Proposal to Construct Three New Primary Schools in the Taf Area of Rhondda Cynon Taf Welsh Language Impact Assessment

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) tool enables the Council to consider the principles and requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015 to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Measure 2011.

It is to be read alongside the Equality Impact Assessment, as the information in both documents is related and the themes within them are cross-cutting.

STAGE 1 – Info	ormation Gathering					
	complete this tool you will be asked for evidence to support your views . Please see nent for more information on data sources.					
Proposal Name	New school buildings for Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools and the amalgamation of Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools.					
Directorate/ Department	Education and Inclusion Services – 21 st Century Schools Team					
Service Director	Andrea Richards					
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Brief Description	The proposal is to create brand new learning environments at Maesybryn Primary School (MPS) and Tonysguboriau Primary School (TPS) on the existing school sites and to amalgamate Cefn Primary (CePS) and Craig yr Hesg (CyHPS) Primary Schools. The amalgamation will be achieved by closing the two existing primary schools, which are in poor condition, and constructing a new, bigger community primary school to replace them on the existing Craig yr Hesg Primary School site and the land adjacent to it (the former site of the Tŷ Gwyn Pupil Referral Unit). The new schools will benefit from 21st Century facilities and provide pupils and staff with an improved and enhanced learning environment. The new schools will be funded by the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government (WG), via the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme's Mutual Investment Model (MIM) revenue funding stream. The catchment areas of Tonysguboriau and Maesybryn schools are not proposed to be altered. The catchment area for the new Glyn-coch school will be an amalgamation of the existing catchment areas for CePS and CyHPS.					
	 Modern, flexible learning environments for all learners, a large hall/dining area, a multi-purpose learning resource area and fully accessible facilities. Internal and external areas for use by the local community. Enhanced outdoor spaces to support the full range of curriculum activities, including an outdoor classroom and a 'forest schools' area. Improved on site staff and visitor car parking. 					

The proposal will also include a review of safe routes to school, and if required an investment in improvements to walkways, road crossings and traffic calming measures, to ensure the required safety standards are met. This is the approach we have implemented within other communities through the delivery of the 21st Century Schools Programme, which has seen significant improvements being made.

The new schools will be built in accordance with Building Bulletin 99 and will be fully accessible and compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

Date

1st July 2022

Outline who this proposal affects

- Pupils and staff of Cefn, Craig yr Hesg, Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools.
- Parents / carers of pupils attending Cefn, Craig yr Hesg, Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools.
- Residents and communities in the vicinity of Cefn, Craig yr Hesg, Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools.

What are the aims of the policy/ project, and how do these relate to the Welsh language?

The aim of the proposed project is to relocate Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools to brand new buildings on their current sites in order to replace their current buildings that are in very poor condition overall. Additionally, the proposed project also aims to amalgamate Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools by closing both schools and opening a new English medium community primary school on a new site which includes the existing Craig yr Hesg Primary School site and land adjacent to it (the former site of the Tŷ Gwyn Pupil Referral Unit). A separate Equality impact assessment specific to the amalgamation of CEPS and CYHPS was also been completed as part of a previous report to Cabinet.

Although these are English medium primary schools, Welsh is taught as part of the curriculum and all pupils will benefit from having the opportunity to be taught in brand new facilities fit for the 21st Century.

The aim has been to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside school. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and in wider contexts in schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners in the transition between key stages, offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022. The existing schools currently support this aim by using incidental Welsh wherever possible and employing initiatives such as 'Helpwr Heddiw', 'Seren yr Wythnos' and 'Criw Cymraeg'. The new schools will continue to do so and will build upon this by committing to achieve the 'Cymraeg Campus' Language Charter, a framework to promote and increase the use of Welsh across the schools.

If implemented, the proposal will also allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the schools' facilities which can be used to hold classes through the medium of Welsh. An example of this can be seen at the new Tonyrefail Community School, where Welsh evening classes are held in the community facilities. The schools will be designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area is being designed within each school so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the school, which could involve Welsh language groups using the 21st Century facilities for meetings / classes etc.

Who will benefit?
Could the policy/ project affect Welsh language groups?

- Pupils of Cefn, Craig yr Hesg, Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools.
- Parents/carers of pupils attending Cefn, Craig yr Hesg, Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools.
- Academic and support staff at Cefn, Craig yr Hesg, Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools.
- The local communities served by Cefn, Craig yr Hesg, Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools.

Any impact on Welsh language groups should only be positive as the new buildings will be accessible to the local community which could involve Welsh language groups using the 21st Century facilities for meetings / classes etc.

While it does not form part of this proposal, the Council is also working to improve and increase Welsh medium provision in the Taf area by building a new purpose-built school to replace the provision of YGG Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School (currently a dual language school), on the current site of Heol y Celyn Primary School in Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd. The new school is to include 480 places plus 60 nursery places and is targeted to open in the autumn of 2024 and offer Welsh medium education in a first class 21st Century learning environment.

Current linguist profile of the geographical area(s) concerned

Every ten years the nation sets aside one day for the Census – a count of all people and households. The Census is a key source of information about the number of people who can speak Welsh.

The 2011 Census¹ indicated that of the 225,555 residents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf, 12.3% (27,779) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 87.6% (197,776) were not able to speak Welsh. This can be compared to the all Wales figures that showed of the 2,955,841 residents living Wales, 19.0% (562,016) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 81.0% (2,393,825) were not able to speak Welsh.

The table that follows illustrates the Welsh language skills of residents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf alongside the main electoral divisions that comprise the catchment areas of CePS, CyHPS, MPS and TPS and is obtained from the 2011 Census.

Welsh Lang	Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)							
	Glyn- coch	Llantwit Fardre	Llantrisant Town	Rhondda Cynon Taf	All Wales			
Can Speak, Read and Write Welsh	9.4%	13.8%	13.4%	9.7%	14.6%			
Can Speak and Read but Cannot	0.6%	1.1%	1.3%	0.9%	1.5%			

¹ 2011 Census

Write Welsh					
Can	1.7%	2.2%	1.9%	1.6%	2.7%
Speak but Cannot					
Read or Write Welsh					
Can Understan	2.5%	4.8%	4.9%	4.2%	5.3%
d Spoken Welsh Only					
Other Combinati	1.9%	3.4%	3.5%	3.3%	2.5%
on of Skills					
No Skills	84%	74.7%	75.1%	80.4%	73.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The data demonstrates that in the electoral divisions that comprise the respective catchment areas of Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools, the Welsh language skills of residents are consistently above the total County Borough level, but mostly below the All-Wales Welsh language skills level. Meanwhile, the data also demonstrates that in the Glyn-coch electoral division that encompasses the respective catchment areas of Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools, the Welsh language skills of residents are largely below the total County Borough and All-Wales Welsh language skills levels.

The new school buildings will include facilities for use by members of the local community and could include the provision of Welsh adult learning classes in order to help support the growth of Welsh language skills in the village. Furthermore, the Council's proposed new Welsh medium primary school on the current site of Heol y Celyn Primary School will increase the capacity of Welsh medium primary education in the Taf area, further supporting the growth of Welsh language skills.

The Annual Population Survey² collects information about respondents' Welsh speaking ability and includes a question on how often people speak Welsh. It is updated quarterly, so is a more up-to-date source than the Census. The most recent Annual Population Survey, for the quarter ending March 2022, reported that 20.9% of respondents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf said they could speak Welsh, this is compared to the all Wales percentage of 29.5% of respondents. This can be further broken down to the data contained in the table that follows.

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)					
	County Borough of Wales Rhondda Cynon Taf				
Can Read Welsh	18.9%	25.9%			
Can Write Welsh	17.7%	23.7%			

² Annual Population Survey

Can	Understand	24.5%	33.4%
Spoken W	lelsh		

The data demonstrates that in each Welsh language skill area, the 'all Wales' percentages are notably higher than the County Borough percentages. However, the current data shows a significant increase in the number of residents that can read, write, and understand spoken Welsh since the 2011 Census.

When asked about their frequency of speaking Welsh, the table that follows shows a breakdown of responses of respondents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf compared to the all Wales responses.

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)					
	County Borough of Wales Rhondda Cynon Taf				
Speak Welsh Daily	8.1%	14.8%			
Speak Welsh Weekly	5.0%	5.2%			
Use it Less Often	5.6%	7.6%			

The data demonstrates that the percentage of respondents that speak Welsh daily is far lower for the County Borough than the all Wales percentage.

The Welsh Language Use Survey³ for the years 2013 to 2015, contains detailed information about Welsh speaker's fluency and their use of the Welsh language in a range of settings. When looking where respondents living in Wales learned to speak Welsh, the majority, 45.0%, learned to speak Welsh at home, followed by 26.0% who learned to speak Welsh at nursery school and primary school between the ages of 2 to 10 and 14.0% who learned to speak Welsh at secondary school at the age of 11 plus. The remaining 2.0% learned to speak Welsh in other settings, including at 'Welsh for Adults' courses.

The proposed new school buildings for Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools and the proposed new community primary school for Glyn-coch will allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the school facilities. The schools are being designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area will be designed within the school itself so that the local community will be able to safely utilise the facilities at the schools with appropriate segregation from the rest of the school.

The data above clearly shows that there is a gap in the Welsh language skills of residents of RCT when compared to the whole of Wales. Proposals such as this significantly improve the learning environment and the opportunities available for our learners. The headteachers of Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools and the executive headteacher of Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools will be encouraged and supported to consider using the new facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase learners' use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and in social contexts. This has been done through the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter laith), developed by Gwynedd Council, and various other

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³ Welsh Language Use Survey 2013 to 2015

projects, in partnership with the CSC JES and the Urdd. This will support the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in the Council's current (2017 to 2022) and new (2022 to 2032) WESP.

The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English to Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education.

Currently, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for learners who are late comers are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises. As such, Welsh medium schools are provided with funding directly to ensure that any late comers to Welsh medium education are provided with the necessary support and skills to enable them to thrive within their school.

Funding was obtained in 2021, via the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Immersion Support Grant, to pilot the creation of Welsh language immersion support for latecomers to the Welsh language, or to provide additional targeted support for those learners within Welsh medium primary schools who required it. We are currently developing another bid to develop and establish a new peripatetic model of Welsh language immersion provision that will support learners throughout the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Other relevant data or research

The language category and standards of alternative / neighbouring schools

RCTCBC has seventeen Welsh medium primary school provisions located throughout the County Borough to ease access. There are two all-through schools for 3 to 19 year olds, namely Ysgol Garth Olwg and Ysgol Llanhari, two dual language primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds, namely Dolau Primary and Heol y Celyn Primary schools and 13 Welsh medium primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds. All learners who attend these schools' study through the medium of Welsh. In the Taf area of Rhondda Cynon Taf there are nine schools offering Welsh medium education for pupils aged 3 to 11 years of age, comprising of: all-through schools from the ages of 3 to 19 years old, dual language primary schools and primary schools catering for 3 to 11 year olds.

In very close proximity to Maesybryn Primary School, there is a well-established Welsh medium all-through school, namely Ysgol Garth Olwg (formerly a primary and secondary school). Ysgol Garth Olwg is 16 years old and was built as part of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract. It is in very good condition with excellent facilities on site, internally and externally, for the school and the wider community. It has 18.58% surplus capacity in the primary stream (PLASC 2022). When Ysgol Garth Olwg was a separate primary and secondary school, the primary school was at 5.5% surplus capacity (PLASC January 2018). As it was nearing capacity, the Local Authority created additional capacity by utilising rooms within the secondary school and subsequently created the all-through school on the site. A recent investment in the school in the sum of £350,000 has created fully refurbished accommodation for years 5 and 6, which will ensure sufficient Welsh medium spaces at primary and secondary levels in this part of the County Borough, allowing for opportunities for further growth of the Welsh language. There is also a Meithrin and a Lifelong Learning Centre on the current Ysgol Garth Olwg site thereby offering a continuum of Welsh medium provision for learners from the birth to eighteen years and beyond within one school site.

In line with the County Borough's current WESP and in order to achieve the targets of the new WESP, the County Borough will continue to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need is fundamental to increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. In addition, the headteachers of the schools covered by this proposal will promote and signpost Welsh medium provision available at the Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre.

Tonysguboriau Primary is approximately 2 miles from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gymunedol Llantrisant, which is a Welsh medium primary school at 35.50% surplus capacity (PLASC 2022). YGGG Llantrisant is also a relatively new build school having been built in 2005. A Meithrin facility was established at the school in September 2021, offering morning sessional childcare for 2-3 year olds and wraparound care for nursery aged children. This provision maximises opportunities for educating through the medium of Welsh in this area for early years children. Also, a proposal to provide brand new 21st Century educational facilities at Ysgol Llanhari (all through school) may further assist with encouraging parents/carers in this area to choose WM education for their children thus also increasing uptake of WM education at neighbouring WM primary schools due to the availability of brand new 21st Century WM secondary school facilities nearby.

Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools are approximately 2.2 miles and 1.6 miles from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton (YGGPSN) in Cilfynydd; the current catchment Welsh medium primary school for families living in Glyn-coch. It is recognised that a new English medium primary school in Glyn-coch may be attractive when parents/carers are choosing a school for their children. However, proposals to reorganise and transform Welsh medium primary education provision in the Pontypridd area of RCT by building a new school that will replace the provision of YGGPSN and the Welsh Medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School (HYCEPS), (currently a dual language school) are underway. This is due to be achieved by September 2024 which is ahead of the timescales for the completion of the new English-medium primary school in Glyn-coch, thus parents/carers who are attracted by new school facilities will have new Welsh-medium provision available. These proposals will see the creation of a new Welsh medium Primary school with a capacity of 480 pupil places, plus 60 nursery places, to be built on the site of the existing HYCEPS, increasing the overall capacity of WM education in the Pontypridd area by 93 places. While the new Welsh medium primary school will be further away from Cefn and Craig yr Hesg Primary schools, all children who currently qualify for home to school transport to access WM provision at YGG Pont Sion Norton will continue to be eligible when the new school opens and the new school can be actively promoted to potential parents/carers. There are also WM places available at other nearby schools of YGG Abercynon and Ysgol Evan James affording ample opportunity for learners to access Welsh medium education.

As part of a wider development to build approximately 1,850 new houses near the current Dolau Primary school, a new building will be constructed with 480 places plus 60 nursery places. Dolau Primary is currently a dual language school, with 441 places plus nursery. The construction of the new building will increase the total available capacity to 921 places plus 124 part-time nursery places, thus considerably increasing opportunities for Welsh medium education in a brand new 21st Century building. Although initial proposals are for this new building to be part of the dual language

Dolau Primary School, subject to further statutory consultation, the new building is likely to become a Welsh medium primary school and will offer Welsh medium education in a brand new, state of the art, 21st Century standard school building. Dolau Primary is 3 miles from Tonysguboriau Primary school.

As can be seen from the data above, there are plentiful opportunities for full Welsh medium education in very good facilities in close proximity to each of the schools forming part of this proposal. Work be undertaken in line with the WESP to further promote WM education in this area to try and ensure some positive outcomes for the WM schools.

The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education.

At present, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for their learners are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises.

Funding was obtained in 2021, via the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Immersion Support Grant, to pilot the creation of Welsh language immersion support for latecomers to the Welsh language, or to provide additional targeted support for those learners within Welsh medium primary schools who required it. We are currently developing another bid to develop and establish a new peripatetic model of Welsh language immersion provision that will support learners throughout the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Pupil Numbers in neighbouring Welsh medium schools

The majority of neighbouring Welsh medium schools have surplus capacity to facilitate growth of Welsh medium education provision going forward. As referred to above, Dolau Primary is scheduled to be greatly expanded in the very near future which will provide even more opportunities for Welsh medium education.

School	Capacity	Number on Roll	Surplus Capacity
YGGG Llantrisant	338	218	35.50%
Ysgol Garth Olwg	409 (primary stream)	333	18.58%
Dolau Primary (dual language)	441 (whole school English & Welsh streams)	460	-4.30%
Ysgol Llanhari	194 (primary stream)	171	14.43%
YGG Pont Sion Norton	267	235	11.98%
YGG Evan James	342	254	25.73%
YGG Abercynon	352	242	31.25%

These surplus places are evident at Nursery and Reception level also in several of the schools (see table below), therefore enabling early years provision through the medium of Welsh.

Ysgol Llanhari, being an all through school has the flexibility of use of space throughout the site to create further early years accommodation, therefore exceeding the admission number is not an issue as the school has sufficient capacity and accommodation overall. Also, (subject to future funding approvals) Ysgol Llanhari is due to benefit from new build accommodation for pupils aged 10 to 19 to further complement the refurbished primary and Meithrin facilities and provide additional Welsh medium pupil places in 21st Century facilities.

Demand and projections are regularly monitored across all schools as part of continual school organisation planning, to ensure that all schools have sufficient accommodation to meet in catchment demand and enable growth of the Welsh language.

School	Admission Number	Nursery P/T*	Nursery*	Reception*
YGGG Llantrisant	48	19	12	41
Ysgol Garth Olwg (all-through school)	58 (primary stream)	0	44	51
Dolau Primary (Dual language)	63 (whole school English & Welsh streams)	18	6 (Welsh stream only)	26 (Welsh stream only)
Ysgol Llanhari (all-through school)	27 (primary stream)	13	6	31
YGG Pont Sion Norton	38	0	34	28
YGG Evan James	48	16	22	44
* PLASC June	2022 figures	1		

Transition rates from Mudiad Meithrin to Welsh medium primary schools

The position at 2019/2020 in terms of progression from Cylch Meithrin into Welsh medium primary schools is shown in the table that follows:

Cylch Meithrin	ithrin Meithrin Primary of 2- of 3- who who		who who Welsh		1	English Medium				
			Olds (Age At 31.0 8.19)	Olds (Age At 31.08 .19)	Cylch Ti a Fi	Flying Start	No.	%	No.	%
Beddau	18	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castellau	14	24	20	28	26	92.8	2	7.1
Evan James	52	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Evan James	12	43	10	56	56	100	0	0
Llanilltud Faerdref	24	Ysgol Garth Olwg	6	0	9	6	6	100	0	0
Pentre'r Egwlys	30	Ysgol Garth Olwg	38	1	12	36	22	61.1	14	38.8
Rhydyfelin	40	Ysgol Heol Y Celyn	18	2	11	17	5	29.4	12	70.6
Cwm Elai	15	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefai	37	1	21	31	26	83.8	5	16.1
Pontyclun	48	Llanhari	16	0	17	14	13	92.9	1	7.1
Ynysybwl	24	YGG Pont Sion Norton	15	4	14	0	7	43.75	9	56.25

(Note: Updated data is awaited from Welsh Government)

Cymraeg 2050 outlines that Welsh medium immersion education is the principal method for ensuring that children can develop their Welsh language skills and for creating new Welsh speakers. Cymraeg 2050 highlights the importance of the Early Years sector as a point of early entry into Welsh medium education and as a way to increase demand for Welsh medium education. In support of this, the Council regularly invests in Welsh medium pre-school facilities on existing Welsh medium primary school sites. A new peripatetic immersion model will aid the continuum of the Welsh language. This falls in line with the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), along with a range of marketing and promotional strategies which are being implemented to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium education are promoted to increase uptake into Welsh medium pre-school facilities and then in turn aid transition rates into Welsh medium primary education. This will involve working collaboratively with partners such as Mudiad Meithrin to effectively market and promote.

In addition, a new provision, Cylch Meithrin Cilfynydd a Phont Norton, is due to open in nearby Cilfynydd in January 2022. This should also help to increase the take up of Welsh medium education in the area.

What facilities are there for members of the community to learn Welsh or undertake activities through the medium of Welsh

The new school buildings will have capacity that can be utilised by community groups and organisations. Each building will be designed to facilitate safe use of areas by the community whilst maintaining segregation from the rest of the school. The headteachers will be encouraged and fully supported to use these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh, as has been successfully implemented at other new schools. This will support the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCTCBCs) current (2017 to 2022) and new (2022 to 2032) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

Is it appropriate to provide additional after school facilities at any alternative school to further secure standards in the Welsh language?

In very close proximity to Maesybryn Primary School is the Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre which is heavily used and offers a variety of courses through the medium of Welsh to children, young people and adult learners.

Given the location and accessibility of the new schools, along with the inclusion of community facilities within the new school buildings, they will lend themselves to offering afterschool facilities accessible to all members of the community through the mediums of Welsh and English, negating the need to travel to an alternative facility.

How parents/carers and learners' engagement with any alternative schools and any specific language enhancement it offers could be supported

The Council, has developed and updated a Being Bilingual booklet, funded by Cronfa Glyndwr which was first published in March 2016 and has recently been updated. The booklet is designed to give information on the benefits of being bilingual, outline the path to Welsh medium education and answer frequently asked questions on choosing Welsh medium education. The booklet is distributed via Health Visitors, Flying Start provision, nursery nurses and through the community in GP surgeries, libraries, dental surgeries, registry offices and hospitals.

The Council's 'Starting School' booklet also provides parents/carers with a range of information including advice on choosing a school, provision of home to school transport and a directory of schools.

In addition, the local Cymraeg i Blant Officer runs weekly bilingual baby massage, baby yoga and Welsh rhyme time sessions for parents/carers and young children across the County Borough working alongside the local Midwifery and Health Visiting Teams. This ensures that parents/carers receive key early messages during the antenatal and post-natal period and are made aware of the bilingual pathway available for their child.

The Council's Youth Engagement and Participation Service work with Menter laith and the Urdd to deliver bespoke language awareness sessions for young people highlighting the value of having Welsh language as a skill. The Youth Engagement and Participation Service also deliver social events and activities for young people through the medium of Welsh which include residential opportunities, eisteddfodau, sport and accreditation.

Information on how the proposal fits with the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and any future actions that will be needed in consequence of the change to continue to comply with the scheme or meet targets in the scheme

The Council believes that all learners should have the appropriate opportunities for learning in both the mediums of Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life in order to meet the demands of the 21st Century.

The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 target and how central the education system in Wales is to achieving its vision. The Council's new WESP (2022 to 2032) sets out a ten year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education within the County Borough, in order to maximise its contribution of achieving the target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. It builds on the work of the previous WESP (2017 to 2022) and sets out an action plan which demonstrates how we intend to achieve our ten-year vision.

The majority of the Welsh medium primary schools in the County Borough have sufficient surplus places to meet demand. However, there are a number of schools where demand is close to outstripping supply. As such, the Council has or is currently taking action to address these issues through a number of projects and proposals. Projects being undertaken to address this issue include: the expansion of YGG Aberdar, including a purpose built Welsh medium childcare facility; a new WM primary school in Rhydyfelin to accommodate pupils at YGG Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh stream at Heol y Celyn Primary School; the expansion of YG Rhydywaun with a new teaching block and sports facilities; and a new school building to serve the Llanilid housing development, which will operate as an extension to the dual language Dolau Primary School, in the first instance. Furthermore, the Council has also committed to increasing the quality and availability of early years Welsh medium provision by investing significantly in a number of provisions through various funding schemes. This will assist in ensuring a language continuum of Welsh medium provision and ensure that increased demand for Welsh medium education is met.

Further, as mentioned earlier, the Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education.

Funding was obtained in 2021, via the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Immersion Support Grant, to pilot the creation of Welsh language immersion support for latecomers to the Welsh language, or to provide additional targeted support for those learners within Welsh medium primary schools who required it.

The Council is currently developing another bid to develop and establish a new peripatetic model of Welsh language immersion provision that will support learners throughout the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

No changes to these proposals are required in order to comply with the WESP.

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language Measure 2011.

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Yes	No	No impact	Describe why it will have a	What evidence do you have	What action(s) can you
			1	positive/negative or negligible	to support this view?	take to mitigate any
			Negligible	impact on the Welsh language.		negative impacts or
						better contribute to
						positive impacts?
Numbers and/or	X			The headteachers of all the	- Welsh evening classes	- Promotion of and
percentages of Welsh				schools included under this	at Tonyrefail Community	signposting to
speakers				proposal will be encouraged and	School for members of	Welsh medium
				supported to consider using the	the community wanting	classes by the
				new facilities to increase	to learn Welsh held by	headteachers all
				participation in the Welsh	Dysgu Cymraeg; also	schools included
				language by offering the	monthly coffee mornings	under this
				opportunity to parents/carers and	for Welsh speakers to	proposal.
				other members of the community	attend to practice their	- Working with
				to attend Welsh classes and/or	conversational Welsh	external partners
				other opportunities for community	with each other.	(e.g. Yr Urdd) to
				engagement through the medium	- Number of	provide out of
				of Welsh. This will support the	parents/carers and other	hours activities
				Welsh Government's target of one	members of the	through the
				million Welsh speakers in Wales	community attending	medium of Welsh.
				by 2050 and the targets set out in	Welsh medium classes	- Promotion of the
				the Council's current (2017 to	offered at Garth Olwg	options available
				2022) and new (2022 to 2032)	Lifelong Learning	to learners who
				WESP.	Centre:	wish to transition
					Since September 2021:	from English
				The Council recognises the	505 people attended	medium education
				importance of immersion in the	craft workshops;	into Welsh

Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English into Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education.

Funding was obtained in 2021, via the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Immersion Support Grant, to pilot the creation of Welsh language immersion support for latecomers to the Welsh language, or to provide additional targeted support for learners within Welsh those medium primary schools who required it. We are currently developing another bid to develop and establish a new peripatetic model of Welsh language immersion provision that will support learners throughout the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

In contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050 and in line with the County Borough's current WESP and in order to achieve the targets of the new WESP, it is vital to ensure a school-based workforce of sufficient size and capability. In order to create more Welsh speakers, our education system is

40 people attended Welsh talks;
90 pupils attended a "Remembering Aberfan" arts project;
140 people attended a fundraising concert for Ukraine:

240 people attended a 'Twm Sion Cati' show.

In addition, on a weekly basis:
15 young people attend drama club;
16 families attend 'Clwb Traed Bach' parent and toddler sensory group.

- medium education via the WESP marketing group.
- The establishment of a new peripatetic Welsh language immersion model in 2022.
- Ensure that schools are supported locally and regionally, including by the CSC JES Welsh in Education Officer to share best practice.
- Employment of a Welsh Language Engagement Graduate Officer who is responsible for the development of new strategies in line the Council's WESP new the support delivery of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 vision of a million Welsh speakers.

dependent on its school-based workforce and we must work locally, regionally and nationally to ensure we create a school based workforce with robust linguistic skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase learner's use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and in social contexts. This has been done through the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter laith), developed by Gwynedd Council, and various other projects, in partnership with the CSC JES and the Urdd. These include but are not limited to:

- Implementing the Welsh Language Charter in all Welsh medium primary and secondary schools in order to develop learners' use of the Welsh language.
- Implementing Cymraeg Campus in a number of English medium primary schools and piloting it in two English medium secondary schools.

- and to contribute towards the development of strategies to promote the Welsh language and Welsh medium education across the County Borough.
- The school-based workforce will be supported with continued professional learning, networking, and opportunities to share best practice.
- Promotion of opportunities for teachers to attend the Welsh Language Sabbatical scheme.
- To promote and increase learner's use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools with all English medium primary

Supporting English medium secondary schools to provide informal opportunities to use the Welsh language and intensive Welsh language learning opportunities through the Urdd's Cymraeg Bob Dydd project. The aim has been to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within primary and secondary schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside primary and secondary schools. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language, across the curriculum and in wider contexts in primary and secondary schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners in the transition between key stages offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales — 2022.	and secondary schools being supported to achieve the Cymraeg Campus Bronze Award.
The current position (2019/2020) in terms of progression from Cylch Meithrin Ynysybwl into Welsh medium primary school is lower	- The new WM primary school can be actively promoted both by

	than the Council would like. However, the separate proposals to deliver a new Welsh medium primary school on the current Heol y Celyn Primary School site, to accommodate pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium pupils attending the dual language Heol y Celyn Primary School may result in more parents choosing to progress to Welsh medium education in a brand new 21st Century learning environment.	the school and via the WESP Marketing Group. While the new Welsh medium primary school will be further away from Cefn and Craig yr Hesg Primary schools, all children who currently qualify for home to school transport to access WM provision at YGG Pont Sion Norton will continue to be eligible when the new school opens. (The eligibility criteria for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education has been set by the Council at 1.5 miles which is less than the 2 miles required by the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008).
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language	 		

to X

Welsh

Opportunities

promote the

If implemented, the proposal will allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the schools' facilities which can be used to hold classes through the medium of Welsh. The schools will be designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area will be designed within each school so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the school.

Each of the schools will be located within a residential area hence they are very accessible to the communities that they serve.

All signage produced will be bilingual and in adherence to the most recent guidelines available.

The Council will continue to adhere to The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011⁴ (the 2011 Measure), which requires the Council to produce a five-year strategy to facilitate and promote Welsh language. The first five-year strategy, RCT – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy⁵, was approved in 2016 and outlined a

The demand for classes through the medium of Welsh could be the evidenced by popularity of the Garth Olwa Lifelona Learning Centre, as evidenced by the data provided above. Additional opportunities to attend community classes / groups in these new school buildings should further improve accessibility as the buildings will have community rooms and be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and such opportunities will be within the heart of additional communities thereby facilitating access.

- Encouragement and support to headteachers promote community use of their facilities for the purpose of Welsh medium education / use by Welsh medium and groups of promotion opportunities via marketing tools currently being developed by the Council's WESP Marketing Group.
- The Council will make efforts to establish Welsh for Adults sessions in the new schools as well as look to establish links with the Urdd and Menter laith to assist in the promotion of the Welsh language.
- In addition, the schools will work with the Councils

⁴ Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (the 2011 Measure)

⁵ Rhondda Cynon Taf – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – 2016

	number of key policy areas to maintain and increase the number of Welsh speakers during its lifecycle. In developing this proposal, the RCT — Welsh Language Promotion Strategy has been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education and the Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with it. This commitment to promoting the Welsh language, increasing the number of Welsh learners and improving the Welsh language skills of staff and pupils across schools in RCT is reaffirmed in the Education and Inclusion Directorate's three-year Strategic Plan.		Sports Development Team and the Urdd to establish links with local Welsh medium sporting groups and associations who may wish to utilise the sports facilities available.
Compliance with the X Council's Welsh Language Standards	All processes associated with the new buildings will be in accordance with the Council's Welsh Language Standards. Where possible, the schools, the Council and the CSC will support school support staff, school learning support workers and teaching staff to participate in Welsh language skills courses at different levels in order to meet identified needs.	- All contractual arrangements will ensure that all consultations are undertaken bilingually; the construction of the new school will incorporate bilingual signage etc. with Welsh being the more prominent to further promote the Welsh language.	- Instil contractor awareness of the Welsh Language Standards and ensure compliance.

Transfer with a Malala W		- Number of support school support staff, school learning support workers and teaching staff participating in Welsh language skills courses at different levels.	- Encouragement of participation in Welsh language skills courses at different levels.
Treating the Welsh X language, no less favourably than the English language	Although these schools are English medium primary schools, they are part of the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme which the Council and Welsh Government jointly fund to ensure that the Council's vision that there are good schools, so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have equitable access to good English and Welsh medium education is fulfilled.	 RCTCBC's current Strategic Outline Programme contains a wide range of schools (Welsh and English medium) in various parts of the county borough. For example, a proposal to improve and increase Welsh medium primary education in the Pontypridd area is being progressed separately, hence all primary pupils from Glyn-coch will have the opportunity to be taught in 21st Century learning environments, regardless of whether they choose Welsh or English medium education. 	 Promotion of Welsh medium classes for community groups etc. in the fully accessible facilities. Promotion of the options available to learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education.
Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal/proje	<u>ct</u>		

ingularining the proposal/project

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
Ensure that all prospective parents are given the 'Starting Schools' and the 'Being Bilingual' booklets to promote the positive experiences that can be achieved through seeking an education through the medium of Welsh.	Ongoing. Booklets have started to be distributed to health visitors to be provided to parents in the Bookstart packs. Booklets will also be distributed to RCT Registration Services and Merthyr Registration Services in 2022 to be provided to all new parents. This will be a continued collaborative effort between all stakeholders.	RCT / Schools / Partners
Use the grant funding received for the development of a Welsh immersion proposal to formulate a medium/long term strategy aimed at establishing a more permanent provision in RCT.	Submit a proposal for Cabinet's consideration in the summer term 2022 following the completion of the pilot.	21st Century Schools Organisation and Business Manager
Monitor demand to assess the need for an immersion support in the Southern Taf area of RCT.	This will form an action of the WESP 2022-32 and will be an ongoing action for officers.	RCT
Link with headteachers to promote the availability of Welsh language classes to their parents/carers/wider community	Ongoing. This will be a continued collaborative effort between the Council and the schools.	RCT / Schools

Stage 4 - Review

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your impact assessment to CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. See our guidance document for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
Welsh Language Services encourage you to consider the possible negative impacts new English medium schools may have on the uptake of Welsh medium education and what ways the Council will mitigate this possible impact. This is particularly the case where there are fairly significant numbers of surplus places in Welsh medium schools, and low transition rates to Welsh medium education from Cylch Meithrin. Mitigation will likely be through promotion of the benefits of WM education and continued investment. Additional consideration should also be given to the effects on the whole community and not just the educational community. For example - Will the proposal effect community attitudes towards the Welsh language? Will groups other than Welsh learners be encouraged to use the site and its facilities? Consideration such as these should help inform these proposals.		 The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme delivers significant investment for both Welsh and English medium schools throughout the County Borough - Council investment in Welsh medium 21st Century facilities includes a proposal to provide brand new 21st Century educational facilities at Ysgol Llanhari for secondary aged learners, encouraging parents/carers in this area to choose WM education for their children thus also hopefully increasing uptake of WM education at neighbouring WM primary schools due to the availability of brand new 21st Century WM secondary school facilities nearby; also new Welsh medium primary school provision at Rhydyfelin providing additional WM primary school places. Marketing and promotional strategies to be implemented (working collaboratively with partners such as Mudiad Meithrin) to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium education are promoted to increase uptake into Welsh medium pre-school

- facilities and then in turn aid transition rates into Welsh medium primary education.

 Promotion of the Council's generous home to school transport provision which gives a wider offer than the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008).

 Encouragement, and support to headteachers to promote
 - Encouragement and support to headteachers to promote community use of their facilities for the purpose of Welsh medium education / use by Welsh medium groups and promotion of opportunities via marketing tools currently being developed by the Council's WESP Marketing Group.
 - The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) sets out the priorities for improvement over the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032, and the actions we will take to ensure that we achieve a 10% growth in the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. To achieve this, we need to ensure that parents and carers are well informed about the benefits of Welsh medium education and bilingualism and to increase the number of learners who access their education through the medium of Welsh. As part of this, Welsh medium school headteachers and governing bodies are encouraged to promote their schools. The WESP Marketing Group can assist with this.
 - A significant growth in the number of learners accessing Welsh medium education also needs to be coupled with measurable gains in the attainment of Welsh in English medium schools. Opportunities to communicate in Welsh need to be experienced in all phases of education so that the Welsh language continues to thrive and flourish in our schools, workplaces, and communities. Strengthening the use of Welsh beyond the school gates in social spaces, in the workplace and across our communities will also be an integral part of creating a thriving and growing Welsh language in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
 - The new WESP has been submitted to Welsh Government for approval. Once approved, this document will underpin decision

		making within the Council, and will be a strategic driver for all new policies and strategies developed over the next 10 years.
Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
 Encourage community usage of the new English medium schools by Welsh medium usage for the community. Could mention working with external partners although are typically exclusive for Welsh medium schools but should be accessible to English medium schools for out of hours activities etc., especially Yr Urdd. The need to recognise that a new build English medium attracts footfall and new pupils - how to overcome the barrier of English medium new builds detracting people from accessing the new Welsh medium schools. There is surplus student spaces for Welsh medium schools in primary sector, thus how does a English medium new build help that situation. Recognising issues around that will show partners that we are aware of that situation. Surplus places in Welsh medium – focusing on how having an improved secondary school could help to fill some spaces in Llantrisant and other Welsh Medium primaries. Being bilingual booklet has been updated 2022 and is ready for distribution. The need for broader impact on how Welsh Language of the community will be impacted by the new school; Transition from English to Welsh medium education – are there any examples or guidance where this has happened in other Local Authorities;* English Medium Primary Section – Recognise there might be a negative impact on Welsh medium education take up and quite a bit of surplus capacity in 	01/07/22	*A number of Local Authorities have language immersion services to support those learners that for a variety of reasons are late comers to the Welsh language. Some Authorities have established immersion provision with some still in their infancy. Officers have recently been

 some places but with the WESP, things we can do to promote the Welsh schools and a mention of the use of Home to School Transport availability; When opening the English medium for Welsh medium community use, look at buildings themselves. Make them look and feel neutral / promote Welsh language more. Even in new English medium school, bilingual signage for rooms /canteen. Welsh larger than English in line with Cymraeg 2050. This way promoting Welsh language visually and its usage. 		working collaboratively with their counterparts in other gathering information on the different immersion support spackages that are available, and discussing lessons lidentifying best practice. Formally establishing this support within RCT is a pricidentified within the new WESP, and a commitment will establish and maintain Welsh language immersion properties and well education within the first five years of the WESP.					ervices and earned and ority that is be made to rovision to
Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description consultation	n of	any	amendments	made	following

Stage 5 - Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

The project will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by officers within the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate and the Corporate Estates Department on a regular basis throughout the design, build and operational period.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows -

The aim of proposed project is to relocate Maesybryn and Tonysguboriau primary schools to brand new buildings on their current sites in order to replace their current buildings are in very poor condition overall. Additionally, the proposed project also aims to amalgamate Cefn and Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools and to build a brand new English medium community primary school on the current site of Craig yr Hesg Primary School and land adjacent to it (the former site of the Tŷ Gwyn Pupil Referral Unit). Although these are English medium primary schools, Welsh is taught as part of the curriculum and all pupils will benefit from having the opportunity to be taught in brand new facilities fit for the 21st Century.

The aim of the Council is to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside school. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and in wider contexts in schools to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners in the transition between key stages offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.

If implemented, the proposal will also allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the schools' facilities which can be used to hold classes through the medium of Welsh. The schools will be designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area is being designed within each school so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the school, which could involve Welsh language groups using the 21st Century facilities for meetings / classes etc. The headteachers will be encouraged and fully supported to use these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh.

In summary, the proposal will therefore assist with delivering the targets outlined in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCTCBCs) current (2017 to 2022) and new (2022 to 2032) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and will support the aim of Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.

Stage 7 – Sign Off							
Name of Officer completing the WLIA Nicola Goodman		Service Director Name:	Andrea Richards, Service Director for 21 st Century Schools and Transformation				
Position Lead for Strategic Plannin MIM			Is implemented with no amendments				
		I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)	Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined				
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language				
Signature	N. Goodman	Service Director Signature	A. Richards				
Date	01/07/2022	Date	01/07/2022				