



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

9 APRIL 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 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 publication of a Statutory Notice 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 Objection Report at Appendix A, which includes a summary of the 9 objections received during the Statutory Notice period, and the comments given in response to the objections.

2.2 Agree to implement the proposals as published in the Statutory Notice which will:

- 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.

2.3 Note that a separate report on funding arrangements will be presented to Council in due course.

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.
- 4.2 Following the conclusion of the consultation period, and at a subsequent meeting of the Cabinet held on January 24th 2019, a decision was taken to progress to the next phase of the statutory process and to publish the Statutory Notice.

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.
- 6.2 Consultation took place between 1st October 2018 and 31st December 2018 and full details of this process were published in a Consultation Report, which was presented at the meeting of Cabinet held on 24th January 2019 and subsequently published on the Council website.

7. THE STATUTORY PROCESS

- 7.1 The Statutory Notice for this proposal referred 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;
- 7.2 If the proposals are agreed, the Council must publish a Decision Notice that formally outlines the reasons for the implementation of these proposals.

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 which will be subject to a further report to Council.
- 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 Full Business Case will be submitted to the Welsh Government in April.

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

- 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 formally approve the proposal as consulted upon and agree 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;

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Background Papers

Cabinet – [20.09.18](#)

Officer to contact: