



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**13 DECEMBER 2021**

**REVIEW OF LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION FOR PUPILS  
WITH SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION  
SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR  
EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR JOY ROSSER)**

**Author:** Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an opportunity to reconsider the proposal for the creation of additional mainstream Welsh medium Learning Support Class (LSC) provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the information contained within this report.
- 2.2 Note the proposal for the creation of a Welsh medium LSC provision to support pupils with significant additional learning needs within the context of the School Organisation Code (2018) and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Modernisation Programme.
- 2.3 Formally approve to recommence consultation on the following proposal: To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in the School Organisation Code (011/2018) so that an improved continuum of Welsh medium Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision can be achieved in RCT.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Cabinet may recall that a report was previously submitted in December 2019 requesting approval to consult with stakeholders regarding the proposal to create new LSC provisions in a number of RCT secondary settings. Approval was given and the consultation process was implemented. Unfortunately, the statutory process lapsed due to the Covid pandemic.
- 4.2 In June 2020 officers sought further approval to amend the original statutory proposal. Due to the impact of the pandemic the Council needed to progress without delay to provide funding to four secondary schools to establish school-based Step 4 provision to meet the needs of our most vulnerable learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in their local communities. This funding request was approved and has subsequently improved the continuum of Additional Learning Provision available within RCT.
- 4.3 Considerable changes are underway in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) (ALNET) Act was introduced in January 2018. The Act requires local authorities to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient. This includes a statutory requirement to take all reasonable steps to create a bilingual system of support for pupils with ALN. The Act is supported by a new statutory Additional Learning Needs Code 2021. The Code is based on the following principles:
- meeting the needs of pupils with ALN should be part of a whole school approach to school improvement;
  - pupils must be supported to participate in mainstream education and in the National Curriculum as fully as possible wherever this is feasible.
- 4.4 For pupils with more significant needs who experience difficulties in coping with mainstream education, more specialist placements are required. Rhondda Cynon Taf has a range of specialist provisions which includes: 44 LSCs, 2 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and 4 Special Schools. These placements are agreed by Access and Inclusion Service panels. However, the LA does not currently have a discreet Welsh medium LSC provision for pupils with additional learning needs. In light of the requirements of the ALNET Act, it is vital that this shortfall is addressed, and approval is sought to create a specialist LSC provision for Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 pupils with significant ALN.

## 5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 RCT spends in the region of £4.6M annually on the provision of LSCs. There are currently approximately 374 pupils accessing the 44 LSC provisions within RCT across a range of needs. Table 1 outlines the range of mainstream LSCs currently available:

**Table 1: Current Mainstream Learning Support Classes**

ALN Learning Support Classes	Foundation Phase (FP) or Key Stage (KS)	Number of classes	Percentage of Overall LSCs
Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	FP	5	39%
	KS 2	6	
	KS 3/4	6	
Complex Learning Difficulties	FP	3	27%
	KS 2	6	
	KS 3/4	3	
Hearing Impairment	FP/KS 2	1	2%
Observation & Assessment	FP	1	7%
Early Years Assessment and Intervention	FP	2	
Nurture	FP	2	18%
Social, Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties	KS 2	4	
	KS 3/4	2	
Speech and Language Difficulties	FP/KS 2	2	7%
	KS 3/4	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 5.2 Currently Welsh medium pupils with significant additional learning needs who would meet the criteria for LSC provision within English medium settings are supported by a specialist peripatetic team. The team, which includes a Welsh medium specialist teacher and two Learning Support Assistants, who provide support through an inclusive delivery model whereby pupils are provided with specialist support within their mainstream settings.
- 5.3 During the Academic Year 2019/20 the Welsh Complex Needs Team supported 14 pupils with an age range of Year 1 to Year 10 of which:
- 1 attended Foundation Phase;
  - 6 attended Key Stage 2;
  - 7 attended Key Stage 3.

5.4 Data analysis suggests that pupils accessing support from the central Welsh Complex Needs Team are making progress that is comparable to that of their peers in English medium LSCs. An evaluation of the above provision in Autumn Term 2019 showed that the above inclusive model adopted in Welsh medium settings has been very positive.

5.5 However, it is concerning to note that due to a lack of Welsh medium LSC provision, 1 pupil had to move from Welsh medium education in 2018/19 and 2 pupils in September 2019/20 in order to access specialist English medium LSC provision.

## **6. PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE**

6.1 It is proposed that a new Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant additional learning needs be established from September 2022 at Ysgol Garth Olwg to ensure the LA meets its new statutory duties to provide bi-lingual ALN provision.

6.2 The LA does not currently have any dedicated Learning Support Class provision to support pupils with additional learning needs that wish to be educated via the medium of Welsh. From September 2021 it is our statutory duty to work proactively towards establishing a fully bi-lingual system and therefore it is imperative that the above Welsh medium provision is put in place as soon as possible.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

7.1 The Council has to satisfy its public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics.

7.2 Equality and Community Impact Assessments are being prepared in respect of this proposal and will be published on the Council's website as a part of the Consultation Documentation in accordance with the requirements of Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) (011/2018) (the "Code"). These will be shared with the review panel as a part of the consultation process.

## **8. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 A Welsh Impact Assessment will be prepared in respect of this proposal and will be published on the Council's website as a part of the Consultation Documentation in accordance with the requirements of Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)

(011/2018) (the “Code”). This will also be shared with the review panel as a part of the consultation process.

## **9. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT**

- 9.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal will be undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code (011/2018). These arrangements stipulate that consultation must be undertaken when the proposal is at a formative stage and that a consultation document must be prepared and circulated to prescribed consultees, as well as being published on the Council’s website.
- 9.2 The consultation document for the proposal outlined in this report is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The consultation period, if it is agreed to progress this matter, will run from the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 until 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022.
- 9.3 The proposed potential timetable for completion of the statutory process is set out in the table below:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Cabinet permission to consult	Cabinet to consider this proposal and give approval to commence consultation.	9 December 2021
Statutory public consultation	Consultation document to be published on the Council website for a minimum of 6 weeks.	5 January 2022
Report back to Cabinet	Cabinet to consider the consultation report and determine whether to publish the report and approve the publication of the proposal in the form of a statutory notice.	March 2022
Publish Statutory Notice	Statutory notice to be published for a 28-day period (if approved by Cabinet).	April 2022
Decision by Cabinet	Cabinet to consider a report on the outcome of the statutory notice period including details of objections received, and an appropriate recommendation.	June 2022
Implementation	In accordance with Cabinet decision, continue with status quo or implement proposal.	September 2022

The Consultation report attached is in draft subject to Cabinet approval.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 10.1 Secondary schools hosting LSC provisions are funded via the Council for one Specialist Teacher and two Learning Support Assistants at an approximate cost of £112k per class. Funding that is currently

provided to Ysgol Garth Olwg to establish a Step 4 provision following the amended proposal in June 2020 will be re-directed to support the establishment of the proposed new LSC for learners with significant ALN.

- 10.2 The creation of the LSC will incur a transportation cost in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy, however this increase in cost is seen as a necessity in order to enhance provision for RCT's most vulnerable pupils. Costs cannot be quantified at this time as placements are pupil led.

## **11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 11.1 Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with SEN/ALN should normally be educated in mainstream schools if this is compatible with them receiving the special educational/additional learning provision that their learning difficulty requires; the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources.

- 11.2 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 also requires local authorities to ensure that SEN/ALN provision is kept under review. The ALN Code for Wales (2021) places a statutory duty upon the LA to keep under review the overall Additional Learning Provision (ALP) available in its area and supporting arrangements, to ensure provision is sufficient to meet the overall needs of its population of learners with ALN and that provision is available in Welsh.

## **12. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 12.1 The proposal will ensure that two of the Council's three key priorities will be met. These include:

- Economy: Building a strong economy
- People: Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.

- 12.2 The proposal will ensure that some of the Council's most vulnerable pupils will have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes, whilst also ensuring equity and support for vulnerable learners and their families in line with strategic priority 3 of the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate's Strategic Plan. The proposal will also ensure more efficient and effective use of Council resources to promote the development of social inclusion and positive outcomes for learners.

- 12.3 The proposal will ensure there is renewed capacity to focus on prevention which is a key statutory requirement of the Wellbeing and

Future Generations Act and a key element of the Council's Corporate Plan.

- 12.4 The proposal will also assist the directorate in achieving strategic priority 3 of the Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services Strategic Plan: Ensuring equity and support for vulnerable learners and their families

### **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 and the statutory ALN Code for Wales requires LAs to regularly review arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN and to ensure that provision is sufficient, meets the needs of its communities and is available in Welsh.
- 13.2 The priority for the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate is to continue to focus on driving up standards in schools and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. In light of the Welsh Government ALN Transformation Agenda and the Council's vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners in its schools by responding proactively to both national and local strategies such as the Welsh Government Welsh Language Strategy: Cymraeg 2050, Rhondda Cynon Taf's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the current 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools plan for the restructure of Welsh medium provision in the Taf area, it is essential to enhance current Welsh medium ALN provision within RCT.
- 13.3 The proposed additional LSC will ensure that the Council has an enhanced focus on providing more effective mainstream inclusion opportunities for Welsh medium pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs. The importance of mainstream inclusion for pupils with ALN is reflected in the revised Estyn Common Inspection Framework which highlights that judgements of achievement for all learners including those with additional learning needs should take account of progress made in relation to agreed learning goals from individual starting points. The framework also recognises the positive impact that the expertise within a LSC can have on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for learners with ALN across the whole school.
- 13.4 It is recommended therefore, that approval is given to recommence consultation on the proposed enhancement to RCT's current mainstream LSC provision so that we can urgently address the lack of Welsh medium LSC provision within RCT.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**13 DECEMBER 2021**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR JOY ROSSER)**

Officer to contact: Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services





**Consultation on the**

**ENHANCEMENT OF WELSH MEDIUM  
LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION  
WITHIN RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

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# Section 1

## Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to enhance Welsh medium mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within RCT.

The proposal seeks to address the need to create Welsh medium specialist LSC provision, in line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act (2018) to provide a bilingual Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system.

To achieve this aim, the proposal for change is:

### ***Proposed development of new provision***

It is proposed that a Welsh medium LSC Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN is established at Ysgol Garth Olwg accommodating 14 pupils in September 2022.

## Who will we consult?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The Governing Bodies, parents/carers and staff of Ysgol Garth Olwg
- Governing Bodies, parents/carers of pupils attending primary schools within the catchment area of the proposed host secondary school
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Ministers including Welsh Minister for Education and Skills
- Menter Iaith
- Assembly Members and members of Parliament for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Local Health Board
- Teaching and Support staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities First Partnerships
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Neighbouring local authorities
- SNAP Cymru

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

The consultation will start on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and will be completed at 5pm on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in March 2022. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council website and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk).

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

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal, a Statutory Notice will be published in April 2022 providing a 28 day notice period for objections.

The School Organisation Code (011/2018) requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education & Inclusion Services will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and her response to them within 7 days of the determination decision by the Council's Cabinet. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's website and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed in Appendix 1.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal, the implementation date is the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2022.

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

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed creation of a Welsh medium LSC provision within RCT.

We would like you to consider the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposal.

## **How do you make your views known?**

A consultation questionnaire is attached (Appendix 1) and is also available on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk). The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the

consultation report to the Council's Cabinet. Schools will also be offered opportunities to consult with pupils and are advised to consult with School Council representatives to seek pupil views. You are also entitled to put your views in writing to:

**Director of Education and Inclusion Services,  
Education Directorate,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ**

**Telephone: (01443) 744333**

**E-mail: [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)**

**Fax: (01443) 744024**

All correspondence should be received 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the Statutory Notice. The consultation documentation will be distributed in both English and Welsh.

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

## **Consultation Events**

The following consultation meetings are to be held:

<b>Consultation Group</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b>School Council</b>	<b>9:30am - 10:30am</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022</b>	<b>Ysgol Garth Olwg</b>
<b>Governing Body and staff</b>	<b>3:30pm - 4:30pm</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022</b>	<b>Ysgol Garth Olwg Community Centre</b>
<b>RCT residents</b>	<b>4:30pm - 6:00pm</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022</b>	<b>Ysgol Garth Olwg Community Centre</b>

## Section 2

### Background

RCT has an excellent range of ALN provisions which allows the majority of pupils to attend schools near to where they live. These include 44 LSCs attached to mainstream settings, 4 special schools and 2 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). However, RCT does not currently have Welsh medium specialist provision.

In addition to this, £6.4M is delegated Enhanced Capacity Funding (ECF) annually to support pupils with severe and persistent needs in mainstream settings. This is in line with RCT's vision for inclusive education and the right for children with ALN to be educated in their local mainstream school where appropriate.

The Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act provides detailed guidance on the duties and responsibilities of local authorities (LAs) in meeting the ALN of children and young people. Children and young people have ALN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for an additional learning provision to be made for them. A learning difficulty is evident when children and young people have:

- significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children and young people of the same age; or
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children and young people of the same age in schools within the area of the locality.

The ALN Code for Wales (2021) recommends that early years and school settings adopt a graduated response to meeting ALN. A graduated response means that progressively greater expertise and support can be brought in to address the difficulties a child or young person may be experiencing. Additional or different provision should be made depending on the severity of the child/young person's level of need.

Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with ALN should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with them receiving the additional learning provision that their learning difficulty calls for, the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources. For those pupils who have very significant needs, more specialist placements are required, and this might result in a placement in one of our specialist provisions. These placements are agreed by the Access & Inclusion Service panels.

Despite the wide range of LSC provisions attached to mainstream schools, in light of the requirements of the ALNET Act (2018) it is felt necessary to enhance the current LSC provision to address the current gap in provision and to ensure the LA complies with its new legislative duty. Whilst the LA does provide Welsh medium peripatetic support it feels this should now be enhanced.

In the context of the above, the proposal for change seeks to achieve the following aim:

- to create a specialist LSC provision for Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 pupils with significant ALN;

## **Overview of the Proposal**

RCT County Borough Council wishes to seek the view of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to proceed with establishing a new Welsh medium LSC provision with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

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

Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 requires LAs to regularly review arrangements for supporting pupils with SEN/ALN and to ensure that provision is sufficient and meets the needs of its communities.

The priority for the Education and Inclusion Service Directorate is to continue to focus on driving up standards in schools and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. In light of the Welsh Government ALNET Act and the Council's vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners in its schools by responding proactively to both national and local strategies, such as the Welsh Government Welsh Language Strategy: Cymraeg 2050, Rhondda Cynon Taf's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the current 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme to increase and improve Welsh medium provision RCT, it is essential to enhance current Welsh medium ALN provision within RCT.

Within Outcome 6 of RCT's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022 – 2032 there is an expectation at the end of lifespan of the WESP, that the LA will have robust processes in place to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to secure Welsh medium and bilingual ALN provision and will endeavour to provide sufficient ALN provision for learners, who request it, through the medium of Welsh along with a workforce of sufficient size and capability.

The proposed additional LSC will support this expectation by ensuring that the LA has an enhanced focus on providing more effective mainstream inclusion opportunities for Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN.

The importance of mainstream inclusion for pupils with ALN is reflected in the revised Estyn Common Inspection Framework which highlights that judgements of achievement for all learners including those with additional learning needs should take account of progress made in relation to agreed learning goals from individual starting points. The framework also recognises the positive impact that the expertise within a LSC can have on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for learners with ALN across the whole school.

### **What is the educational case for the proposal to create additional LSC provision?**

The advantages of implementing the proposed changes includes:

- an enhanced focus on improved mainstream LSC provision which provides improved life chances for our most vulnerable learners;
- appropriate continuum of provision which is well matched to pupils' primary needs;
- compliance with one of the underpinning principles of the ALNET Act that all pupils should access mainstream education where possible;
- improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to effectively meeting pupil needs;
- greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in local community schools;
- ensuring that LSC provision is situated within education settings that are accessible and appropriate for the needs of pupils with wide ranging needs, including physical and medical needs;
- improving the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils;
- compliance with a core aim of ALNET Act to create a bilingual ALN system; and
- the enhanced LSC provision will be hosted by a school that has the capacity for the development of an additional class due to surplus spaces and can accommodate the additional pupils who will be placed in the school.

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

The LA proposal if agreed will have a positive impact on pupils with ALN across RCT as it will mean that the funding will be directed to establish a



provision that addresses an area of growing need. The proposal will ensure that the County Borough Council continues in its commitment to meeting the needs of learners with ALN effectively by addressing gaps in existing provision thus improving the quality of provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The schools will be delegated sufficient funding to establish the proposed provision. The funding will cover staffing and capitation costs. The proposal does not involve any transfer or disposal of land.

The creation of the new LSC will incur a transportation cost in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy. However, this increase in cost is seen as a necessity in order to enhance provision for RCT's most vulnerable pupils. Costs cannot be predicted at this time as placements are pupil led.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on school pupils?**

It is anticipated that the proposal will have a significantly positive impact on Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN by providing an inclusive model of specialist provision hosted by a mainstream school that can meet their identified needs within their local community.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. If placed within LSCs pupils may be required to travel out of catchment however, enhancing the number of LSCs does provide additional options.

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 children in their communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

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

There will be no negative impact on existing LSC staff as current LSCs will be unaffected by the proposal. The proposal will have a positive impact creating a new teaching and 2 non-teaching LSC posts, providing development opportunities for existing staff.

## **What is the likely impact of the proposal on the local communities?**

A Community Impact Assessment has been completed and is included as an appendix. This proposal will not have any significant impact on the local community as more local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community and the new provision will address a gap in existing provision. The school will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of the LSC will enhance the overall capacity of the host school to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist ALN expertise within the school.

In addition, Equality Impact and Welsh Language Assessments have been completed for this proposal and are attached as appendices. These will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that they include pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The assessments will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal.

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

Implementing this plan will be of benefit to Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN across RCT and will ensure greater equality and access to specialist provision.

The creation of the new LSC could potentially cause some limited disruption to Ysgol Garth Olwg as the proposed host school. However, it is recognised that hosting a specialist LSC provision has a positive impact on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for pupils with ALN across the whole school.

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

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

In light of the requirements of the ALNET Act to do nothing would mean that RCT would not be meeting its statutory duty to meet the identified ALN of some of its most vulnerable pupils.

There is clearly identified need for this provision within RCT and it would be in children and young people's best interest to address this. Some consideration was given to re-directing resources to further enhance the capacity of mainstream schools to meet need in local community schools. However, in so doing this could make the continuum of provision more fragmented.

Whilst alternative options have been considered, these have not been pursued given the obvious benefits of implementing these changes. Alternative secondary schools could be approached to establish a specialist provision. However, Ysgol Garth Olwg was selected because of their inclusive practice, success in supporting pupils with ALN in the mainstream and its surplus capacity. Establishing this provision will reduce the need for demand for English medium LSC provision and will ensure that learners with significant needs that require more intensive support can access this in the Welsh medium sector.

## **Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments**

Community Impact, Equality Impact and Welsh Language Assessments have been prepared in respect of this proposal and are attached as appendices. Copies will also be published on the Council's website hard copies can be obtained by emailing a request to [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01443 744333.

## **Section 3**

### **Proposed New Provision**

RCT County Borough Council proposes to create a new Welsh medium LSC provision with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2022 for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg accommodating 14 pupils.

### **Background to the opening of the new LSC**

Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's key priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable pupils will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our provisions are well matched to the needs of pupils is central to pupils achieving positive outcomes.

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 Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Government target of having 1 M people in Wales able to speak Welsh by 2050. We consider that this proposal will address the existing lack of Welsh medium LSC provision, allowing Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN to remain in a Welsh medium education setting and work towards the Council's WESP. Rising exclusion rates has historically been a source of concern in the LA.

The LSC will be located within the secondary school as it has appropriate accommodation. By locating specialist provision within mainstream settings, pupils will have the opportunity for increased inclusion. This is supported by the Estyn Common Inspection Framework, which highlights the positive impact that the expertise within a LSC can have on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for learners with ALN across the whole school.

The LA currently has 8 LSC provisions within the 17 all through and secondary school provisions. The additional LSC will enhance current provision by providing specialist Welsh medium LSC for the County Borough. The establishment of the Welsh medium LSC for pupils with significant ALN will address a current gap in LSC provision.

### **Information on the school affected by the proposal**

#### **Ysgol Garth Olwg**

##### ***General Information***

Ysgol Garth Olwg is located Main Road, Church Village, Pontypridd, CF38 1DX. The school is a newly created 3–19 Welsh medium provision and is situated on a site that has benefited from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School

Modernisation Programme. The LA's building condition survey reports the school as a category A. The school does not currently have LSC provision but has accessed enhanced resources to develop in-house Step 4 provision for learners with more complex needs.

**Pupil Projections**

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Ysgol Garth Olwg from 2021/2022 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Ysgol Garth Olwg are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code.

Pupil Numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2018/19	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Ysgol Garth Olwg 11-16	810	813							
Ysgol Garth Olwg 3-16			1183	1210	1208	1237	1230	1242	1218

Capacity: Secondary 1110; Primary 324.

**Quality and Standards**

As this is a new education setting there are no Estyn reports currently available. This proposal does not adversely impact any children as it is proposed that the provision is established to meet an identified need.

Ysgol Garth Olwg is a school that accesses core and not enhanced support from Central South Consortium.

The proposal will ensure that the current gap in secondary LSC provision for Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN is addressed.

## Consultation Response Pro-forma

In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services,  
Access and Inclusion Service,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon,  
CF45 4UQ,  
or by email to [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)

### **Proposal: Creation of a Welsh medium Learning Support Class with effect from the 1st of September 2022:**

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

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

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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

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3. How you feel the proposal could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative) and if in any way it treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language?

**Positive**                      or                      **Negative**

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4. Please state how positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be decreased?

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Please indicate who you are (e.g., parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

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

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.  
Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address **no later than 5pm on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022.**

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

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