2016, Chwarae Plant were able to deliver this training but funding was a barrier	MI18. Support the Play Sector to undertake a holistic review of their Health & Safety policies and procedures to ensure that the risk benefit is being applied.
MI 19	The Local Authority offers the provision of insurance through the Local Authority scheme to	RED	RED	Individual organisations must have their own public liability insurance in order to		MI19. Ensure third sector and community play providers have access to appropriate advice on

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2016	RAG Status 2019	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	all third sector play providers and community councils			be commissioned by the Council		insurance requirements

Play within relevant policy and implementation agendas

Please use this section to highlight successes of collaboration across policy areas to improve play opportunities.

Play features in the top layer of objectives of the regional Cwm Taf Well-Being Plan adopted by the Council. This has encouraged a more innovative approach to meeting cross cutting objectives including play.

Have there been challenges?

The main challenges are the general reduction in funding available to providers and the subsequent loss of providers. Also a number of providers are not registered even after much investment in training and support from the Council

How can these be overcome?

More work needs to be done to develop a quality assurance framework that works to move providers from non-registration to minimum standards and on to CIW registration

Comments:

The service changes to be implemented in April 2019 onwards will see emphasis given to developing a continuum of provision for children and young people aged 0-25 years, from childcare to play and to youth work underpinned by a quality assurance framework that can be used across all providers within the sectors. Changes to commissioning arrangements via the new Children and Communities Grant will also encourage and support more collaboration between services and more sustainability for third sector providers able to deliver integrated provision.

Conclusion

This section should identify the key priorities for the Local Authorities in accordance with the regulations and described in the Statutory Guidance.

Throughout the whole of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) Report it is evident that there are a number of issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure that all budgets and funding available are being utilised to deliver provision to meet the emerging needs of individual service users, families and communities. A main priority will be the gathering, analysis and use of data to inform and co-ordinate the planning, delivery and monitoring of play, leisure, culture and sporting provision. The use of this data will enable us to identify areas of need and target our resources to address them. It will also enable us to identify those children and young people who face barriers to accessing play as a result of their socio-economic or family situation and enable us to proactively remove these barriers.

All members of the PSA group will be responsible for undertaking and monitoring of the actions of the 2019 PSA Action Plan. This will mean that colleagues from across the sector will need to share their knowledge and understanding of how various approaches and processes can be applied to achieve these actions, for example, engaging with communities and carrying out consultations. It is envisaged that through the joined up working across the sector we will be able to provide CYP, families and residents across the communities of RCT access to a range of play, leisure, culture and sports activities as and when they want it.

Way forward

This section should briefly introduce the Action Plan which sets out what steps need to be taken to improve the opportunities for children to play within the Local Authority area, including what mechanism and criteria were used to agree and prioritise actions. It should also describe the actions the Local Authority will take with regards to change in infrastructure, partnership working or mechanisms to ensure that it is well placed to deliver on the duty to secure sufficient play opportunities

The service changes from April 2019 in respect of the Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service taking responsibility for the management of the PSA and facilitating the work of the PSA Working Group in the monitoring of the play sufficiency action plan, will see a re-energised emphasis on delivering integrated play opportunities across the County Borough. This will ensure that the statutory responsibilities for the monitoring of the PSA and the monitoring of Youth Support Services provision will be undertaken together, providing a more comprehensive assessment of service provision, gaps and areas of development required. It will also enable the gathering of routine data and service mapping activity to inform the monitoring role of the RCT PSA Group.

The Action plan focuses on addressing those PSA criteria that have been assessed as red and amber within this document and therefore in need of development and improvement. Existing funding and resources will be utilised to create the infrastructure needed to quality assure a range of provision and develop the tools necessary to monitor quality of delivery.

Signed:

Date:





Play Sufficiency
Assessment V5 App

Appendix 1a -

Adult Consultation Report



Play Sufficiency
Assessment V5 App

Appendix 1b -

Children and Young People's Consultation Report

Appendix 2

Actions to be taken to address the issues / shortcomings recorded in the Play Sufficiency Assessment

Proposed actions for the period of 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020

(Funding source: funding from Local Authority own budgets and to be included in the Single Integrated Plan).

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
Matter B: Providing for diverse needs	MB1 The play requirements of children living in isolated rural areas are understood and provided for	The data is to be analysed and used to develop and deliver appropriate levels of play opportunities.	MA ME8	Staff time	Existing funding
		Outcomes from the Your Voice report to be included in the PSA action plan, to inform service delivery.	MC17	Staff time	Existing funding
		To secure external funding to enable opportunities to be created locally for children to engage with and participate in the arts.		Staff time to identify funding	Existing funding
	MB2 The play requirements of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for	Additional Welsh Language providers to be sourced and commissioned to deliver provision.		Staff time to identify providers Delivery costs	Existing funding New funding for delivery
		Identify external providers to deliver sessions through the Medium of Welsh		Staff time to identify providers	Existing funding

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
		To secure external funding to enable opportunities to be created locally for children to engage with and participate in the arts through the medium of Welsh.		Staff time to identify providers Delivery costs	Existing funding for staffing resource New funding for delivery
		Identify suitable staff to deliver sessions through the Medium of Welsh. Promote the sessions to increase uptake of the service.		Staff time	Existing funding
	MB7 Access audits for all play provision as described in the guidance are undertaken	Access audits of all provision to be carried out. Data to then be collated and publicised on the council website alongside the play scheme timetable. Thus supporting families to make an informed choice of which play provision best suits their need.	MC3 MC5 MC7 MC10 MF18	Staff time to undertake audits	Existing funding
	MB8 Designated play space is provided and well maintained on gypsy traveller sites	Review of Gypsy traveller sites required.		Staff time to review	Existing funding
Matter C: Space available for children to play	MC3 The Local Authority undertakes access audits at all open spaces and implements proposals to improve access and safety	Keep the Open Space Assessment up to date	MB7	Staff time to undertake audits	Existing funding

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
	MC5 The Local Authority undertakes and actions play value assessments in public open spaces	Work with the wider Play sector and planning department to identify and agree a process to undertake play value assessments in public open spaces.	MB7	Staff time to undertake the assessments	New funding required
	MC7 The Local Authority has undertaken an Accessible Green space Study that maps areas that are used for playing	Undertake a review of the accessibility audit.	MB7	Staff time to undertake review	Existing funding
	MC8 The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of all designated play space as described in the Statutory Guidance	Contact Community Councils and Housing Associations to develop a fuller picture of existing designated play spaces not in Council ownership.		Staff time to co-ordinate	Existing funding
	MC10 The Local Authority undertakes access audits at all designated play spaces and implements proposals to improve access and safety	Continue to work with partners in Planning and Highways so that appropriate access to play and open space are not overlooked.	MB7	Staff time	Existing funding
Work with the Diversity and Equality team to gain a snap shot of generic access issues.			Staff time	Existing funding	
Obtain costs to commission a new access audit to update existing information			Staff time to scope costs	New funding	
	MC13 The Local Authority has introduced smoke-free playgrounds	Continue to renew signage in relation to smoke-free playgrounds		Staff time Material costs	New funding to accelerate progress

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
	MC15 The Local Authority has erected signs, such as Play Priority Signs to encourage more children playing in the community	Review signage and replace where possible, subject to funding.		Staff time Material costs	New funding to accelerate progress
	MC17 The Local Authority includes children and their families in any consultations regarding decisions to dispose of playing fields	PSA group to review current process with Coporate Estates.	MB1	Staff time to undertake consultations	Existing funding
Matter D: Supervised provision	MD2 The Local Authority offers play provision which offers a rich play environment as described in the Statutory Guidance	Carry out monitoring visits to all play providers to ensure that they are using the data from the outcomes tool to inform their planning.		Staff time to undertake monitoring	New funding required
	MD5 Staffed play provision that the Local Authority funds meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards	Work with voluntary and private sector to support and develop community groups to deliver play provision in local communities.		Staff time	New funding required
	MD6 Staffed play provision that the Local Authority's partners provide meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards	Use the relevant data collected from workforce audit to inform the training needs of the sector to maintain regulated requirements. The PSA group to work collaboratively to create joint training opportunities for staff.		Staff time Training delivery costs	Existing funding New funding required for training delivery

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
	MD7 Staffed play provision across the Local Authority works to a recognised quality assurance programme	Joint QA mechanism to be developed to cover registered and non-registered provision		Staff time to develop QA mechanism	Existing funding
	MD8 The Local Authority prioritises quality issues when engaging with/ commissioning the private sector to deliver recreational activities for children.	Need to attract more play providers to register with the Council's procurement framework to be eligible to bid for tenders via the Dynamic Purchasing System		Staff time to support providers and set up the Dynamic Purchasing System	Existing funding
	MD11 The sports agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children	To use the PSA working group to improve joined ways of working to plan and deliver provision across the sector to maximise current and future funding.		Staff time	Existing funding
Matter E: Charges for play provision	ME6 The Local Authority records the provision of no cost / low cost premises used for play provision	Establish mechanisms for recording no cost / low cost premises.		Staff time	Existing funding
	ME7 The Local Authority records the provisions where grants or subsidies are available for play providers	ME7. Establish mechanisms to record and share this information with play providers.		Staff time	Existing funding
	ME8 The Local Authority provides subsidised transport for children travelling to play opportunities	Assess need for transport using provision mapping data	MB1	Staff time to undertake assessment	Existing funding

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
				Transport costs	New funding required for transport costs
Matter F: Access to space/provision	MF2 The Local Authority has an identified mechanism for assessing the impact of speed reduction and other road safety measures on the opportunity for children to play outside in their communities	Consider how opportunities for play can be included in the assessment.		Staff time to research and develop mechanism for assessing impact	Existing funding
	MF3 The Local Authority has a plan(s) to reduce the negative effect of busy roads and junctions through the introduction of speed reduction measures and provision of safe crossing points/routes for pedestrians and cyclists	Continue to bid for schemes and seek other opportunities of funding.		Staff time Cost of schemes	Existing funding New funding for schemes
	MF4 The Local Authority has a plan(s) to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas	Continue to bid for Local Transport Fund (LTF) and Safe Routes in Communities funding (SRIC) funding to enable further walking and cycling schemes to be implemented.		Staff time to bid Cost of schemes	Existing funding New funding for schemes
	MF5 There is potential for the Local Authority to take further action to reduce traffic speed and improve road safety to promote play opportunities	Agree traffic calming policies and procedures to introduce traffic calming measures.		Staff time to produce policies and implement them	New funding to accelerate progress

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
	MF11 The Local Authority uses child pedestrian road accident casualty data to inform the location and design of interventions which help children get around independently in their communities	Further consideration on how the Local Authority can use child pedestrian road accident casualty data to inform interventions.		Staff time to scope data and include it in profiling models	New funding to accelerate progress
	MF12 The Local Authority considers children's needs to access play opportunities when making decisions about public transport planning and expenditure	Further consideration on how the Local Authority can address this once National information has been made available.		Staff time to scope data	New funding to accelerate progress
	MF18 The Local Authority publicises information and support for parents to help them encourage their children to play	PSA Working Group to establish mechanisms for sharing and promoting play opportunities via Community Zones and Hubs.	MB7 MI14 MI15	Staff time for planning	Existing funding
	MF19 The Local Authority widely uses on-site signposting to safeguard and promote play	PSA working group to develop and share relevant information to promote play utilising the Council's website and social media platforms.	MB7	Staff time for planning	Existing funding
Matter G: Securing and developing the workforce	MG9 The Local Authority has undertaken a comprehensive training needs analysis for the play workforce as defined in the toolkit glossary and above	Develop a new process to gather and analyse the data needed to inform an annual training programme for the play sector workforce		Staff time for planning	Existing funding

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas	MI4 Schools provide play opportunities during out of teaching hours	PSA Working Group to engage with schools to promote play opportunities		Staff time	Existing funding
	MI5 Schools provide access to school grounds for playing out of school times	Work with 21 st Century Schools Team to ensure community access to and use of school grounds out of school hours		Staff time	Existing funding
	MI8 The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children of various age groups and abilities	A review of the policies will be carried out as part the next LDP review		Staff time to review policies	Existing funding
	MI13 The local implementation of the Families First programme recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities	Identified gaps in play provision will be addressed form April 2019 and will reconfigure our current Families First contracts with various providers to include play provision in areas of identified need within the PSA. This will now be made possible through the realigning of the Families First and Childcare and Play Grants in the new Children and Communities Grant		Staff time to review contracts with providers Re-commissioning of provision	Existing funding and use of new Children and Communities Grant
	MI14 Plans to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities	Community Zone Plans to include play approaches to reduce the impact of ACE's	MF18	Staff time for planning	Existing funding

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
	MI15 There are a range of play based approaches to inter-generational activity	Community Zone Plans to include play opportunities	MF18	Staff time for planning	Existing funding
	MI18 The Health and Safety policies and procedures incorporate the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	Support the Play Sector to undertake a holistic review of their Health & Safety policies and procedures to ensure that the risk benefit is being applied.		Staff time to support providers	New funding required
	MI19 The Local Authority offers the provision of insurance through the Local Authority scheme to all third sector play providers and community councils	Ensure third sector and community play providers have access to appropriate advice on insurance requirements		Staff time to support providers	New funding required
Matter A: Population	Improve the use of Local Authority population data to plan for sufficient play opportunities locally	Develop profiling models for individual children and young people, for families and for communities that utilise both local and national data sets to ensure we are targeting our services where they are needed most.	MB1	Staff time	Existing funding

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Appendix 3a

***Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough
Council Consultation Team / Early Years
& Family Support Services***

October 2018

**Consultation Report | Play Services
(Play Sufficiency Assessment Appendix 1)**



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Play Sufficiency Audit Adult 2018

This report was generated on 07/01/19. Overall 164 respondents completed this questionnaire.

The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent

100 rows.

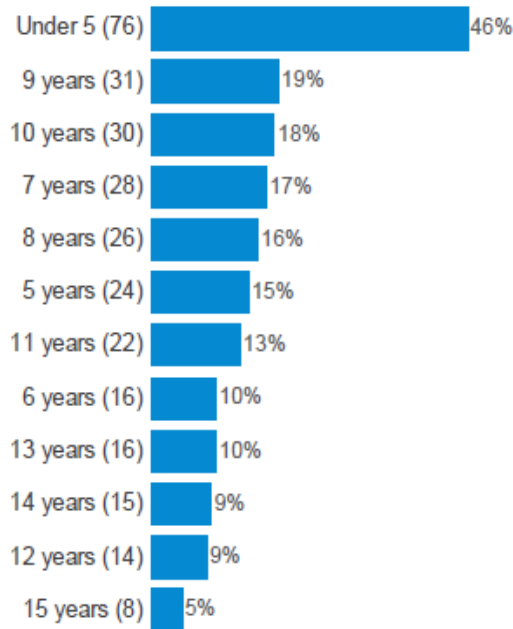
Q1. How many children do you have? (Boy(s) please state number:)

1 1 1 1 2 2 2 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 1 2 2 1 1 1 1 3 2 2 1 1 3 1 2 3 1 2 1 1 1 2 2 2 1
 2 1 2 1 1 2 3 1 1 1 2 1 1 3 3 2 1 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 3 2 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 2 1
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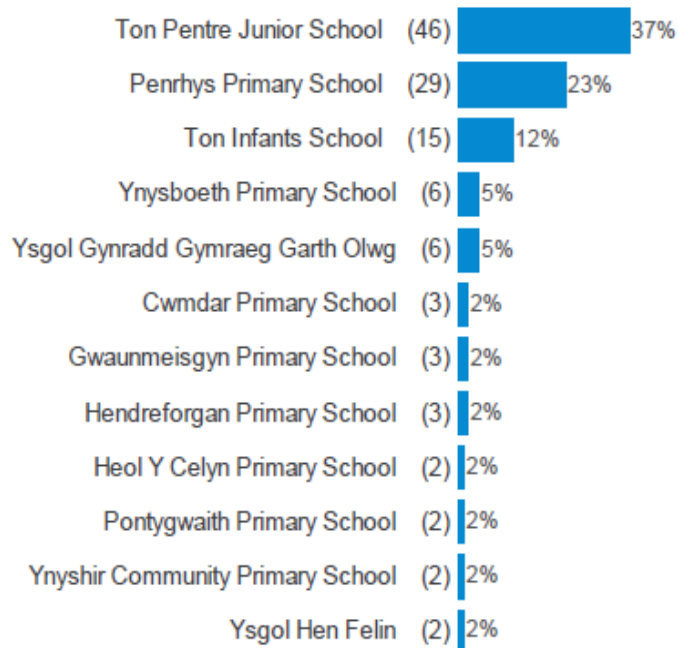
Q1. How many children do you have? (Girl(s) please state number:)

1 2 2 1 1 1 1 2 1 1 3 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 3 2 3 3 6 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 3 3 1 1 1 1 1 2 2 1
 1 1 3 1 1 0 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 3 1 1 2 2 2 3 1 1 1 3 1 2 1 3 1 1 3 2 1 4 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 1 2
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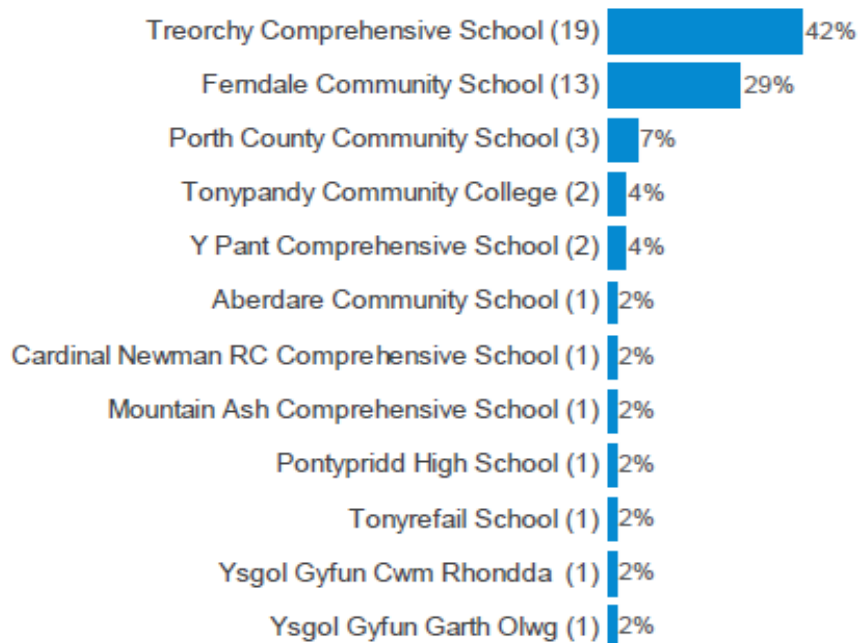
Q2. How old are they? Please tick all applicable:



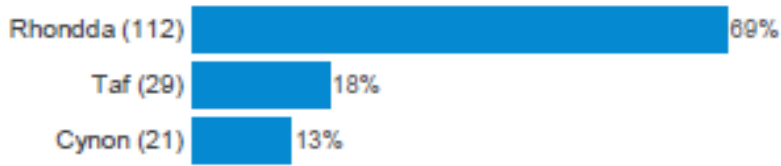
Q3. Which school(s) do they attend? (Primary) (What Primary School did you attend? (only answer these qu...))



Q4. Which school(s) do they attend? (Secondary)



Q5. Which area of Rhondda Cynon Taf do you live?



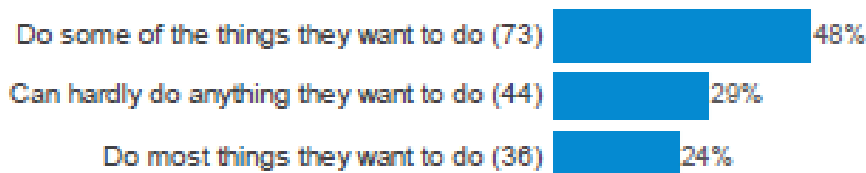
Q6. Please provide us with your postcode so that we are able to identify the area you live.

CF41 7EZ CF41 7HB CF41 7EL CF41 7DE CF43 3PU CF41 7HE CF43 3PT
CF43 3RH CF43 3PU CF43 3RL CF43 3PY CF41 7DX CF43 3PT CF41 7AT
CF41 7AU CF41 7DY
CF41 7EN CF41 7AR CF41 7AQ CF41 7NE CF41 7AP CF43 3NF CF43 3PT
CF43 3NP CF43 3AS CF43 3PU CF39 9HJ CF40 1ER CF72 8GA CF37 4RE
CF44 6LN CF39 0EY CF44 9NN CF38 1PJ CF38 2LR CF37 2EQ CF38 1DY
CF37 2HB CF38 1DJ CF43 3RA CF43 3PY CF43 3RW CF43 3RB CF43 3RH
CF43 3DP CF43 3RW CF41 7RA CF43 3PY CF43 3EL CF43 3RH CF43 3RH
CF43 3PT CF43 3RG CF43 3RB CF43 3PU CF43 3PT CF43 3NW CF45 4LP
CF45 4PR CF45 4TN CF44 8AB CF44 8DU CF44 6TU CF45 4NH CF45 4YY
CF45 4DJ CF45 4EX CF42 6UP CF41 7RS CF38 2FE CF38 2TF CF44 9QH
CF37 5BA CF37 5HW CF39 0LZ CF39 0HP CF38 1DR CF37 2RP CF39 0DD
CF37 4NG CF40 2BD CF37 5PH CF37 3AR CF37 2DL CF72 9QZ CF38 2PT
CF72 8HB CF39 0PS CF72 9QX CF72 9PH CF40 2RS CF38 2PL CF41 7NH
CF40 2BJ CF43 4AE CF40 2DT CF40 2BY CF39 8UP CF39 8UY CF39 8UB

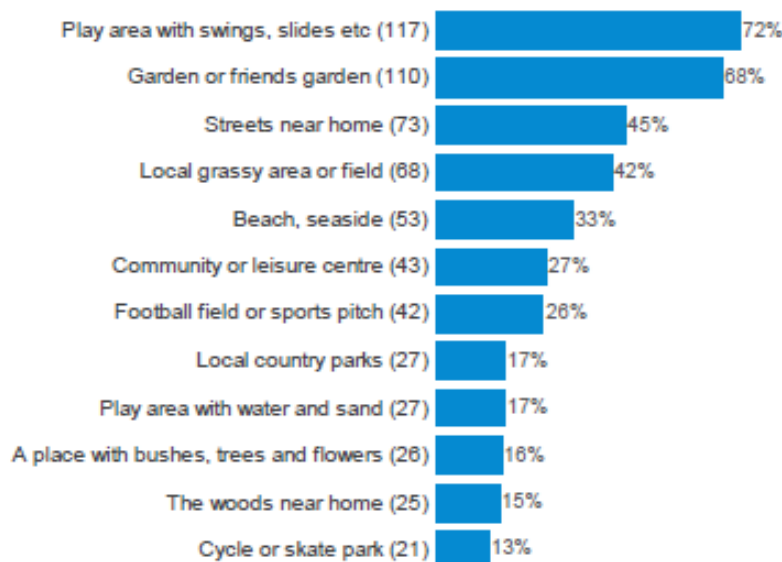
Q7. How often does your child(ren) go out to play and/or hang out with their friends?



Q8. When playing in their neighbourhood is your child able to:



Q9. Where do your children like to play or hangout in their free time? (please tick all that apply)

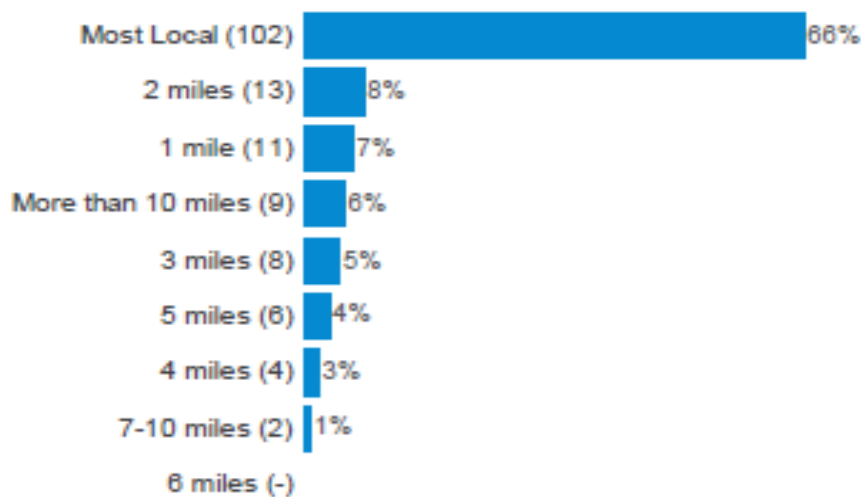


Q9a- Other

- Somewhere with disabled facilities which is not possible in RCT
- Boys and Girls Club
- Rivers and mountains
- Ton & Gekki boys and girls club
- Cinema
- Friends houses.
- Mountain

Beavers/Scouts
 In the back lane.
 Walking our dog up the mountains and through farms.
 Boys & girls club.
 Town
 WILL BE MOVING IN 1 MONTH FOR BETTER AREAS TO PLAY
 Child is non verbal, unable to walk. Attends Craig Y Parc school
 Museum
 LCDP Youth Club and Playscheme
 Fuze

Q10. Does your child mostly use their local play area or do they prefer to play somewhere else?



Q11. If you travel outside of your local area to visit play areas please tell us why?

Some play areas are not suitable for my little boy's age and so we have to travel a little further.
 Better facilities.
 Our park is not the best for both their ages
 Not the best play areas
 Parc gwell yn bellach i ffwrdd.
 To meet friends
 Yes more variety outside of the borough - splash parks etc
 There are more groups in Pontypridd town rather than Cilfynydd
 We do often go outside of the area to visit farms as my daughter loves animals and there is nothing within RCT.
 The local park does not provide suitable equipment for my children a rather poor excuse of a park if im being honest swings/climbing frame (for ages 7 plus) and a roundabout which isn't worth having at all!!
 The "park" is vandalised with graphic images and is situated on a very busy road with a gate that has

also been vandalised! Its intimidating to approach the park area when crowds of youngsters gather
and bad language is freely used! Also drinking is a common problem at this park and broken glass
Bottles and empty cans are always thrown across the play area therefore as a parent I am always
Attending other parks in surrounding areas as I do not want my children getting hurt or verbally
abused!!
For variety and dog walking opportunities
Better. Busier. Not lonely places.
Because RCT have very poor disabled play facilities and no changing place facilities so have to travel
to places that do cater for special needs.
There are no skate park or anything aimed at teenagers in the Taf area
Nearest park is Gelli Park where facilities aren't that good. The swings need replacing. Also too many
dogs off leads and antisocial behaviour in evenings.
Caravan at Amroth
Ignore by sea, to get to the beach
Have to travel as there is so much trouble in the area.
We do travel sometimes to parks etc.
Because local parks are boring.
Have caravan so child spends most of his time there (beach etc.)
Go to the sports centre and the play in the park.
Variety.
Facilities not available locally.
Use local park but find Barry Sidings better due to better facilities.
We visit Barry Siding as this is the closest facility for biking (approx. 8 miles away)
Better facilities elsewhere.
We live in Pentre but cubs is in Cwmparc and the sports centre is in Ystrad.
Aberystwyth - Family.
We let our daughter choose a day out and travel there in the car or by train. We also have relatives in
England and Scotland so we use facilities there when we visit.
For a change.
More activities off the site.
To go to the sports centre swimming and then play in the park.
Tennis courts (Treorchy) Cricket field
The play areas further afield have more choice of play especially for younger ones.
Better facilities. Splash parks.
Better facilities.
Most of family live in Barry/Llantwit Major
Sometimes we use other parks that are not filled with teenagers
Friends from further away
Friends live in Cardiff and better facilities
Larger indoor play provision, variety

Beaches

To go to Trampoline club, beach or seaside

Larger Parks

To visit bigger parks.

Trehafod park is a great large and safe area.

More to offer

There is more to do.

Most areas around Cynon don't have soft play area for children 1 and under.

Abercynon park does not
have anything for babies.

variety of activities not available locally e.g. Outside pool.

Swimming, Trampoline parks are not in our area.

Because it's disgusting in the local park

Soft plays, larger, cleaner parks

Grandparents live in Cardiff so the castle a lot & the museum.

Parks are better for boys because of football fields.

We also like to visit Treherbert park as it has a lovely play area.

We tend to take the children to different areas depending what we/they want to
do.

More choice

Pontypridd is the ONLY PLACE with a wheelchair swing

Dragons Den Aberdare. Very clean, friendly and plenty to do/events

Because there's little locally

There isn't much in my area that's safe enough to play in

Enjoys car ride

Nicer facilities that are well looked after

All areas close to home are inaccessible to my child. Wheelchair user

Aberdare Park Cwmdare Country Park Cyfartha Castle

There's not much to do in the area so we travel to places for the children to
interact and explore

To access disabled friendly sites where parking is available.

There is no play area on our estate.

No local play area in Llantrisant.

Lots of teenagers swearing in local park

Better play park facilities

NPT Sea Front Barry Sidings Swansea Beaches Darren Park

Cleaner, more play activities - Roath park for example.

Not much around

Travel to Pontypridd as nothing around

My children like to go to jazzy jungle and fuse

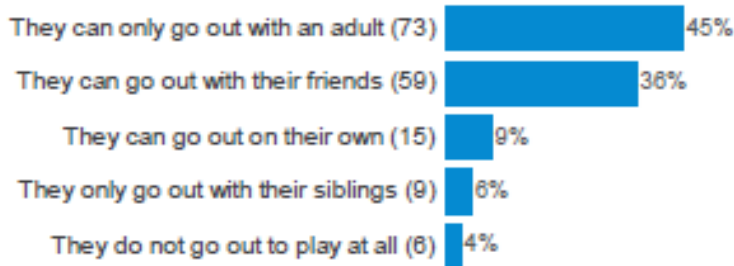
Q12. Which of these is true about the area in which you live?

There are some of the places near to our home that my child likes to play or hangout in

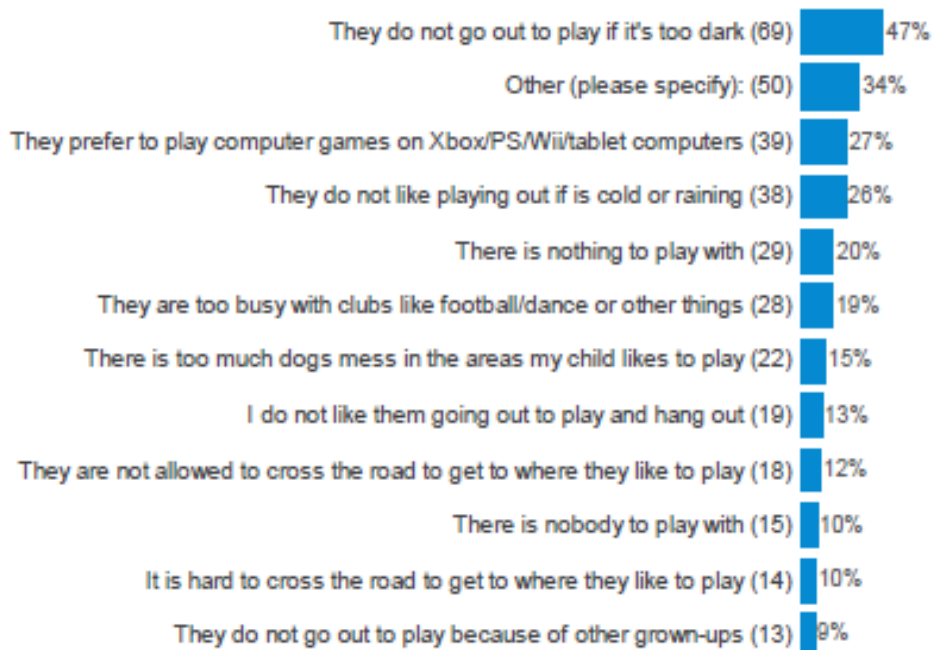
hardly any places near to our home that my child likes to play or hangout in

to our home that my child likes to play or hangout in

Q13. When my child(ren) go out to play....



Q14. What stops your child from playing out? (please tick all that apply)



Q14a- Other

- Too young
- too young
- He isn't old enough to go out on his own (he's 2)
- The other residents in the street complain and shout at them.
- Oedran
- Too young to go out unsupervised
- Too young
- Would rather read or create art.
- Lack of disabled place equipment and changing places
- There is nowhere to cross the road near us
- They play out every weekend and school holidays at caravan park
- Both two and under
- There is lots of smashed glass and drugs
- Only out with grown up.

People drinking alcohol, used needles left lying around.
People under the influence of drugs/alcohol in area and parks.
Drug takers
No many safe areas to play locally.
She doesn't have many friends.
Nowhere for them to go.
Too young.
They have ASD
None of the above/dogs running around.
I take them places myself, they don't go out alone.
They also have additional needs.
My 5 & 6 yr old needs to be with an adult
Does dim llawer o bethau i blant yn eu harddegau i wneud yn lleol.
too young to be out by themselves
They are too young to go out to play
Younger one goes out with an adult, Friends live too far away now
As long as I'm with her we go most places
Too young to go out without an adult
Rugby
too young
Not old enough yet
Too young
Not old enough to out and play on their own.
Don't like her going out on her own.
Nowhere to play. The local park is always messy & full of older kids.
Teenagers in park woods
They are too young to go out and play.
They are too young.
People drive dangerously in the street
Jacob has zero road safety even though been shown
Lack of Facilities
To young at the moment
Lack of safe spaces
Too young
N/a
Disability
Behaviours and attitudes towards children who are different
People speed through our street
Need additional play provisions at various time to support their play
They are too young to go out alone. Age 3.
My daughter is 2 - I don't think the above is applicable yet.
Under 1
He's too young. 1year old.

Q15. How can we help your child to play outside and hang out more often? (please tick all that apply)



Q15a- Other

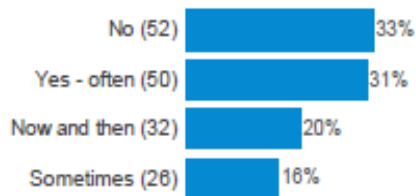
More places suitable for under 5s
 Restrict cars
 More for teens in the area. Outdoor gym or skate park
 Changing places (toilet and hoist) in all major parks and disabled swings, roundabouts in all parks
 Children need safe places away from traffic to play where they are safe from drug and alcohol users.
 Clean area.
 Put more PCSO's around to stop the drinking.
 Allow them access to the 3G pitch in Pentre.
 Deal with drug and alcohol problem in area.
 Drug users are quite prominent in the community - don't think there is any way to reduce this!
 Open sporting facilities i.e. 3G, 4G football, rugby grassed facilities.
 Safer places to play
 None of the above.
 Find something for teenagers to do so younger children can actually use the facilities
 Mwy o leoedd/weithgareddau i blant hyn.
 More accessible facilities for disabled children.
 Clean up local areas.
 More inclusive parks- Wheelchair swings/roundabouts. More changing facilities with beds and hoists.
 Thorough Maintenance of areas
 More accessible and a P.A. required
 I let my daughter play down her friends street by my ten year old son isn't allowed to play outside
 More indoor child friendly areas when weather is bad.
 Consider funding youth teen schemes supporting young people to play locally with qualified staff
 Gelli Park is very big and a wasted space, children love riding bikes and scooters there.

More things to do.

Q16. Does your child have a disability?



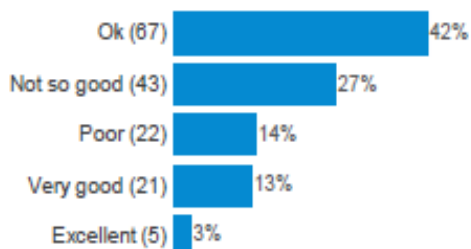
Q17. Do your child(ren) go to any clubs to play or hang out?



Q18. If answered no to the above please can you tell us why? (please tick all that apply)



Q19. What do you think of the play opportunities for your child(ren) available in your local area?



Q20. What is good about your area for playing and hanging out?

The only good thing is the 3G pitch for boys
Local and free indoor fun for babies/ toddlers or 50p- £1.50
The summer has been great within a couple of mile radius, but now the Winter months are coming
there will be far less opportunities for my child to socialise
Local parks
Local park
Little lounge group and park and rugby field.

The line behind our house can be used to walk all the way to the country park.

Nothing

We are close to a large park

Nothing. Apart from the park there is nowhere for them to go

The park in Bryncae has been recently upgraded, very well used by lots of locals

Llanharan drop in centre and the activities they put on

Nothing much in our area for children to play or hangout.

2 great parks but they are full of druggies.

Boy & Girl Club, Football, karate etc. But expensive (sometimes)

You can have fun and be chatting for hours.

Lots of free places to play.

Ton Pentre Girls & Boys club.

Lovely mountain walks, nice park.

Variety of play areas - parks, mountains and swimming pools.

Local park is around the corner to where we live.

Park

Park Community Hall.

There is a great football club, training one night a week at Pentre 3G. There is also an excellent

community centre in Ton.

Ton and Gelli community centre provides a warm safe place to play and hang out.

Nothing

Ton Pentre boys clubs. Gelli park (in daylight only)

Local park has good facilities but no other local outdoor places to play - often use local community

centre for clubs.

The community centre, nice and local to home.

Local park.

Access to Gelli Park (although gang culture seems to be becoming more prevalent). Surrounding

mountains which are good for mountain biking.

Lots of community parks. Community centre. Dance schools.

Local boys and girls club. Local rugby team. Dance classes.

Close knit community.

You have the local boys club. Park is near and football field is near.

The park and community centre.

The proximity of the playground

Play yard

The community centre is good.

Gelli park & the community centre

There is nothing in our area especially for youth, this is why they end up in trouble.

We live in an area where all the children are of similar age, the children play together in our block, the

parents keeping an eye out for them all. It is safe for them to play on their bikes and scooters around

the block.

The local park

The only area available to play with activities is the park which is always a mess.
Only the park
The kid's enjoy the outside as we live by the park
Good local park and community centre.
Local Community Centre. Local football club (Funded) Chapel run youth club.
Local
netball club (Funded) After school club provision. Girl guides (Funded)
Girls & Boys club - Ton and Gelli
There's a park nearby which we use a lot.
There is a local park and community centre.
There is a local park (Gelli) with large grounds.
There is a boys and girls community centre where I volunteer, it's a safe place for
children to come for
a warm and sit with their friends.
Lots of places close by.
It has a park, community club, rugby/football clubs, 3G pitch, library.
Close community.
Have walking with my children in the mountains.
They have them
Mae parciau lleol yn iawn i blant lau, ond does dim digon ar gyfer plant hyn.
Two local parks which can be used - however they could do with being upgraded
and lights being
installed
Some small play parks One indoor play centre
Good play areas
Clean and tidy
Lots of parks nearby
The kids enjoy the outside.
Good community
Living in and on a council estate and the local community does things for the
children.
We have the church that has activities for the children and also we have a sports
club for them. We
also have a park.
It's a close community so everyone knows your child.
Local swimming centre. Local park
The park is at the end of our street
Close community
Nothing there is nothing for them to do or go.
Apart from playgroups there is nothing.
nice play parks, good places to go walking.
Local parks, swimming, Lakes
Feel good factory.
Play scheme, that's about it.
Not a lot. We go to the park after school with friends.
nothing really, park always full of rubbish due to older kids.
Sports Centre Local play yard
Green space & playing field.

we live on a private estate so the traffic is minimum plus we have a small local park nearby

Ilan centre

Local forestry, fields and parks

? Ha-ha

Lots of trees

At least there is a small park

Sports fields

Nothing

We have access to Pontypridd park, the common - outdoor spaces.

It has a natural wood. All year round Play scheme for aged 5 to 14 but need to develop a teen scheme

for older young people

On our estate there are other children my sons age who can play together at one of our homes.

It's a small community so a lot of people know different people, children.

My area is busy & friendly, Gelli park is nearest to my child but there is so much wasted space it's

mainly used for dog walking. Loads of children play there but often get bored as it is not all age

appropriate. i.e.: No goals to play football bikes or scooters. A ramp park would be great.

Parking & paddling pool (Summer)

Fuze

Park nearby, lake also close by to encourage being friendly to animals.

People they know.

My children like to play in the local park

Q21. What is not so good about your area for playing and hanging out and needs to be made better?

More places for older children so the younger ones have a chance of playing in the park without

hearing swearing.

The line is always full of dog mess so I cannot let my child run as free as she would like. The local

park is very poor.

Vandalised play areas

They don't always feel safe in the park without an adult

Nothing for older children. No youth club. Previous clubs at community centre were hampered by

abuse from children not attending event but causing trouble outside centre. Lack of paid organisers

and investment in village.

Our village park has a wheelchair roundabout but that's it, we were told they were catering for my little

Boy, the workmen actually told him that they were doing the park for him but no swing, no sensory

equipment as promised at the time. The large park in our town has a wheelchair swing but it is
Segregated from main play area, the Lido and park have no changing places so unsuitable for us. Why
Do parks, leisure complexes have toilets for everyone but no changing places for those that need?
them?
Nothing for teenagers locally parks is used by drunks and druggies
Too much traffic, not enough crossings, not enough police presence to combat antisocial behaviour.
It's not a very big park and had a lot of people using it.
Drugs need to be gone. Area needs to get cleaned of all smashed glass.
More clubs. Activities for after school children
The park needs more activities and more fun in there.
Paddling pool remained closed again this summer.
Boys club is on the other side of Ton (Roads are too busy to cross). No playground locally.
Need more play area, maybe local pool in park.
Anti - social behaviour from other children or adults in the park areas, dog fouling in the park.
Drunken behaviour (adult & teens) used needles being found around the park and school lanes. Dog
mess not being picked up and dogs being left into the play area in the park.
Crossing roads are too unsafe.
The 3G pitch sits un-used most days. Plus large groups of older children drinking and smoking in the
park in Pentre.
Gelli park could be better lit in dark nights.
There are too many cars in our street, so my kids can't play out.
Wider range of activities. Under cover sporting facilities for clubs to use for free.
Move drug users
houses away from populated areas.
More outdoor places to play.
Busy main road and side streets.
Not much activities.
Sometimes there is rubbish and dog mess in the parks.
Cars double parked in streets. Cars driving too fast and carelessly in streets.
The halfway house where there is people who are drinking or talking drugs (adults). The summer was
terrible.
Better public transport to get children to most activities.
Dog mess. Crossing Facilities.
As mentioned, drug users are hanging about which scares the kids, their place of residence is very
close to the schools. Also the amount of traffic can be worrying although the speed bumps help with
speeding.
Not having enough places to go when it's cold and wet outside.

Secure areas, crime, lack of community support officers keeping areas safe.
No facilities for youth.
As children get passed Junior school age there is nothing really for teenagers unless they are into a certain sport. They just hang around the streets and parks in groups.
slower traffic - maybe speed bumps.
Nothing is good about the play area because it's always a mess.
More things for children.
Bullying
Older teenagers hanging around play areas/sports fields underage drinking.
Too much dog mess in the park.
Local park has very little activities.
Busy roads. Dog mess. Intoxicated adults.
I would possibly let my 8yr son out to play with friends if there weren't so many teenagers smoking,
Swearing in our parks etc.!
The park is too far for my 7yr old to go with her friends.
The local park has limited play choice for younger children and children with mobility concerns. There
Is also anti-social behaviour.
As there is a house that take in people who have been released from prison/hospital with mental health needs.
Vandalism, dog mess, bullies.
Teenagers hang around the area and cause trouble. Busy roads.
Limited choice no youth clubs for older children.
No amenities.
The rubbish and the behaviour of some of the users have
Llefydd/gweithgareddau ar gyfer plant hyn. Palmantydd gwell yn hen Llantrisant I gyrraedd y ganolfan hamdden. Llwybrau seiclo o bosib.
The Taff Trail is the nearest nature space but there are often drunks/druggies and odd people there,
so my daughter is not comfortable going there
Lack of facilities for disabled children.
There is a local park but could be better maintained- such as grass cutting
Not much green space
More activities that are advertised. We often miss things going on as we don't hear about them
Nothing.
There is not enough activities for older children. (comprehensive)
There's not a lot for the kids, especially the older kids.
Dogs, strange people hanging about.
Bullies
Not enough for all ages
There's not a lot of things for them to do.
Everything
Glass in the parks.

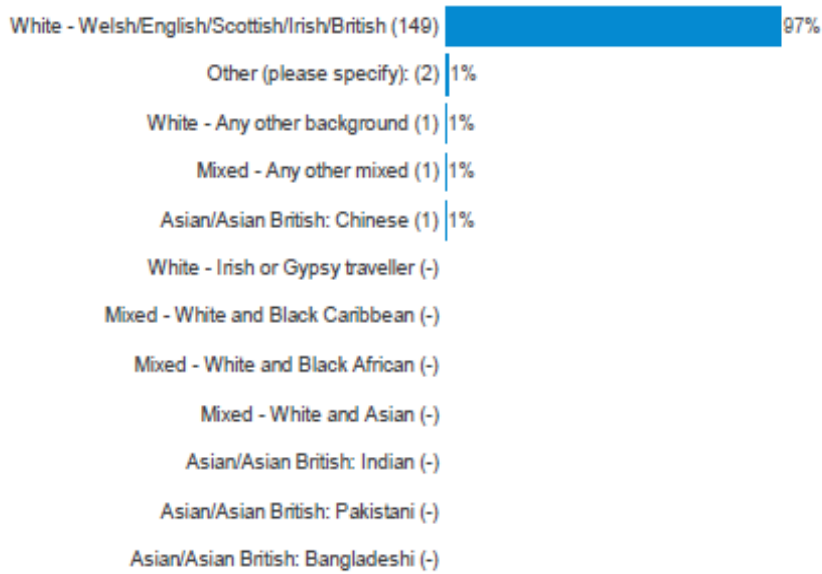
Not enough variety.
Not enough indoor places to go when the weather is bad.
teens, gangs, drugs, dog poo
Parks dirty due to youths degrading it, roads dark.
Nowhere clean/tidy or structured
Park, camera's needed.
Better playing facilities for toddlers.
Soft flooring in the park for toddlers
The local park is always full of swearing teenagers. plus adults drinking booze.
Dog mess & poorly light areas, poor facilities.
maybe a bigger park
Unfortunately some areas attract naughty children/teens
More inclusive parks- Wheelchair swings/roundabouts. More changing facilities with beds and hoists.
The splash area in park could be made better
Lack of space/lack of playing areas
Not enough
Busy main road
Dirty and poorly maintained
Drop kerbs for wheelchair users. There is nothing for wheelchair users
The parks are designed for older children and not suitable for my 4year old
Dogs mess on the fields
The park older kids drinking etc. down there, more activities for children with additional needs.
Nowhere is child friendly when the weather is poor. Taff trail is too isolated for a mum and child to walk alone.
Traffic calming, safe road crossings, building he available all year round to support as well as the need
for natural open space where children and young people can play freely - development of a staffed
Adventure playground with qualified youth and play workers
We are on a new build estate and there is no parks or playing fields.
Dogs mess Only 1 small park Mostly bigger children are there playing football
Drugs, alcohol and swearing at local skate park
Anti-social behaviour from older children Not enough opportunities for secondary aged children
Not enough to play with there's one park in our area- Ton/Gelli. We need more things for children of
all ages to play with in Gelli park.
Dog bins. Bikes/Scooters Park would be lovely
It's rough. Not many places for babies/toddlers
Precautions by the lake. Regular clean ups of park - underage drinking leaves bottles.
Not much to do.

Q22. Data monitoring questions
Preferred language of choice?



Q22a- Other
Welsh learner

Q23. Ethnic identity





Appendix 3b

***Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough
Council Consultation Team / Early
Years & Family Support Services***

October 2018

**Consultation Report | Play Services
*(Play Sufficiency Assessment Appendix 1)***



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Play Sufficiency Audit child 2018

This report was generated on 12/11/18. Overall 504 respondents completed this questionnaire.

The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent

100 rows.

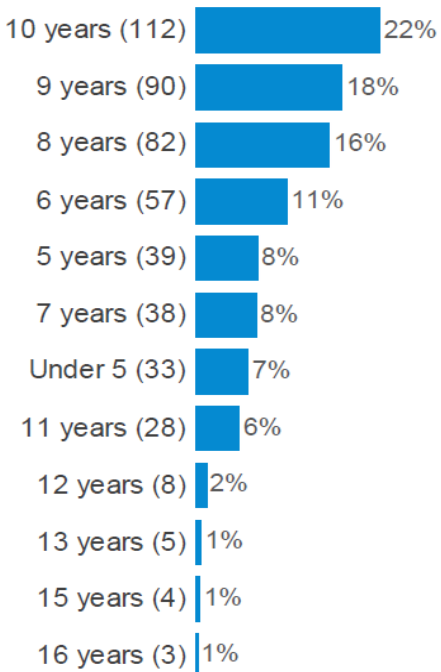
Q1. Gender:



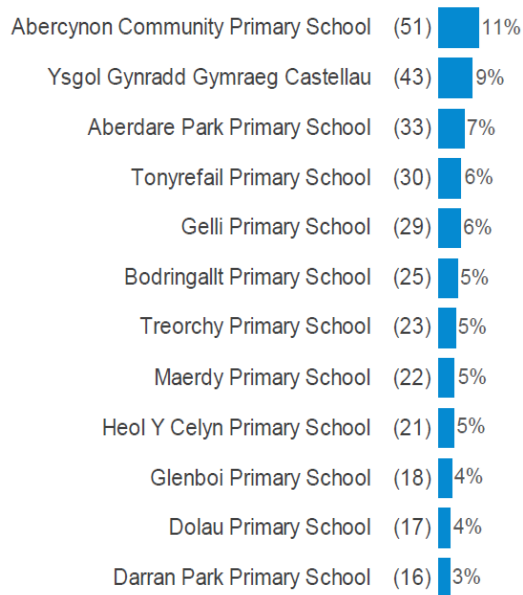
Please specify 'Other'

Trans Gender

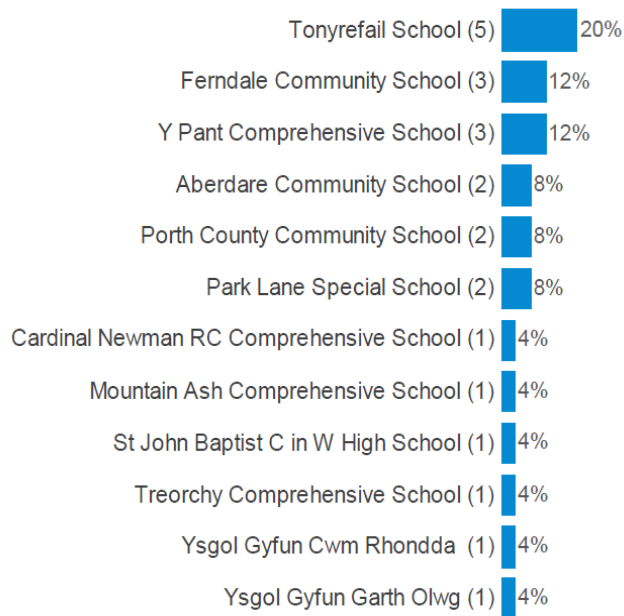
Q2. How old are you?



Q3. Which school do you attend? (What Primary School did you attend? (only answer these qu...))



Q4. Which school do you attend?



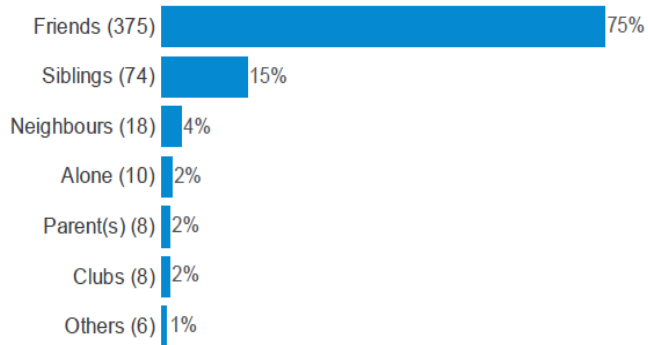
Q5a. Which area of Rhondda Cynon Taf do you live?



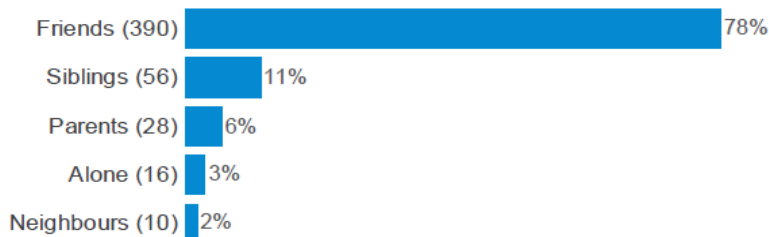
Q5b. Please let us know your postcode so that we are able to identify the area you live in.

CF45 3EH	CF45 4LS	CF43 4PY	CF45 4FA	CF41 7NH	CF38 2JE	CF43 9PT
CF44 8LB	CF45 4PU	CF43 3RP	CF45 4TP	CF43 4AE	CF42 6EL	CF43 4NP
CF41 7RQ	CF45 4LR	CF43 4HE	CF42 5ET	CF40 2DT	CF42 6BE	CF43 3DP
CF41 7RF	CF45 4PQ	CF43 4NG	CF39 0NP	CF41 7SH	CF42 6EN	CF43 4PT
CF41 7QJ	CF45 4LR	CF45 4LS	CF38 2AW	CF41 7QR	CF41 7SW	CF43 2PT
CF41 7RF	CF45 4PN	CF45 4RS	CF38 0WZ	CF4 7RQ	CF42 6AW	CF39 8UU
CF41 7RQ	CF45 4ND	CF45 4PN	CF40 2BQ	CF42 6RE	CF42 6SP	CF39 8AE
CF41 7QQ	CF45 3DA	CF45 4LU	CF42 6UP	CF45 4PA	CF43 4PY	CF39 8AD
CF45 3NG	CF45 4NG	CF45 4RS	CF38 1TG	CF45 3EH	CF43 4NG	CF39 8LW
CF45 4TU	CF45 4NL	CF45 4RG	CF38 1PE	CF45 3EE	CF43 4NP	CF39 8LW
CF45 4PE	CF45 4TP	CF45 4SU	CF37 2RP	CF43 4TP	CF43 4NG	CF39 8NS
CF45 4RN	CF45 4HR	CF45 4NG	CF37 3AA	CF43 4DS	CF43 4PW	CF40 1JS
CF45 4NE	CF45 4NU	CF45 4NY	CF37 2DL	CF37 5DB	CF37 5LY	CF39 8AG
CF45 4SP	CF45 4PJ	CF45 4CP	CF46 5RP	CF37 5DB	CF43 9PT	CF39 8AE
CF45 4LR	CF37 3JD					

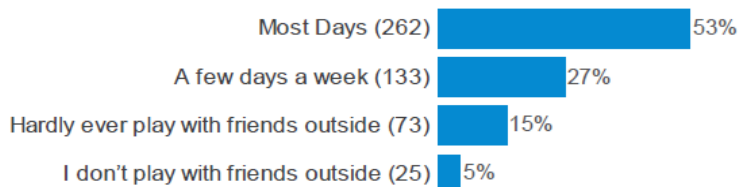
Q6. Who do you play with?



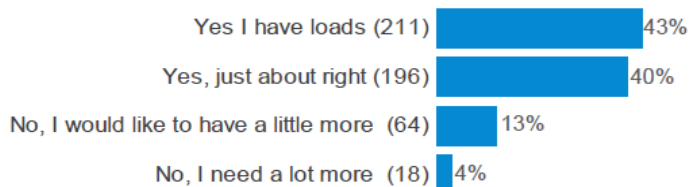
Q7. Who do you most like to play/hang out with?



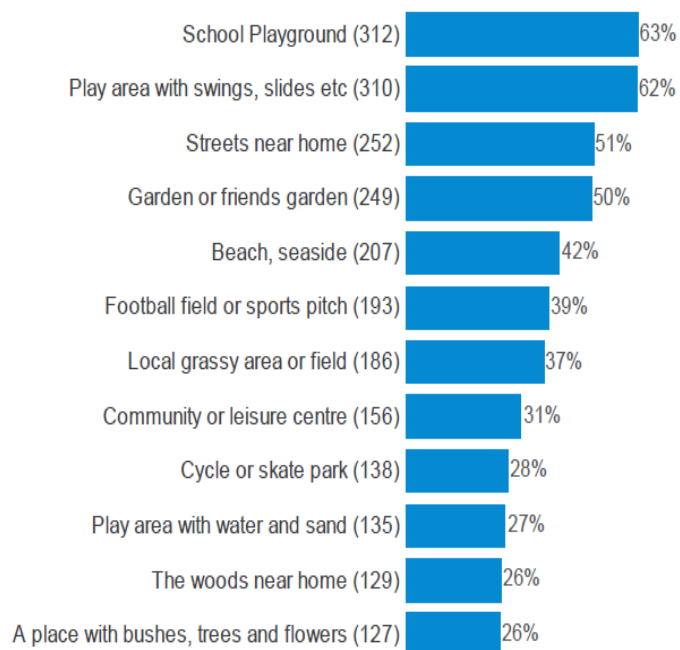
Q8. How often do you go out to play and/or hang out with friends?



Q9. Do you have enough free time for play or to hangout



Q10. Where do you like to play or hangout in your free time? (Please tick all that apply)



(please tell us more):

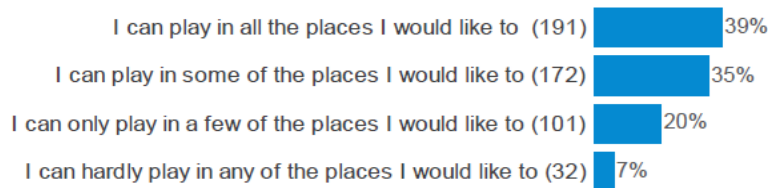
McDonalds

House

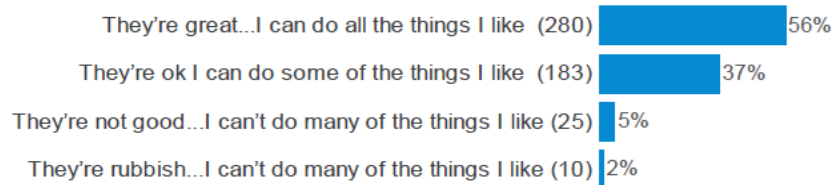
House
House
House
In my house
My house
In Park
I normally play fortnite with my friends or go out on my bike with my friends.
Fishing
Attic in house.
yn y ty, yn y (lane)
Yn y Ty
yn y ty gyda brwd
Swimming Pool
Swimming Pool
Cinema, parties
I don't go out
Pool
I like to play on my trampoline
At home
McDonalds
At my friend's house or mine
In my house
Club
Clwb
Clwb
Play in Cardiff
My friends live too far away
See them now and again
I go with mammy and daddy and my sister
sipwire
Swimming
Museum
Trampoline
In my house
Gelli talked park cricket field
Brownies
In my house
Rhydyfelin
In the house
Park
In dragons den.
In the house with mammy.
Arcades
Club
Jump jam trampoline park
On holidays.
In my house.
Play scheme

Church or things to do with church
Online and friends' houses

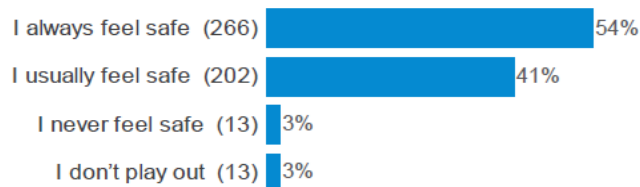
Q11. Can you play in all the places you would like to?



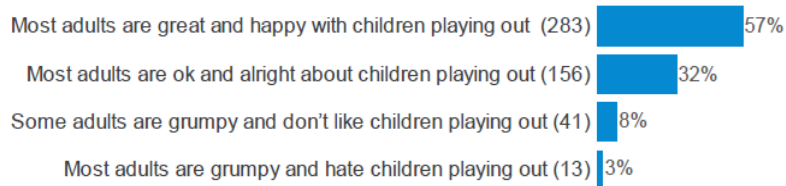
Q12. How good are the places you play in?



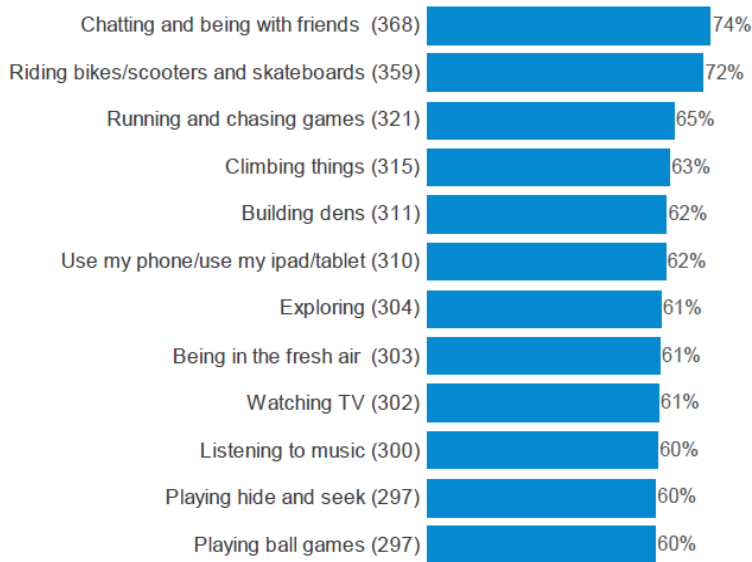
Q13. How safe do you feel when you play or hang out?



Q14. What are grownups like when you are playing or hanging out?



**Q15. Please can you tell us what you like to do when you are playing/ hanging out?
(Please tick all the boxes that apply)**



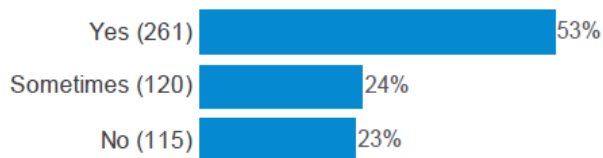
Other

- Xbox
- Singing songs
- Playing fortnite
- Lego and Xbox
- Playing on my computer games
- Xbox
- Playing on my ps3/ps4
- PS4
- Xbox
- Singing and playing on Laptop
- Playing fortnite
- Playing with my dogs
- Singing
- Singing
- PS4
- Playing on PlayStation
- Playing Xbox
- Sing songs
- I like fortnite and playing with my friends.
- Gymnastics
- Judo
- Taggers
- I like doing Brownies
- Karate
- PS4
- Skate Park
- PS4
- Parks
- Games console

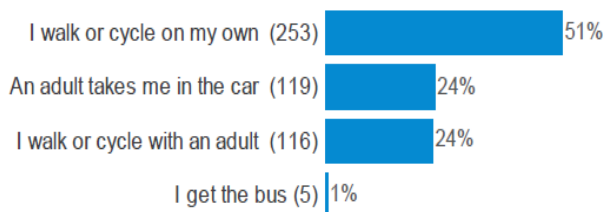
arts and crafts
Sing
Singing
Gymnastics
Art
Gymnastics
Goofing around
Gymnastics
Devices
Play Pokemon
Swimming
Playing in the house
Holiday Play scheme
Puzzles
Playing Snakes and Ladders
Singing
Acting in act 1 Jr a acting the after group
Playing football
Brownies
Drama games skylanders trap team ps4 ps3
Trampoline
Making slime
Xbox one
Playing British bull dogs and fox and hounds
Gardening
Trampoline
Trampoline and going shed
Ps3
Playing with toys
Park
Colouring
Playing with cousins
Roller skates
Eating chocolate
Xbox
Nail painting, colouring, painting and making crosswords.
Shopping
Lying down and staring at the sky, arts and crafts.
Looking for fossils, going to discos.
Diving
Playing in the park, playing on the Xbox.
Playing with my cousin.
PlayStation
Swimming
Arts and crafts, gymnastics
Board games
Xbox
Xbox, ps4 and PC

Baking
 Playing on the beach.
 Gymnastics
 Gymnastics
 Jumping up in the air on my trampoline.
 Trampolining
 Ps4
 I like to play in the house, hide and seek with teddies.
 Singing
 Playing in my bedroom, and the field.
 Free running
 Learning Welsh and English

Q16. Are you allowed to play out on your own?



Q17. How do you get to the places you want to play?



Q18. What is good about your area for playing and hanging out?

Quiet
 Nice park
 You can do whatever you want
 Protects me from getting sunburn
 Fun and fantastic
 Football pitch
 Swings
 Nice and fun
 Swings
 Lots of grass
 Lots of stuff there
 High swings
 Den building
 Because they are safe and fun
 Everything is normally good
 Basketball pitch in my garden, grassy areas
 Always food nearby.

Zip wire woods
Safe to run around and do what we like to do
It's fun
Fun and lots of room to play
Lots of places.
Fun
Nice and big
"Because I have so many toys and so many things to do"
That we get to play gymnastics and do cartwheels.
Nice area
Hasn't got stingies.
Nice walks
Always a park nearby.
Having Chinese with my friends.
No dog poo
In the woods.
Big with lots of room
Roundabout swings
Inside my bedroom .
Good
It's fun hanging out with friends and we got a giant grass hill to go down
I can do anything with my friends
Forest
I like the parks
I live close to rivers and have fun fishing
It's fun and a great place to explore
There are lots of parks near my home
There are nice parks
Jumps
Playing in the park
Grass but dog poo
Fun
In the trampoline park
It's got a massive slide and a climbing frame
Fun, safe, lush
It is safe it is fun it is pretty there are trees
Fun adventures
Very fun adventures
Parents always watch us
Always have fun and it never closes
Easy to go out to play where I want to go
Room to play football in the park
The park, climbing mountains, lots of friends near where I live.
Lots of time to play in three skate park
It's fun to play with and big. Won't get hurt on them.
Fun and flat with some hills
Park.
All my friends live there

Swings climbing frame
Like having friends around me
My house and up the park.
Lots of grass and mountains
Big area
Quiet nice and relaxing
The park's really fun.
Swings
It's really fun and you get to see friends
Lots of space
You can meet new friends
I like going to school and I like playing with school toys.
Park
Playing with friends
Play games with the door, like boomerang.
Field
Field
I like going to fun places, like jolly jesters.
Elrington my neighbourhood
Field
I'm with my friends
I like being able to ride my bike
They got swings and slides
It's got lots of stress and a park to play in
I really like playing in the park
We can do anything we want such as football or rugby.
Friendly environment and know everyone around
The fair in Porthcawl
It has a park
Newport
My friends and family live nearby and I like playing in the trees by my house
The people I hang out with
It's really fun
Full of excitement, banging places to go
Field next to me

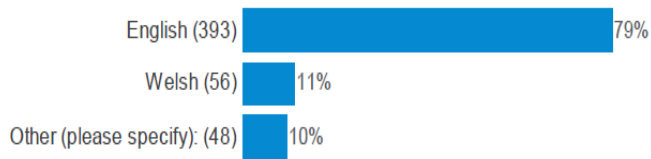
Q19. What is not so good about your area for playing and hanging out and needs to be made better?

There are not many clothing shops
Some places are dangerous.
Bees
Beehives.
Park
Going in at night
Park because someone could steal you and you could make it better by only letting kids go there no adults unless for toddlers
Rumours

Rumours
Strangers
Not allowed to play on the bowling green in the park.
Strangers
Quit boring
In my garden
Flood's and cold and windy
It's a bit dangerous
Don't like playing fighting games or playing on my own.
I'm only allowed to place in my street
Everything
Dog mess
Lots of rubbish and there was a fire last time I went
Bumpy hills.
That I don't get to play with my friend
That it's a bit small
People not looking after the equipment
It's a bit muddy
Not much to play with
Playing with some of the boys in my class
More fun things need to be there
Streets could be bigger
One game on my phone doesn't work
Dangerous area
Nothing
Too small
No friends in the street
Loudness
Nothing
Cold
Rusty and dirty
Mud
Slide
Spiny things
Hard floor surfaces
Nothing
Too many cars
Rubbish and glass in the park from teenagers
Slide is tiny
Not much for big children
"I normally get called and don't have a long time to play"
Rubbish
Stingy nettles.
Dogs mess
Litter
The climbing frames.
Stones and litter
Graffiti and litter

You need to walk quit far to get to the park
How some people react to us playing on our bikes/scooters
Busy roads
Loads of cars
There are lots of kids who are unkind in my area
Lots of cars
Baby stuff there
Dog poo
Dog poo
In the mud.
Too many stones
There is lots of rubbish
People who are mean
Bullies
Some dogs chase us
When it's time to go home
Dogs poo in rugby field
Road is close by
Litter and dogs poo
In the farm because I'm not allowed.
When I'm on my own it's boring
I don't like it when I fall over
The farm.
Climbing frame
Mess
Arguments and fights
That it's mostly concrete
Litter
Dogs poo
Dog poo, I feel frustrated about it.
Spiders everywhere
The park
Some places are scary fast rivers, snakes
When no one will play with me
Don't like playing in the field and getting muddy.
Not much parks and equipment for us to play on.
Walking around corners is nervy (could be animals there)
Porthcawl is too far to go everyday
That there is no skate park near
The bad thing is most of my friends don't live close
I have to walk far to get to the park
There's not a lot of things to do
Nothing
People can be too aggressive and moody against us children

Which language do you prefer to speak?



(please specify):

- French
- Both
- English and French
- Welsh and French
- Russian
- Saesneg, Cymraeg, Spaneg, Franceg
- Polish and English
- English and Chinese.
- Saesneg Cymraeg Japaneaid
- My family speaks English but me and my friends sometimes speak welsh
- Welsh
- French
- Malagasy.
- English and Hungarian.
- Spanish
- Spanish
- Welsh
- Spanish
- Spanish and French
- Polish
- English & Welsh
- French
- English and Spanish
- English, Welsh, French & Spanish
- Portuguese
- French
- French
- Spanish
- Welsh
- English & Welsh
- English and Welsh
- Spanish
- Both
- Spanish it try, French
- Speaks some Welsh
- English and Polish
- No speech
- Chinese
- Both
- German

Both
 Bit of both
 Both
 Both
 Both
 English and welsh
 Both
 A bit Spanish
 English and Welsh.
 with
 Both
 Both
 Both
 English and Welsh
 Spanish, French and English
 Irish
 Fijian.
 My own voice
 English and Welsh
 English, Welsh and Spanish
 Both
 English
 English and Welsh
 English and Welsh
 Both
 Latvian
 English and Welsh
 Welsh and French
Q21. Do you think yourself as disabled?



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