



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

24 JANUARY 2019

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

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

Authors: Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools and Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

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

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

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

4. BACKGROUND

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

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

6 CONSULTATION

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

6.2 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix B for your attention. It contains information in respect of meetings held to discuss the proposal, with copies of the notes taken at these meetings. It also contains a summary of the correspondence received during the consultation period and where appropriate, the responses given to the comments and queries raised. The report also references the Draft minutes of the Children & young People Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 19th December, 2018.

6.3 It must be noted that there has been a fair response to this particular consultation process with 58 written responses received; in addition to this approximately 60 people, plus pupils, from both Hirwaun Primary and Penderyn Community Primary School attended the open evening held to provide further information on 27th November 2018.

7. THE STATUTORY PROCESS

7.1 The Statutory Notice for this proposal will refer to:

- Increasing education provision in Hirwaun by constructing a new school for Hirwaun Primary School; and
- Improving Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community Primary School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium Primary School

7.2 If agreed, and subject to the matter not being called in for consideration by Scrutiny, the Consultation Report will be published on January 30th 2019. Following a two week period the Statutory Notice will be published on 13th February 2019 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending on 12th March 2019.

7.3 If any objections are received during this period, in accordance with the aforementioned Code, an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, probably in April 2019, for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

estimated that the cost of this work will be approximately £10.4m. This will be funded by the 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.

- 8.2 Any revenue and capital costs that accrue in completing the consultation and preparing financial business cases for Welsh Government approval will be met from within existing budgets.
- 8.3 The Welsh Government has approved in principle the Strategic Outline financial business case to construct a new Hirwaun Primary School. A more detailed Outline Business Case will be submitted to the Welsh Government in February 2019, and if approved a Full Business Case will follow.

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

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

10 CONCLUSION

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

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People

Appendices to the report are:

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

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