



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH JUNE 2021

**21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE
EDUCATION PROVISION FOR
YSGOL GYNRADD GYMRAEG LLYN-Y-FORWYN**

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

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Century Schools and Transformation**

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:
- Carry out a regulated alteration to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn-y-Forwyn (“YGG Llyn-y-Forwyn”), by way of transferring the school to a new building on a new site.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached Consultation Report, which includes a summary of correspondence received during the consultation exercise, including the full response from Estyn, feedback received from the online survey, and notes of the meetings held.
- 2.2 Agree to progress the proposals to the next stage of the consultation process by issuing an appropriate Statutory Notice which will trigger the start of the Objection Period.

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 011/2008).
- 3.2 To increase capacity and improve the quality of the Welsh medium primary education provision available to learners in the Rhondda Fach area of Rhondda Cynon Taf by delivering a new Welsh medium primary school in the Rhondda Fach.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 28th January 2021, approval was given to begin a statutory process to formally consult on a proposal to improve and increase Welsh medium education provision in the Rhondda Fach by investing in a new school for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn-y-Forwyn.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 5.1 Equality and Community Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of this proposal and were published, and can still be viewed, on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document that outlines the proposal in detail. The link is below:
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/CurrentConsultations/ProposedalterationstoYsgolGynraddGymraegLlynyForwynYGG LlynyForwyn.aspx>
- 5.2 In summary, the outcome of Equality Impact Assessment identified positive and neutral impacts, and no negative impacts, upon the protected characteristics and so it was deemed that approval would be sought to continue to implement the proposal. It also confirmed that the Action Plan will continue to be reviewed throughout the duration of the project delivery period.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment was prepared in respect of this proposal and published, and can still be viewed, on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document that outlines the proposal in detail. The link is below:
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/CurrentConsultations/ProposedalterationstoYsgolGynraddGymraegLlynyForwynYGG LlynyForwyn.aspx>
- 6.2 In summary, the outcome of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment was that the proposal would encourage people to use Welsh at work; it would promote Welsh medium education or opportunities to study

through the medium of Welsh; it would promote the status of Welsh or positive attitudes towards the language; and it would create opportunities to raise people's confidence to use Welsh or improve their skills to use Welsh more often or in more situations. No negative impacts were identified.

7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 7.1 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 November 2018 which replaced the October 2013 version. 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 Statutory Notices be published within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 29th October 2021 in this instance.
- 7.2 The Consultation Report, prepared in respect of this proposal, is attached at Appendix 1 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 contains Estyn's full response to the proposal and the appropriate clarification to the response; it also contains a summary of the online survey responses received during the consultation period and where required the appropriate clarification to any issues raised.
- 7.3 It must be noted that there has been a fair response to this particular consultation process with 72 written responses received, all via the online survey that was available for the duration of the consultation period on the RCT website. Due to COVID restrictions meetings with the community could not be held, however meetings with the staff, governors and pupils were held virtually via Teams.
- 7.4 Out of the 72 responses received, 70 were in agreement with the proposal, 1 respondent was not and 1 respondent was unsure. Overall, the responses were overwhelmingly positive and in favour of the proposal to build a new school. To confirm, all of the comments and issues raised during this consultation process have been reviewed by Cabinet Members.

8. THE STATUTORY PROCESS

- 8.1 The Statutory Notice for this proposal will refer to:
- Carrying out a regulated alteration to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn-y-Forwyn ("YGG Llyn-y-Forwyn"), by way of transferring the school to a new building on a new site.

8.2 If agreed, and subject to the matter not being called in for consideration by Scrutiny, the Statutory Notice will be published on 25th June 2021 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending on 22nd July 2021.

8.3 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, in September 2021, for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

9.1 If the proposal proceeds, a significant capital investment will be required in the region of circa £8.5M to construct the new school. The funding package will continue to be developed alongside the consultation and decision making process.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1 Part 1 of the Education Act 1996 (“the 1996 Act”) imposes a number of general duties on all local authorities in Wales. The general duty in section 13 of the 1996 Act is to contribute (so far as the Council’s powers enable them to do so) towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by ensuring that efficient primary education and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population of their area.

10.2 Section 13A(3) of the 1996 Act states that a local authority in Wales must ensure that their relevant education and training functions are exercised by the authority with a view to promoting high standards, and the fulfilment of learning potential by every person to whom the subsection applies, including those who are of compulsory school age or are below school age and are registered as pupils at schools maintained by the authority.

10.3 Section 14 of the 1996 Act requires the Council to secure sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education in the Council’s area. Schools available for an area shall not be regarded as sufficient unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide all pupils with an appropriate education.

10.4 Appropriate education means education which offers such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of (a) the pupils’ different ages, abilities and aptitudes; and (b) the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their different needs.

- 10.5 Powers for councils to develop school organisation proposals are governed by the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Code 011/2018. (Local authorities must, when exercising functions under Part 3 of the 2013 Act, act in accordance with any relevant requirements contained in the Code and must have regard to any relevant guidelines contained in it. A copy of the Code is found here:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/schoolorganisation-code-second-edition.pdf>

11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 11.1 There are links to RCTCBC's Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper

- Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

- 11.2 Due regard has been made to all seven well-being goals and the Five Ways of Working, as contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which requires the Council to think about the long-term impact of decisions, on communities to prevent consistent issues such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

This proposal would contribute to achieving the wellbeing goals by:

- Improving sustainability of school buildings in the Council portfolio through a commitment to achieving a zero carbon building and constructing to BREEAM excellent.
- Providing additional school places to meet WG targets and to promote the Welsh language in the Community.
- Opening new community facilities that would create opportunities for local people to utilise.

This proposal would achieve the five ways of working by:

- Creating a new school environment that can deliver the new Curriculum for Wales.
- Provide first class learning facilities for pupils and the wider community and contribute towards a healthier Wales by providing additional outdoor sport facilities for pupils.
- Contributing towards a prosperous Wales by committing to opportunities for local tradespeople and to use local resources, wherever possible to build the new school.
- Engaging with the community on a thorough consultation with opportunities for all stakeholders in the Community to engage throughout the process.

11.3 The Equality Impact Assessment includes further detail on the contribution of the proposal to the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act and this document formed an integral part of the consultation document.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, and to give officers approval to publish an appropriate Statutory Notice on 25th June 2021 to progress this proposal.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Item:

Background Papers

The background papers included as appendices to the report are:

- **Consultation Report**

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