



## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023

### CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSALS TO REALIGN ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS MAINSTREAM LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND WELSH LANGUAGE (COUNCILLOR R LEWIS)

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

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the outcome of the publication of the Statutory Notices in respect of the proposal to realign Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider the information contained within the report and the Objection Report in Appendix 1, which includes details of objections received during the Statutory Notice period, and the comments given in response to the objections.
- 2.2 Agree to implement the proposals as published in the Statutory Notices which includes:
- 2.2.1 **Proposal 1:** Relocation of the Observation and Assessment LSC at Penrhiwceiber Primary School to Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from September 2024.
- 2.2.2 **Proposal 2:** Transfer the LSC for pupils in years 3-6 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision in the Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from September 2024.
- 2.2.3 **Proposal 3:** Establish one Early years Assessment and Intervention LSC for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs at Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from April 2024.

2.2.4 **Proposal 4:** Establish two Welsh medium Primary Phase LSCs at the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin (YGG Awel Taf) for pupils with significant ALN taking effect from September 2024.

2.2.5 **Proposal 5:** Establish one LSC for pupils in years 7-11 with ASD at the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site (Ysgol Afon Wen) taking effect from September 2024.

2.3 Subject to 2.1 and 2.2 above agree to the publication of the relevant Decision Notices in respect of any proposals taken forward as required by the School Organisation Code.

### **3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in the Welsh Government legislative guidance (The School Organisation Code 2018) so that an improved continuum of ALN provision can be achieved in RCT.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of Cabinet held on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023, approval was given to begin a process to formally consult on a proposal to realign the Additional Learning Needs mainstream Learning Support Class provision within RCT.

4.2 Following the conclusion of the consultation period, and at a subsequent meeting of the Cabinet held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023, a decision was taken to progress to the next phase of the statutory process and to publish the required Statutory Notices.

4.3 The Statutory Notices were published on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023 which triggered the commencement of the Objection Period. This ran until the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023. 7 objections were received during this period, details of which can be found in the Objection Report at Appendix 1. A summary of key themes is provided in Section 8.

### **5. STATUTORY NOTICES**

5.1 Statutory Notices were issued on the 10<sup>th</sup> October until 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 relating to the following proposals:

- **Proposal 1:** Relocation of the Observation and Assessment LSC at Penrhiwceiber Primary School to Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from September 2024.
- **Proposal 2:** Transfer of the LSC for pupils in years 3-6 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision in the Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from September 2024.
- **Proposal 3:** Establishment of one Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSC for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs at Abercynon Community Primary School. The proposal will take effect from April 2024.

- **Proposal 4:** Establishment of two Welsh medium primary phase LSCs at the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin (YGG Awel Taf) for pupils with significant ALN. The proposal will take effect from September 2024.
- **Proposal 5:** Establishment of one LSC for pupils in years 7-11 with ASD at the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site (Ysgol Afon Wen) taking effect from September 2024.

5.2 In respect of the proposals outlined above there are a small number of pupils that will be directly affected. In September 2024, the proposed implementation date for the relocation of ASD provision, Abercynon LSC will have 5 x year 5 learners. In the event of parental opposition to a relocation of their children's provision to the proposed Perthcelyn LSC, supported mainstream placements in the existing settings can be explored in partnership with the school and Access and Inclusion Service staff. In Penrhiwceibr LSC there are currently 9 pupils (1 x year 1, 4 x reception, 4 x nursery). However, placements at Penrhiwceibr Observation and Assessment Class are intended to be short-term and it is highly likely that the majority of the 9 pupils referenced above will have moved on to their long-term educational placement before the proposed implementation date of September 2024.

5.3 Following completion of the Statutory Notice period an Objection Report has been produced which includes officer observations and comments in respect of the objections received. This report is attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

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

6.1 The relevant Equality Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment were published on the Council's website together with the consultation document that outlined the proposal in detail. The assessments have been updated following the consultation. Copies of the updated assessments are attached as Appendix 2 and 3 to this report.

## **7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been prepared in respect of this proposal and 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 (2nd Edition) (011/2018) (the "Code"). A copy of the updated assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

## **8. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT**

8.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined within the School Organisation Code 2018. The consultation took place between the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and full details of this process were published in a Consultation Report, which was presented at the meeting of Cabinet held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and subsequently published on the Council website.

8.2 During the Statutory Notice period, a total of 7 objections were received in relation to **Proposal 2** (Transfer the LSC for pupils in years 3-6 with ASD at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision in the Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from September 2024) by the closing date of

the 6th of November 2023.

There were no objections to **Proposals 1, 3, 4 or 5**.

8.3 The key themes of the objections received, and the Local Authority's responses are detailed in the following table:

Objection Key Theme	LA Response
<b>Community resources/ Curriculum offer</b>	Significant emphasis has been highlighted in relation to the perceived advantages of one community over another. Within the new Curriculum for Wales all schools are required to develop their individual curriculum by building on the opportunities available in each school's locality. Due to this requirement the curriculum offered will be unique to each setting but there is an expected consistency in the range of learning opportunities and the specialist provision available in LSCs and beyond.
<b>Disruption of pupils/ Transition support</b>	<p>All the required impact assessments have been undertaken. LSC re-alignment will inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty for parents and pupils for a period of time, although experience from previous LSC realignments has been positive. Access &amp; Inclusion will provide support to eradicate or minimise any potential negative impact. This will involve collaboration between current LSC staff, Access and Inclusion staff, pupils and their families to ensure a person-centred approach is taken to meeting the educational and wellbeing needs of pupils.</p> <p>The current LSC staff will be moving with the pupils and they will work in collaboration with Access &amp; Inclusion to ensure that a robust transition process is put in place. This will ensure there is continuity in staffing and support for pupils to support both their educational provision and wellbeing. The LSC will continue to be monitored collaboratively by school and the LA through its quality assurance protocol.</p>
<b>Parental refusal of relocation</b>	In the event of parental opposition to a relocation of their children's provision to the proposed Perthcelyn LSC, supported mainstream placements in the existing settings can be explored in partnership with the school and Access and Inclusion Service staff.
<b>Consultation process and reporting of comments/submissions</b>	Concerns have been previously raised and addressed regarding the recording of petition signatories, lack of communication and engagement by Access and Inclusion Officers. Stakeholders are assured that the consultation has been undertaken in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018.

Objection Key Theme	LA Response
Transport	As previously reported, transport will be provided in line with the Learner Travel Policy.

## 9. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Secondary schools hosting LSCs for pupils with ASD are funded via the Council for one specialist teacher and two learning support assistants at an approximate cost of £131,500k per class. Primary schools hosting Early Years LSC's are funded for one teacher and one learning support assistant at an approximate cost of £97,600k. Primary phase Welsh provisions will be funded for one teacher and one learning support assistant at an approximate cost of £97,600k each. To ensure the LA is able to meet the needs of its ALN pupils, funding of approximately £424k is requested/required.
- 9.2 The creation and relocation of the LSCs 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 however given that there will be a net increase in the number of LSC provisions additional funding is likely to be required.
- 9.3 £330k has already been set aside following the agreement by Cabinet to progress with the original proposal to establish three additional LSCs for pupils with significant SEBD and therefore no additional funding would be required if consideration was given to resuming this proposal. Further development work on this will be undertaken in due course.

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

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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.

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

- 11.1 The proposals will support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan for 2020-2024 specifically:

- People:
  - Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do:
  - Improving the social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people by increasing the range of specialist services available.
- Places:
  - creating the capacity for meeting the needs of residents within their communities.
- Prosperity:
  - Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education:
  - Improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

11.2 There are links to RCTCBC's Education and Inclusion Services Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2025 and its mission: '*To deliver equity and excellence in Education and enhanced well-being for all*'. The proposal will also support delivery against the five strategic priorities, most notably:

- Strategic Priority 2: Supporting educational settings to deliver a transformational curriculum, high quality teaching and learning and improved outcomes for all.
- Strategic Priority 3: Ensuring equity and support for vulnerable learners and their families.
- Strategic Priority 5: Delivering 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Environments and innovative services for our learners and communities.

11.3 The proposals 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. Due regard has been made to all seven wellbeing goals and the five ways of working, as contained within the [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) which requires the Council to think about the long-term impact of decisions on communities to prevent consistent issues such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

11.4 The proposal could contribute towards achieving some of the seven wellbeing goals by:

- **A Healthier Wales** – Accommodation at the proposed host schools will continue to support opportunities for enhanced outdoor spaces. As well as supporting the full range of curriculum activities these facilities are also available for community use.
- **A More Equal Wales** – Providing enhanced opportunities for pupils to access specialist provision.
- **A Wales of More Cohesive Communities** – All host schools are fully accessible and integrated community school with a dedicated area designed within so that the local community can safely use the facilities, both during and after the school day.
- **A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language** – establishing new primary phase Welsh medium LSC provision will support of the Council's WESP.

- **A Globally Responsive Wales** – pupils will have access to extra-curricular activities which encourage healthy lifestyles for the school and wider community.

11.5 The proposal could contribute towards achieving some of the five ways of working by:

- **Long Term** – To ensure that the Council undertakes its statutory duties in relation to the ALNET Act (2018) that requires local authorities to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient, including a statutory requirement to take all reasonable steps to create a bilingual system of support for pupils with ALN.
- **Prevention** – The Council believes that the proposal represents the best opportunity to safeguard and sustain educational standards for the future and provides a platform for further improvement.
- **Integrations** – Host schools are fully accessible and integrated community schools.
- **Collaboration** – The Council will continue to work effectively with internal and external partners to ensure the changes brought about by these proposals will meet the short and long term needs of pupils, parents/carers, staff and the wider community.
- **Involvement** –The proposal is made in accordance with the [School Organisation Code \(2<sup>nd</sup> Edition\) \(011/2018\)](#) and seeks the views of a prescribed list of stakeholders including pupils, parents/carers, staff and the wider community. As such face to face meetings will be arranged with the staff, school councils and governing bodies.

11.6 As stated in 7.1, an Equality Impact Assessment which further details the contribution of the proposal to the [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) has been prepared.

11.7 The information in the report contributes to the priorities within RCTCBC's Corporate Plan, 'Making a Difference'.

11.8 The proposals will also assist the directorate in achieving Outcome 6 of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), which is to increase the provision of Welsh medium education for learners with ALN.

## **12. STRATEGIC OR RELEVANT TO ELECTORAL WARDS**

12.1 Given the considerable changes in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of learners with the implementation of the ALNET Act (2018) and the ALN Code (2021) the above proposals to secure additional capacity and resources will ensure that the Council successfully delivers on its statutory obligations, and as such is a strategic proposal relevant to all wards.

## **13. CONCLUSION**

13.1 The proposals to realign LSC provision will ensure that RCT has undertaken its statutory duty under the ALNET Act (2018) to review arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within the county borough and has identified necessary steps to

ensure the sufficiency of its provision for pupils with significant ALN who require specialist placement.

- 13.2 The proposals support the delivery of the RCT WESP and one of the core aims of the ALNET Act by working towards the development of a fully bilingual ALN system within the county borough.
- 13.3 The proposals will ensure greater compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and access to significantly improved premises which have benefited from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation Programme and investment.
- 13.4 Members are now asked to consider the contents of the Objection Report, at Appendix 1 to the report, and agree to its immediate publication and consider whether to implement the proposed changes to LSC provision within RCT.
- 13.5 If the proposals are agreed as outlined in the report, the Council must publish Decision Notices that formally outlines the reasons for the implementation of these proposals.

**Other Information:**

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee:**

Education and Inclusion Scrutiny Committee

**Contact Officer: Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services**



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

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

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND WELSH LANGUAGE (COUNCILLOR R LEWIS)**

**Item: CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSALS TO REALIGN ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS MAINSTREAM LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

**Background Papers**

**Officer to contact:** Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## OBJECTION REPORT

## PROPOSALS TO REALIGN ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS MAINSTREAM LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**1. Purpose of the Objection Report**

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 011/2018. Its purpose is to:

- Inform the outcome of the publication of the statutory notices published of the proposals, which were published on the 10th of October 2023 for a period of a minimum of 28 days; and
- Include a summary of the key themes to the statutory objections received and the local authority's response to them.

**2. The Statutory Notices**

The Statutory Notices to progress each individual proposal, which were published on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023, are reproduced below:

**Proposal 1:** Relocation of the Observation and Assessment Learning Support Class (LSC) at Penrhiwceiber Primary School to Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from September 2024.

**Statutory Notice  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Rhondda Cynon Taf, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to relocate the Observation and Assessment Learning Support Class at Penrhiwceiber Primary School, Church Street, Penrhiwceiber, Mountain Ash, CF45 3YD to Abercynon Community Primary School. The school is currently maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf. Rhondda Cynon Taf undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers' responses and the views of Estyn is available on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

The current number of pupils at the school is 123, the pupil capacity of the school is 141 and the proposed capacity once the proposal is implemented will be 141.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Learner Transport Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say

by 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Signed



Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf

Date – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### **Explanatory Note**

1. Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's main priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our support classes are well matched to the needs of learners is important in helping them to make progress.
2. Whilst the quality of Learning Support Classes (LSC) in Rhondda Cynon Taf is good, there is a need to modernise and develop the type of LSCs to increase opportunities for mainstream inclusion and to further improve results for vulnerable groups of learners.
3. The current location of the LSC is felt to be no longer suitable to meet the needs of the new curriculum within a fully accessible environment.

### **Statutory Notice**

#### **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Rhondda Cynon Taf, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to establish an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision at Abercynon Community Primary School, 26 Ynysmeurig Rd, Abercynon, Mountain Ash CF45 4SY by providing 8 places for Foundation Phase (aged 3 – 7) pupils in an Observation and Assessment Class. The school is currently maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Rhondda Cynon Taf undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers' responses and the views of Estyn is available on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

The current number of pupils at the school is 329, the pupil capacity of the school is 325 and the proposed capacity once the proposal is implemented will be 325.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Learner Transport Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Signed

*Gwynor Davies*

Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf  
Date – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### **Explanatory Note**

1. Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's main priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our support classes are well matched to the needs of learners is important in helping them to make progress.
2. Whilst the quality of Learning Support Classes (LSC) in Rhondda Cynon Taf is good, there is a need to modernise and develop the type of LSCs to increase opportunities for mainstream inclusion and to further improve results for vulnerable groups of learners.
3. The proposed change will provide enhanced provision for Foundation Phase pupils with significant presenting needs.

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**Proposal 2:** Transfer the LSC for pupils in years 3-6 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision in the Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from September 2024.

### **Statutory Notice** **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Rhondda Cynon Taf, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to relocate the Learning Support Class (LSC) for pupils Academic years 3-6 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Abercynon

Community Primary School, 26 Ynysmeurig Rd, Abercynon, Mountain Ash CF45 4SY to Perthcelyn Community Primary School. The schools are currently maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Rhondda Cynon Taf undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers' responses and the views of Estyn is available on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

The current number of pupils at the school is 329, the pupil capacity of the school is 325 and the proposed capacity once the proposal is implemented will be 325.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Learner Transport Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Signed



Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf

Date – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### **Explanatory Note**

1. Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's main priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our support classes are well matched to the needs of learners is important in helping them to make progress.
2. Whilst the quality of LSCs in Rhondda Cynon Taf is good, there is a need to modernise and develop the type of LSCs to increase opportunities for mainstream inclusion and to further improve results for vulnerable groups of learners.
3. Abercynon Community Primary School will have 2 LSCs which will provide enhanced provision to both Foundation Phase and pre-statutory school aged pupils with significant presenting needs.

### **Statutory Notice**

**Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Rhondda Cynon Taf, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to establish an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision at Perthcelyn Primary School, Glamorgan Street, Perthcelyn, Mountain Ash, CF45 3RJ by providing 10 places for Primary Phase (Academic years 3-6) pupils with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The school is currently maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Rhondda Cynon Taf undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers' responses and the views of Estyn is available on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

The current number of pupils at the school is 113, the pupil capacity of the school is 160 and the proposed capacity once the proposal is implemented will be 160.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Learner Transport Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Signed



Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf  
Date – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### **Explanatory Note**

1. Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's main priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our support classes are well matched to the needs of learners is important in helping them to make progress.
2. Whilst the quality of Learning Support Classes (LSC) in Rhondda Cynon Taf is good, there is a need to modernise and develop the type of LSC's to increase opportunities for mainstream inclusion and to further improve results for vulnerable groups of learners.

3. This will provide a cross phase provision on an accessible single school site for pupils with ASD.
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**Proposal 3:** Establish one Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSC for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs at Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from April 2024.

**Statutory Notice**  
**Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Rhondda Cynon Taf, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to establish an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision at Abercynon Community Primary School, 26 Ynysmeurig Rd, Abercynon, Mountain Ash CF45 4SY by providing 8 places for Early Years pupils under statutory school age in an Assessment and Intervention Class. The school is currently maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Rhondda Cynon Taf undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers' responses and the views of Estyn is available on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

The current number of pupils at the school is 329, the pupil capacity of the school is 325 and the proposed capacity once the proposal is implemented will be 325.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Learner Transport Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Signed



Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf  
Date – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Explanatory Note**

1. Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's main priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our support classes are well matched to the needs of learners is important in helping them to make progress.
  2. Whilst the quality of Learning Support Classes (LSC) in Rhondda Cynon Taf is good, there is a need to modernise and develop the type of LSCs classes to increase opportunities for mainstream inclusion and to further improve results for vulnerable groups of learners.
  3. The proposed changes will provide enhanced provision within the Early Years for pre-statutory school aged pupils with significant presenting needs.
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**Proposal 4:** Establish two Welsh medium Primary Phase LSCs at the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin (YGG Awel Taf) for pupils with significant ALN taking effect from September 2024.

### **Statutory Notice Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Rhondda Cynon Taf, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to establish an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision at the new Welsh medium Primary School (YGG Awel Taf) being built in Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd by providing 18 places for Primary Phase pupils with significant ALN. The school will be built by September 2024 and will be maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Rhondda Cynon Taf undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers' responses and the views of Estyn is available on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

At present it is not possible to project pupil numbers and forecast information for the new Welsh medium school. The capacity of the school is 540. Capacity has been built into the new building design to accommodate the proposed Learning Support Classes (LSC).

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Learner Transport Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.



Signed

*Gwynor Davies*

Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf

Date – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### **Explanatory Note**

1. Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's main priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our support classes are well matched to the needs of learners is important in helping them to make progress.
2. Whilst the quality of LSCs in Rhondda Cynon Taf is good, there is a need to modernise and develop the type of LSCs to increase opportunities for mainstream inclusion and to further improve results for vulnerable groups of learners.
3. There is a need to expand specialist Welsh medium provision in the Local Authority.
4. This will provide a cross phase provision on an accessible single school site.

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**Proposal 5:** Establish one LSC for pupils in years 7-11 with ASD at the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site (Ysgol Afon Wen) taking effect from September 2024.

### **Statutory Notice**

#### **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

Notice is given in accordance with Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Rhondda Cynon Taf, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to establish an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision at the new 3-16 all through school Ysgol Afon Wen School Lane, Hawthorn, Pontypridd, CF37 5AL by providing 14 places for Key Stage 3/4 pupils with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The school is currently maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Rhondda Cynon Taf undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers' responses and the views of Estyn is available on [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

At present it is not possible to project pupil numbers and forecast information for the new through school. The capacity of the school is 1260. Capacity has been built into the new building design to accommodate the proposed Learning Support Class (LSC).

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Learner Transport

Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by 6<sup>th</sup> November any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Signed



Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf

Date – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### **Explanatory Note**

1. Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's main priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our support classes are well matched to the needs of learners is important in helping them to make progress.
2. Whilst the quality of LSCs in Rhondda Cynon Taf is good, there is a need to modernise and develop the type of LSCs to increase opportunities for mainstream inclusion and to further improve results for vulnerable groups of learners.
3. There is a need to expand Key Stage 3/4 ASD provision in the Local Authority.

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### **3. Details of Objections Received**

During the Statutory Notice period, **a total of 7 objections** were received in relation to **Proposal 2** (Transfer the LSC for pupils in years 3-6 with ASD at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision in the Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from September 2024) by the closing date of the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2023.

There were **no objections to Proposals 1, 3, 4 or 5.**

### **4. Objection Key Themes and Local Authority Response**

The key themes of the objections received, and the Local Authority's responses are detailed in the following table:

<b>Objection Key Theme</b>	<b>LA Response</b>
<b>Community resources/ Curriculum offer</b>	<p>Significant emphasis has been highlighted in relation to the perceived advantages of one community over another. Within the new Curriculum for Wales all schools are required to develop their individual curriculum by building on the opportunities available in each school's locality. Due to this requirement the curriculum offered will be unique to each setting but there is an expected consistency in the range of learning opportunities and the specialist provision available in LSCs and beyond.</p>
<b>Disruption of pupils/ Transition support</b>	<p>All the required impact assessments have been undertaken. LSC re-alignment will inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty for parents and pupils for a period of time, although experience from previous LSC realignments has been positive. Access &amp; Inclusion will provide support to eradicate or minimise any potential negative impact. This will involve collaboration between current LSC staff, Access and Inclusion staff, pupils and their families to ensure a person-centred approach is taken to meeting the educational and wellbeing needs of pupils.</p> <p>The current LSC staff will be moving with the pupils and they will work in collaboration with Access &amp; Inclusion to ensure that a robust transition process is put in place. This will ensure there is continuity in staffing and support for pupils to support both their educational provision and wellbeing. The LSC will continue to be monitored collaboratively by school and the LA through its quality assurance protocol.</p>
<b>Parental refusal of relocation</b>	<p>In the event of parental opposition to a relocation of their children's provision to the proposed Perthcelyn LSC, supported mainstream placements in the existing settings can be explored in partnership with the school and Access and Inclusion Service staff.</p>
<b>Consultation process and reporting of comments/submissions</b>	<p>Concerns have been previously raised and addressed regarding the recording of petition signatories, lack of communication and engagement by Access and Inclusion Officers. Stakeholders are assured that the consultation has been undertaken in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018.</p>
<b>Transport</b>	<p>As previously reported, transport will be provided in line with the Learner Travel Policy.</p>

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance, please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The '[A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties](#)' guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

## SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

**Lead Officer:** Lisa Carter

**Director:** Gaynor Davies

**Service Area:** Education and Inclusion Services, Access & Inclusion

**Date:** 15/03/2023

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy/Plan	Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service	Policy/Procedure	Practice	Information/Position Statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

**CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSALS TO REALIGN ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS MAINSTREAM LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

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 ALN provision within RCT.

The proposals will address surplus capacity issues and a lack of capacity in key provisions allowing resources to be directed to

enhance capacity for mainstream inclusion, early intervention and preventative approaches. In addition, the proposals will address the current imbalance between the number of primary and secondary provisions, transition and accessibility issues. The proposals also seeks to address the need to create additional 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.

The proposals seek to achieve the following aims:

- reducing unnecessary transition across schools by establishing cross phase specialist provisions within individual schools where possible
- developing a robust continuum of provision that effectively addresses a wide range of need across all year groups and builds upon effective early intervention and prevention approaches.
- establishing LSC provisions in fully accessible settings that provide a learning environment fit for the 21st Century.
- establish Welsh-medium provision to facilitate the learning of pupils with significant ALN in the Primary Phase.

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

In developing the proposal, consideration has been given to the following:

- Section 315 of the **Education Act 1996** requires Councils to ensure that ALN provision is kept under review.
- The **Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018** (The ALNET Act 2018) requires Councils to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient. The ALNET Act 2018 is supported by the statutory **Additional Learning Needs Code 2021**.
- Powers for Councils to develop school organisation proposals are governed by the **School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013** which is supported by a statutory **School Organisation Code (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) (011/2018)**.

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community

## **SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?**

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

### **Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011**

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b>Age</b> (<i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i>)</p> <p>Reception – Yr2 (formerly Foundation Phase)  Yr 3-6 (formerly Key Stage 2)  Yr 7-11 (formerly Key Stage 3 &amp; 4)</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate placements which are well matched to pupils' primary needs</li> <li>• Improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to meeting identified pupil needs more effectively.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in local community schools</li> <li>• Improved continuum of learning provision which improves life chances for our most vulnerable learners</li> <li>• Bilingual opportunity of LSC through provision for pupils with ALN</li> <li>• Proposed additional classes will enhance LSC capacity across all age ranges.</li> </ul>	<p>Since the inception of the Early Years Forum in September as at 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023, 294 pupils have been discussed by the Forum. Of these pupils, 40 have been allocated placements within specialist settings and an additional 14 pupils have changed placement from mainstream to specialist provision following a period of assessment.</p> <p>During the academic year 2022/23, the Welsh Complex Needs Team supported 12 pupils with an age range of year 2 to year 11.</p> <p>It has been identified through data analysis that as of 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023, the potential number of pupils transitioning in 2023/24 (year 6 to year 7) without a year 7 placement is 14.</p>



Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b>Disability</b> <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Negative</p>	<p>The review of LSC provision will allow the LA to better meet the needs of its ALN pupils. The proposed mainstream schools hosting the LSC will be fully compliant with all disability legislation. The increase of classes will enable more students to access fully accessible LSC provision while reducing unnecessary transition</p> <p>LSC re-alignment will inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty for parents and pupils for a period of time, although experience shows that this can be kept to a minimum and the children's education and wellbeing does not suffer. Access &amp; Inclusion will provide support to eradicate or minimise any potential negative impact.</p> <p>All the required impact assessments have been undertaken, LSC re-alignment will inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty for parents and pupils for a period of time, although experience from previous LSC realignments has been positive. Access &amp; Inclusion will provide</p>	<p>Delivery of new LSC provision enhances the educational opportunities for pupils with significant additional learning needs and will provide the required additional LSC provision.</p> <p>The positive impact that the proposal will have far outweighs the short-term negative impact.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>support to eradicate or minimise any potential negative impact. This will involve collaboration between current LSC staff, Access and Inclusion staff, pupils and their families to ensure a person-centred approach is taken to meeting the educational and wellbeing needs of pupils.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised that the proposals will have a negative impact on pupils and may require some pupils to undertake additional transitions to another setting. However, it is important to highlight that all learners accessing Observation and Assessment placements do so on a short term basis whilst their needs are being assessed and identified to inform a longer term placement. Concerns were also raised regarding the transition of older pupils currently in the class from Abercynon as there would be an extra transition and the potential negative impact of this. The staff mentioned that pupils will experience anxiety and stress as a consequence of the proposed move.</p> <p>Robust transition plans will be put in place for any pupils directly affected</p>	

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		by the proposals, which will be planned collaboratively with parents and staff and involve additional support from specialist members of staff from Access and Inclusion.	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they</i>	Neutral	This proposal is not expected to have a direct impact on characteristics relating to Gender Reassignment. The implementation of this proposal will be monitored routinely. Should an impact arise relating to Gender Reassignment, this impact assessment will be updated to reflect this.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<i>(were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i>			
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Neutral	This proposal is not expected to have a direct impact on characteristics relating to Marriage or Civil Partnership. The implementation of this proposal will be monitored routinely. Should an impact arise relating to Marriage or Civil Partnership, this impact assessment will be updated to reflect this.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Neutral	This proposal is not expected to have a direct impact on characteristics relating to Pregnancy or Maternity. The implementation of this proposal will be monitored routinely. Should an impact arise relating to Pregnancy or Maternity, this impact assessment will be updated to reflect this.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b>Race</b>  <i>(ethnic and racial groups, i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The proposal will have a positive impact on children and young people between the ages of 3 to 19 with ALN. As a result of the proposal, the Council is expected to deliver increased ALN provision.</p>	<p>When looking at ethnicity data, 2022 PLASC data shows 93.9% of statutory school aged pupils were white British, 5.9% were classified as any other ethnic background whilst 0.2% were unknown.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Neutral	This proposal is not expected to have a direct impact on characteristics relating to Religion or Belief. The implementation of this proposal will be monitored routinely. Should an impact arise relating to Religion or Belief, this impact assessment will be updated to reflect this.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Neutral	This proposal is not expected to have a direct impact on characteristics relating to Sex. The implementation of this proposal will be monitored routinely. Should an impact arise relating to Religion or Belief, this impact assessment will be updated to reflect this.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Neutral	This proposal is not expected to have a direct impact on characteristics relating to sexual orientation. The implementation of this proposal will be monitored routinely. Should an impact arise relating	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.  Where a potential impact

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		to sexual orientation, this impact assessment will be updated to reflect this.	arises Access & Inclusion Service will ensure the host schools and LSCs follow Council guidance on support pupils with LGBTQ+ community.

In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<b>Armed Forces Community</b> <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Positive	The increase in LSC provision will provide greater opportunity for pupils with significant ALN to access specialist provision.	Increased numbers of LSC places will result in the ability to accommodate more children with significant ALN.
<b>Carers</b> <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Positive	Increased potential to access appropriate specialist provision.  Increase opportunity for parents/carers to choose appropriate Welsh medium specialist provision.	The establishment of more LSC provision will result in the ability to support more children with significant ALN.

If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts, then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant, please provide an adequate explanation below:

No negative impacts have been identified for protected groups. All impacts on protected groups will be either neutral or positive.

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?                      Yes                       No

**Name:** Lisa Carter

**Position:** Inclusion Co-ordinator

**Date:** 15/03/2023

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.



PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals. Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a 'strategic nature' is available on page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio- economic Duty](#) Welsh Government Guidance.

### **SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)**

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Students
- Single adult households

- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales
- People with low literacy and numeracy
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People misusing substances
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People involved in the criminal justice system

Socio-economic disadvantage	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b>Low Income/Income Poverty</b>  <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The advantages of implementing the proposed change includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an enhanced focus on improved mainstream LSC provision which provides improved life chances for our most vulnerable learners</li> <li>• appropriate continuum of provision which is well matched to pupils' primary needs</li> <li>• improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to effectively meeting pupil needs</li> <li>• greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in a local community school</li> </ul> <p>A disadvantage could potentially include additional travel for some pupils. However, transport 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 a LSC pupils may be required to travel out of catchment although Access &amp; Inclusion will endeavour to place pupils in the nearest appropriate LSC to their home address. ITU also have a Gatekeeping process to consider requests for transport that fall outside of the policy where it is felt that it would be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous establishment of new LSC provision throughout the county borough</li> <li>• Increase in the capacity of the LA to support pupils with additional learning needs</li> <li>• Positive impact of establishing the LSCs on the school and wider communities.</li> </ul>

		reasonable for parents to provide home school transport.	
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Socio-economic disadvantage	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b>Low and / or No Wealth</b>  <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The advantages of implementing the proposed change includes: ensuring that LSC provision is situated within an education setting that is accessible and appropriate for 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.</p> <p>the new LSC provisions will be hosted by schools that have 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.</p> <p>A disadvantage could potentially include additional travel for some pupils. However, transport 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 a LSC pupils may be required to travel out of catchment although Access &amp; Inclusion will endeavour to place pupils in the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous establishment of new LSC provision throughout the county borough</li> <li>• Increase in capacity of the LA to support pupils with additional learning needs</li> <li>• Positive impact of establishing the LSCs on the school and wider communities.</li> </ul>

<b>Socio-economic disadvantage</b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		nearest appropriate LSC to their home address.	

Socio-economic disadvantage	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b><u>Material Deprivation</u></b>  <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The advantages of implementing the proposed change includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an enhanced focus on improved mainstream LSC provision which provides improved life chances for our most vulnerable learners</li> <li>• appropriate continuum of provision which is well matched to pupils' primary needs</li> <li>• compliance with one of the underpinning principles of the ALNET Act that all pupils should access mainstream education where possible</li> <li>• improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement through effectively meeting pupils' needs</li> <li>• ensuring that LSC provisions are situated within education settings that are accessible and appropriate for pupils with wide ranging needs, including physical and medical needs</li> <li>• improving the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available for the benefit of all pupils</li> <li>• compliance with a core aim of ALNET Act to create a bilingual ALN system.</li> <li>• the new LSC provision will be hosted by schools that have the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous establishment of new LSC provision throughout the county borough</li> <li>• Increase in capacity of the LA to support pupils with additional learning needs</li> <li>• Positive impact of establishing the LSCs on the school and wider communities.</li> </ul>

<b>Socio-economic disadvantage</b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		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.	





Socio-economic disadvantage	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>the specialist provision available in LSCs.</p> <p>During the consultation the following question was asked: How will their children continue to have the same opportunities that they enjoy now? Such as weekly library visits, trips to the local shops, time at the organics garden, swimming once a week, horse riding attended through use of private minibus</p> <p>School Council at Perthcelyn Community Primary School noted that pupils in the LSC could access local resources such as the park, community centre (clubs) and the fields. Perthcelyn has lots of countryside surrounded the school and is located close to the local village. A lot of community activities are available including using the paddling pool and the church.</p>	<p>In line with new curriculum for Wales, the curriculum is designed by the school to build on the opportunities available in the school's locality. This will be unique to each setting but there is an expected consistency in the range of learning opportunities and the specialist provision available in LSCs and beyond.</p>

Socio-economic disadvantage	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b>Socio-economic background</b>  <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Improving specialist provision for pupils in RCT has been at the heart of the decision-making process in relation to the proposal.</p> <p>All decisions have been made with a full understanding of the needs of the pupils and with the aim of providing high quality, fully accessible 21<sup>st</sup> Century specialist provision for pupils who require specialist provision in a LSC within a fully inclusive mainstream setting.</p> <p>Pupils with ALN to benefit from having the opportunity to be taught in brand new facilities fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The new host schools will be fully accessible and compliant with the Equality Act 2010 Accommodation will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern, flexible learning environments for all pupils, a hall/dining area, and a multi-purpose learning resource area.</li> <li>• Enhanced outdoor spaces to support the full range of curriculum activities.</li> <li>• Traffic management systems including on-site pupil bus drop off, and on-site staff parking.</li> </ul>	



Socio-economic disadvantage	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>would be able to make more friends in a new school and should move due to larger space to move around for play.</p> <p>Those affected will be supported by Access &amp; Inclusion during the transition phase. Those staff working in a LSC that is proposed to be relocated will move with the LSC pupils to ensure their expertise is maintained and that the pupils have continuity of staff supporting them.</p> <p>The proposed change in provision has some implications for a small number of pupils (currently 3 pupils) who currently attend an affected LSC but were due to transfer to Abercynon LSC in September 2023. To minimise any potential negative impact upon individual pupils, parents have been provided with the option to move to Abercynon LSC or to remain in Perthcelyn with additional support provided within the current Perthcelyn ASD LSC in September 2023. These arrangements will remain in place until a decision regarding the proposal has been reached, parents have been made fully aware of the implications of the option they have chosen.</p>	

## SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) **In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**

Overall no substantial negative impacts have been identified in this equality impact assessment. However, a potential negative impact has been identified in relation to the short term disruption of pupils attending the LSCs proposed to relocate. To mitigate this potential impact, staff working in a LSC that is proposed to be relocated will move with the LSC pupils to ensure their expertise is maintained and that the pupils have continuity of staff supporting them.

- 4.b) **If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.**

The potential negative impact has been mitigated as detailed above.

- 4.c) **Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff.**

- Data analysis is based on data derived from the Access & Inclusion data systems and PLASC where appropriate.
- Qualitative reasoning gathered from the Councils Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team and Access and Inclusion Team and the Council's Corporate Estates Team.

- 4.d) **Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.**

In line with the School Organisation Code detailed cabinet reports, consultation documentation and consultation feedback reports have been written at each stage of the process to support the proposed realignment of LSC provision. All reports clearly identify the need for additional LSC provision and the data rationale behind the proposal. The consultation was undertaken between the 5<sup>th</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 the consultation report will be shortly be shared with cabinet and all relevant stakeholders. It is noted that there has been a good response to this statutory consultation process; 127 completed questionnaires, 12 letters/emails and 3 petitions. A further online petition was submitted by the Perthcelyn Community, however it has not been considered as it was received after the deadline. Meetings have been held with all impacted Schools Councils, Governing Bodies and staff. The feedback received has informed amendments to the proposal for Cabinet to consider further. Details can be found in the Consultation Feedback Report.

4.e) **Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?**

Yes

No

The consultation was undertaken on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 - 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

Face to face meetings were held with the staff, School Councils and Governing Bodies of the special schools across RCT.

A Consultation Response Form has also been available at on the Council's website on the 'Get Involved' page. The Consultation Response Form enabled consultees to indicate if they wished to be notified of the publication of the Consultation Report, once presented to the Council's Cabinet.

Consultees have also been welcomed to put their views, comments, and any questions in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Access & Inclusion Service  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ

Or

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

Children and young people have a right to express their views in all matters affecting them and for their views to be heard and considered in accordance with their age and maturity. As such, the Councils Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services Access & Inclusion Service held meetings with the School Councils of all potentially impacted host schools, children and young people will be encouraged to be active participants throughout this process.

A drop in session was arranged so that members of the public could discuss the proposal with Officers from the Councils Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services.

This Equality Impact Assessment was updated following the completion of the consultation to include any necessary feedback.

## SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

### 5a) **Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:**

The proposal is made in accordance with the School Organisation Code 2018 (011/2018). Section 2.1 of the School Organisation Code 2018 refers to elements of school organisation that require the publication of proposals, including:

- The opening of a maintained school (including special school).
- The closing of a maintained school (including special school).

The consultation started on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and completed at 17:00 on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

Face to face meetings were arranged with the staff, School Councils and Governing Bodies of the host schools across RCT.

A Consultation Response Form was available at on the Council's website on the 'Get Involved' page. The Consultation Response Form enabled consultees to indicate if they wished to be notified of the publication of the Consultation Report, once presented to the Council's Cabinet.

The Council's Access & Inclusion Service will be fully engaged in supporting the head teacher and governing body to establish the LSC provision through its well-established line management and quality assurance processes relating to its management of LSC provisions. In line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (ALNET) and Education Act 1996, the LA will continue to keep its LSC provision under review to ensure that it meets the identified needs of its learners with ALN in RCT.

Interested parties have been welcomed to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Access & Inclusion Service  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ  
or e-mail [A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk)

Children and young people have a right to express their views in all matters affecting them and for their views to be heard and considered in accordance with their age and maturity. As such, the Councils Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services



Access & Inclusion Service held meetings with the School Councils of all potentially impacted host schools, children and young people will be encouraged to be active participants throughout this process.

A drop in session was arranged so that members of the public could discuss the proposal with Officers from the Councils Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services.

**5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?**

The Council's Cabinet will consider the Consultation Report and decide, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, amend the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Council's Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of the proposal.

If the Council's Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal, a Statutory Notice will be published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2018 requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal can 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 Statutory Notice was published.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the outcome of the Statutory Notice at the next available Cabinet meeting and determine the proposal.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education and Inclusion Services will publish an Objection Report providing a summary of the objections and the response to them within seven days of the day of the determination of the proposal.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, it will be implemented in accordance with the date stated in the Statutory Notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of the proposal, the implementation date will be no later than the 2026 academic year.

**5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?**

Officers from the Access & Inclusion Service will monitor the proposal throughout the consultation and implementation period.

**5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?**

The Access & Inclusion Service will undertake a 'Lessons Learnt' review at the end of the implementation phase and this will feed into future projects so that each project improves and benefits from lessons learnt (positive and negative) during previous projects.

## SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision please forward your impact assessment to [Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk) for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqIA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general, the Impact Assessment could be strengthened by using the information contained within the consultation report as there is a wealth of information from Estyn, School Council, etc. to make it more robust and demonstrate due regard;</li> <li>• Disability section – requires more information given the nature of the proposal as ASD counts as disability under the Equality Act;</li> <li>• Page 125 – Transition plans and mitigation to be included;</li> <li>• Page 141 – Transition comments from teachers could be included;</li> <li>• Disability section – It notes that individuals may experience uncertainty for a period of time but this could be more specific and there is an opportunity for more clarity as to why it is both a positive and a negative i.e. is one long term etc;</li> </ul>	<p>5<sup>th</sup> September 2023</p>	<p>Review Panel Comments have been noted and actioned as appropriate.</p> <p>Narrative from the Consultation Feedback Report has been included within the assessment including pupils’ comments where appropriate.</p> <p>Review Panel comments regarding transport have been noted but as agreed in the panel discussions pupils will not be disadvantaged as the home to school transport policy will be applied equitably. However, the assessment has been strengthened by including reference to the Gatekeeping process undertaken by ITU.</p>

Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-economic – more data from the consultation would make it more robust (location and transport need to be addressed);</li> <li>• Pages 125-127 - Area deprivation – There’s several comments in respect of the move to Abercynon – include 125/126/127 mitigations and the opportunities for children – Estyn comments 133 could be added;</li> <li>• Pages 127 and 141 - Pupil comments to be included to show you’ve engaged;</li> <li>• Good use of the Welsh Index for Multiple Deprivation within the socio-economic section;</li> <li>• Area Deprivation section - Transport has been flagged but is there a need to be more specific on numbers and if there’s a financial detriment to families as parents have raised this in the consultation? Opportunity to state that parents aren’t losing out financially, that it is consistent with mainstream pupils and in line with existing home to school policy;</li> <li>• Section 4B has merged with 4A - HD to send LC/CJ a clean copy of an EIA to ensure the correct format is used;</li> <li>• Section 4C needs to be clear with the amount of engagement undertaken;</li> <li>• Section 6 needs to be updated to demonstrate that a number of potential negatives and mitigations have been put in place.</li> </ul>		

<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>
No comments have been received during the LSC consultation process regarding this assessment.	5 <sup>th</sup> June – 14 <sup>th</sup> July	
No further comments have been received during the objection period that impact on the validity of this assessment.	10 <sup>th</sup> October – 6 <sup>th</sup> November	

## SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

In summary, the Equality Impact Assessment identifies positive and neutral impacts, and mitigations have been provided for any potential negative impacts upon pupils with protected characteristics.

- The impact on age is extremely positive as they will have the full benefit of being educated in specialist LSC provision based in fantastic facilities fit for the 21st Century. Providing an inclusive model of specialist provision hosted by a mainstream school that can meet their identified needs within their local community.
- The buildings will be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 thereby ensuring that no pupil, staff member, parent/carer or member of the wider community is prevented from fully accessing the whole extent of the new facilities.
- There will be positive impact on the Welsh language as the proposal seeks to establish more Welsh medium specialist LSC provision, in line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act (2018) to develop a bilingual Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system. It also aims to assist with the delivery of strategic priorities within RCTCBC's WESP.

There is an expectation that pupils in all LSCs will have mainstream inclusion opportunities. The LSCs are integral to the ethos of the host schools and families and pupils are treated equitably alongside mainstream peers. The realignment of LSCs and establishment of the proposed LSCs will ensure the LA has bilingually provided suitable provision to support children with ALN.

## SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS

**Lead Officer:**

**Name:** Lisa Carter

**Position:** Inclusion Co-ordinator

**Date:** 15/03/2023

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage

**Head of Service/Director Approval:**

**Name:** Gaynor Davies

**Position:** Director of Education and Inclusion Services

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.

**Community Impact Assessment**

This Community Impact Assessment is prepared in accordance with the School Organisation Code – 2018 (011/2018). It is to be read alongside the Consultation Document, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and the Equality Impact Assessment as the information in all documents is related and the themes within them are cross-cutting.

Section 2.3 of the School Organisation Code – 2018 refers to regulated alterations to a school which includes:

- The introduction or removal of SEN/ALN provision or any change in the type of such provision. This is where the provision is in a mainstream school but the pupils who are admitted are in addition to admission number of the school. The provision **must** also be recognised by the local authority as reserved for pupils with SEN/ALN;

The proposals include:

- To relocate the Observation and Assessment LSC at Penrhiwceiber Primary School to Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from April 2024.
- To transfer the LSC for years 3-6 pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision in the Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from April 2024.
- To establish one Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSC for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs Abercynon Primary School. The proposal will take effect from April 2024.
- To establish two Primary Phase Welsh medium LSCs at the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin for pupils with significant ALN. The proposal will take effect from September 2024.
- To establish one LSC for pupils years 7-11 with ASD at the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site taking effect from September 2024.

The proposals were consulted on between 5<sup>th</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023. A detailed Consultation Document was circulated to all prescribed stakeholders and the Community Impact Assessment is an appendix of this main document. Copies will be forwarded to the Welsh Government in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. During the Objection Period that ran from 10<sup>th</sup> October to 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 no further comments were received during that impact on the validity of this assessment.

**Proposal:**

- 1. To relocate the Observation and Assessment LSC at Penrhiwceiber Primary School to Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from April 2024.**

RCT is proposing to relocate its Observation and Assessment class from Penrhiwceiber to Abercynon. This proposal will ensure greater compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and relocation to significantly improved premises which have benefited from 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation and Investment Programme. The provision will continue to accommodate 8 pupils aged 3-7 years old and placements within the LSC will be agreed in the Access and Inclusion ALN panels.

- 2. To transfer the LSC for pupils in years 3-6 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision at the Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from April 2024.**

The proposal to relocate the class at Abercynon to Perthcelyn will minimise unnecessary transition for pupils with ASD, provide continuity in their educational placements and ensure that a higher number of specialist LSC provisions provide equity for pupils in LSCs so that they remain in one setting until transition to secondary provision in line with their mainstream peers. The provision will continue to accommodate 10 pupils and placements within the LSC will be agreed in the Access and Inclusion ALN panels.

- 3. To establish one Early Years Assessment and Intervention LSC for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs at Abercynon Primary School. The proposal will take effect from April 2024.**

RCT is proposing to enhance the Early Years Assessment and Intervention provision within the County Borough by creating an additional LSC to support pre-statutory school age pupils with significant presenting needs. The class will support 8 pre-statutory school aged pupils.

- 4. To establish two Primary Phase Welsh medium LSCs at the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin for pupils with significant ALN. The proposal will take effect from September 2024.**

The proposal is to enhance the Welsh medium Additional Learning Needs provision within the County Borough by creating LSC provision for pupils in Reception years 6 currently at the school, therefore creating specialist Welsh medium provision for pupils with significant ALN from Reception – year 11. The classes will support 8 pupils within reception to year 2 and 10 pupils in years 3-6.

- 5. To establish one LSC for pupils in academic years 7-11 with ASD at the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site taking effect from September 2024.**



To address the current capacity issues, it is proposed RCT opens an additional LSC for pupils in years 7-11 with ASD at the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site. This is to ensure the LA meets the demands for specialist ASD provision in its secondary phase.

### **Community Impact**

The reasons for consideration of these proposals are fully outlined in the consultation document that will be widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposals and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

The creation of the new provisions is seen as positive. The proposals will not have any significant impact on local communities as more local pupils will be able to access specialist provision within their local community. However, where it is proposed to relocate existing LSCs it is acknowledged that there will be short term impact upon the immediate local communities as they will lose their current inclusive specialist provision. The LSCs will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable pupils and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of the LSCs will enhance the overall ability of the host schools to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist ALN expertise within the school.

### **Impact on Health and Wellbeing**

It is anticipated that the proposals will have a significantly positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils with significant ALN attending Welsh medium provision as it will enhance the current inclusive model provided by the specialist Welsh medium Peripatetic Team and address the current gap in full time specialist Welsh medium ALN provision. The relocation of classes will allow pupils to access buildings that have benefited from the modernisation programme and the creation of additional Early Years and ASD provision will meet the rising demand for specialist provision in these specific areas of need in RCT. For the few pupils currently attending the two LSCs proposed to relocate to new host schools, there will be some short term disruption. Impact upon pupils and their families will be mitigated through the relocation of the same staff to the new host schools, thus providing consistency and continuity to support pupils and families through the transition process. Central Access and Inclusion staff will also provide enhanced support to the affected LSCs during this period.

### **Current 'Out of hours' Usage**

Any services currently provided by the schools to parents, pupils and the communities will remain unaltered for example; breakfast and afterschool clubs.

### **Community Safety**

The host schools will be a fully accessible and within fully integrated community schools. No concerns regarding community safety are anticipated.

### **Transport and Travel Implications**

There is a statutory duty placed upon all Local Authorities in Wales to provide pupils with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond 'safe walking distance' to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided mainstream primary school, secondary school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe 'walking distance' is defined as two miles for pupils of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for pupils of compulsory school age receiving secondary education. If placed within the LSC pupils may be required to travel out of catchment.

Further information in relation to the Council's Home to School transport provision can be viewed and downloaded from the council website via:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/ParkingRoadsandTravel/Travel/SchoolandCollegeTransport/SchoolandCollegeTransport.aspx>

## Community Engagement

Members of the public wishing to find out more information on the proposed changes can view the proposal documents under the 'Get Involved' section of the RCT corporate website. Members of the public are also encouraged to provide feedback on the consultation using the online proforma

(<https://RCTCBC.welcomesyourfeedback.net/r9g1ao>).

Parents/Carers, School Council, School Staff and the School Governing Bodies directly affected by these changes are invited to a consultation event where they can discuss the proposals with Officers from the Council's Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services. Below is a timetable of the stakeholder events including the time, date and location of each event.

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Time	Date	Venue
Abercynon Primary Community School	School Council	13:15 – 14:00pm	12 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Abercynon Primary Community School
	Parents	14:00 – 15:00pm		
	Staff/Governing Body	16:00 – 16:45pm		
Perthcelyn Primary School	School Council	14:15 – 15:00pm	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Perthcelyn Primary School
	Parents	15:15 – 16:00pm		
	Staff/Governing Body	16:00 – 16:45pm		
Penrhiwceiber Primary School	School Council	14:15 – 15:00pm	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Penrhiwceiber Primary School
	Parents	15:15 – 16:00pm		
	Staff/Governing	16:00 –		

	<b>Body</b>	<b>16:45pm</b>		
<b>New 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site</b>  <b>New Welsh medium School</b>	<b>School Council Heol-y-Celyn Primary School</b>	<b>9:15 – 10:00am</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>Heol-y-Celyn Primary School</b>
	<b>School Council YGG Pontsion Norton</b>	<b>10:15 – 11:00am</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>YGG Pontsion Norton</b>
	<b>School Council Hawthorn Primary School</b>	<b>11:30 – 12:15pm</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>Hawthorn Primary School</b>
	<b>School Council Hawthorn High School</b>	<b>12:30 – 13:15pm</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>Hawthorn High School</b>
	<b>Staff/Temporary Governing Bodies</b>	<b>16:00 – 16:45pm</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>Via Teams: <a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a></b>
	<b>Parents</b>	<b>15:15 – 16:00pm</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>Hawthorn Leisure Centre</b>

## WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#) to ensure compliance with the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#).

### Stage 1 – Information Gathering

**NOTE:** As you complete this tool you will be asked for **evidence to support your views**. Please see [Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for more information on data sources.

<b>Proposal Name:</b>	<b>CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSALS TO REALIGN ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS MAINSTREAM LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN RHONDDA CYNON TAF</b>
<b>Department</b>	Access & Inclusion Service
<b>Service Director</b>	Gaynor Davies
<b>Officer Completing the WLIA</b>	Lisa Carter
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:Lisa.c.carter@rctcbc.gov.uk">Lisa.c.carter@rctcbc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Phone</b>	01443 744344
<b>Brief Description</b>	<p>To realign current provision to meet the demand for specialist placements. This will be achieved by the following adjustments to LSC provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To relocate the Observation and Assessment LSC at Penrhiwceiber Primary School to Abercynon Community Primary School taking effect from April 2024.</li> <li>• To transfer the LSC for pupils year 3-6 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Abercynon Community Primary School to create a through provision at Primary Phase at Perthcelyn Primary School taking effect from April 2024.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish one Early Years Assessment &amp; Intervention LSC for pupils under statutory school age with significant presenting needs at Abercynon Primary School. The proposal will take effect from April 2024.</li> <li>• To establish two Primary Phase Welsh medium LSCs at the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin for pupils with significant ALN. The proposal will take effect from September 2024.</li> <li>• To establish one LSC for pupils year 7-11 with ASD at the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site taking effect from September 2024.</li> </ul>
<b>Date</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2023 updated 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)</b>	Pupils with Additional Learning Needs requiring specialist provision, their parents/carers and the wider additional learning needs community.
<b>What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?</b>	The aim of these proposals is to realign current ALN provision to meet the demand for specialist placements. At present, learners with significant additional learning needs attending Welsh medium schools who meet the criteria for Primary Phase LSC provision are supported by a specialist peripatetic team through an inclusive delivery support model. The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (ALNET) 2018 stipulates that all local authorities must develop bilingual ALN provision. The establishment of 2 Welsh medium LSCs in the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin will ensure Welsh support is available to learners with ALN who meet the LSC criteria. The LSCs will support 18 pupils with significant additional learning needs in the Primary Phase.
<b>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh medium learners with significant additional learning needs.</li> <li>• Early Years pre-statutory school age pupils presenting significant needs.</li> <li>• Year 7-11 (formerly Key Stage 3/4) English medium pupils with ASD.</li> <li>• Pupils at the hosting schools.</li> <li>• Parent/carers of pupils attending hosting schools and those with children/young people with significant additional learning needs.</li> <li>• Staff at hosting schools.</li> <li>• The hosting schools are: Abercynon Primary Community School, Perthcelyn Primary School, new Welsh medium primary school at Rhydyfelin, the new 3-16 school on the Hawthorn Primary/High School site.</li> </ul>
<b>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s)</b>	The 2021 Census figures regarding the Welsh language show a decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers across Wales to 17.8%. There was, however, a small increase in RCT – the percentage of the population of the

concerned

county borough who can speak Welsh increased from 12.3% to 12.4%. Numerically, RCT saw a 2.8% increase in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough, from 27,779 speakers to 28,556 speakers. RCT was also one of only four LAs in Wales to see an increase in the percentage of Welsh speakers – the others were Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Merthyr Tydfil. All of these are neighbouring county boroughs, which could demonstrate that our region is seeing some positive trends in terms of increases in Welsh speakers, and that there may be a resulting increase in demand for services through the medium of Welsh. As further, more detailed, data from the Census becomes available for RCT (e.g. LSOA data), we will need to consider what impact it may have on the services we provide.

The table that follows illustrates the Welsh language skills of residents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf and is obtained from the 2021 Census.

**Table 1: Welsh Language Skills of Residents (Census 2021) – (%)**

	<b>County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf</b>	<b>All Wales</b>
Can Speak, Read and Write Welsh	10.1%	14.8%
Can Speak and Read but Cannot Write Welsh	0.7%	1.2%
Can Speak but Cannot Read or Write Welsh	1.4%	2.4%
Can read but cannot speak or write Welsh	1.6%	1.4%
Can write but cannot speak or read Welsh	0.2%	0.2%
Can read and write but cannot speak Welsh	0.5%	0.6%
Can Understand Spoken Welsh Only	4.0%	5.5%
Other Combination of Skills	0.1%	0.2%
No Skills	81.3%	77.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The Annual Population Survey 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 year ending 31 March 2023, reported that 20.2% of respondents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf said they could speak Welsh, compared to the-all Wales percentage of 29.7% of respondents. This can be further broken down to the data contained in the table that follows.

**Table 2: Welsh Language Skills of Residents (Annual Population Survey)**

<b>Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)</b>		
	<b>County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Can read Welsh	18.8%	26.0%
Can write Welsh	17.2%	23.9%
Can understand spoken Welsh	23.0%	33.5%

The data demonstrates that in each Welsh language skill area, the all-Wales percentages are notably higher than the County Borough percentages.

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.

**Table 3: Welsh Language Skills of Residents (Annual Population Survey)**

<b>Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)</b>		
	<b>County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Speak Welsh daily	7.4%	15.0%
Speak Welsh weekly	5.1%	5.8%
Use it less often or never	5.2%	8.9%

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 Survey 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 data above clearly shows that there is a gap in the Welsh language skills of residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf when compared to the whole of Wales. Proposals such as this significantly improve the opportunities available for Welsh learners with ALN through providing targeted specialist Welsh medium LSC provision for learners with significant additional learning needs in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century School environment. The headteacher of the new school will be encouraged and supported to consider using the community use facilities at the school to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity for parents, carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. The school will be designed to be a fully accessible and there will be a dedicated area within the school itself so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the school.

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 Iaith/Cymraeg Campus), developed by Gwynedd Council, and various other projects, in partnership with the CSCJES and the Urdd to provide opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language in different contexts. In terms of the schools involved in this proposal:

- Perthcelyn Primary School have received their bronze and silver Cymraeg Campus awards and are working towards achieving the gold award.
- Abercynon Primary School have engaged with the Cymraeg Campus provision and are working with CSCJES to achieve their bronze award.
- Hawthorn Primary School have received their bronze Cymraeg Campus award and are now working towards achieving the silver and Hawthorn High School have engaged with the programme and are working towards achieving the bronze award.

An evaluation conducted in July 2023 whilst gathering information and data for the WESP Annual Review Report evidenced the positive impact the Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus programme has had on the use of the Welsh language in English medium schools. 13 English medium primary schools from different areas of the County Borough were contacted and all reported an increased use of incidental Welsh throughout the school with more children playing yard games through the medium of Welsh and more assemblies being held with focus on the Welsh language, history and heritage. The Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus programme has been rolled out to all special schools and units in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and many have already begun their journey to receiving the awards. The continued roll out of this programme 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 new WESP (2022



to 2032).

**Other relevant data or research**

Having reviewed internal data it was noted that due to a lack of Welsh medium LSC provision, 7% of the total number of pupils accessing specialist settings have previously attended Welsh medium provision.

The most recent data available from PLASC 2023 shows that there are currently 1,926 (6.28%) learners with ALN attending English medium schools and 256 (3.58%) learners with ALN attending Welsh medium schools across the County Borough. When comparing this with data available from PLASC for the previous year, the number of learners with ALN in schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf has increased, please see table below.

**Table 4: Learners with ALN attending schools across the County Borough (PLASC)**

<b>Number and Percentage of Learners with ALN Attending Schools in RCT</b>				
<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2021 - 2022</b>		<b>2022 - 2023</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>English Medium Education</b>	1,508	4.87%	1,926	6.28%
<b>Welsh Medium Education</b>	200	2.77%	256	3.58%

In line with the Council's new WESP, in order to achieve the targets of the WESP we will continue to ensure the benefits of the Welsh language and Welsh medium education are promoted to parents/carers from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education and onwards through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need. In line with Outcome 6 of the WESP, the Council are committed to increasing the provision of Welsh medium education for learners with ALN (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018).

The continuing development of Welsh medium ALN provision will form part of the Local Authority's Access and Inclusion Services' action planning, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing processes. This will ensure the sufficiency of Welsh medium additional learning provision for learners with ALN in Rhondda Cynon Taf is kept under review to ensure arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of learners and to identify any emerging needs or gaps in provision.

Section 63 of the ALNET Act (2018) highlights the Duty on local authorities to keep under review the arrangements that they and the governing bodies of maintained schools in their area make for children and young people with ALN. This includes considering the extent to which the arrangements are sufficient to meet the ALN of the children and young people for whom they are responsible. Local authorities must have regard to

	<p>the additional learning provision that may reasonably be arranged by other bodies (such as health bodies). It also requires local authorities to consider the sufficiency of additional learning provision in Welsh and the size and capability of the workforce available. If a local authority considers that the arrangements are not sufficient in any way, it must take all reasonable steps to remedy the matter. Local authorities must consult any persons that they consider appropriate in order to inform the consideration and review, and at times which they consider appropriate.</p>
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## **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 (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

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

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?</b>	<b>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.</b>	<b>What evidence do you have to support this view?</b>	<b>What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</b> e.g. staff, residents and visitors</p> <p>The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	<b>Positive</b>	The proposals included in this proposal are to relocate, transfer and establish English medium LSCs at different locations throughout the County Borough where there is identified need and demand for specialist provision should not have a negative impact on the Welsh language. The proposals to relocate and transfer LSCs between Perthcelyn Primary	Data gathered by the Access and Inclusion team shows that 7% of the total number of pupils accessing specialist settings have previously attended Welsh medium provision, are now accessing English medium LSC provision due to there being a lack of Welsh medium LSC provision available in the County Borough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact of establishing the LSC provision in the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin will be evaluated and demand monitored to ensure the opening of these classes have a positive impact on the Welsh language. If positive, opportunities to develop more LSCs like</li> </ul>

		<p>School and Abercynon Primary School is being proposed in order to improve the continuum of ALN provision in this area of the County Borough by creating a through provision at primary phase. The establishment of an Early Years Assessment &amp; Intervention LSC for pupils under statutory school age at Abercynon Primary School further supports the Council's hopes to improve the continuum of ALN provision in this area of the County Borough where there is identified need.</p> <p>The establishment of a specialist LSC for pupils in year 7 – 11 with ASD at the new 3 - 16 school which is being built on the current site of Hawthorn High School should not negatively impact the Welsh language as this will be a specialist provision. The establishment of two Primary Phase Welsh medium LSCs at the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin will transform the Welsh medium opportunities available to learners with significant ALN in this area of the County Borough</p>	<p>The Welsh Language Use Survey (2013 – 2015) reported that over half of the Welsh speaking respondents who completed the survey reported that they try to use Welsh in the workplace with colleagues and when dealing with public organisations. This demonstrates the importance of staff, residents and visitors having fair access to opportunities to use the Welsh language.</p> <p>In line with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards, any Council publications, documentation and correspondence must be bilingual with a message included to state that correspondence in Welsh is welcomed and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. The Council also applies this to any new school builds so that signage in English schools is bilingual. New school builds now also incorporate bilingual braille on signage throughout the</p>	<p>this across the County Borough will be considered. Ensuring inclusion with mainstream pupils is a key principle to ensure learners with ALN have equal opportunities to learn the language and receive their education through the medium of Welsh.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the headteacher of the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin and Welsh medium organisations to utilise the facilities to deliver Welsh medium learning sessions for parents, carers and the wider community.</li> <li>• If a person is unable to speak Welsh, they must call on a colleague in the building who is able to speak Welsh if this is being requested.</li> </ul>
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as this will be the first of its kind in the County Borough and can only have a positive impact on the language. Alongside this, the newly established Welsh medium LSC provision at Ysgol Garth Olwg will open to the secondary aged learners from September 2023, providing opportunities for learners to remain in Welsh medium education and continue to receive their education through the medium of Welsh in this area of the County Borough. The establishment of Welsh medium provision at different stages of education can only positively impact the Welsh language. Welsh medium ALN provision and the demand for this type of provision will be evaluated and monitored closely. If deemed successful, the Council's Access and Inclusion Services will explore options to develop further provision like this in different areas of the County Borough.

The proposal to create 2 Welsh medium primary phase LSCs at the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin will have a positive

school.

impact on the Welsh language. This will be the first Welsh medium provision of its type in the County Borough and will widen the opportunities available to learners with ALN to learn the Welsh language. Learners accessing the provision will be able to access a range of additional extra-curricular activities in line with their peers through the medium of Welsh.

Opportunities for community and third-party use of the facilities at the school will be encouraged to offer Welsh medium learning classes for adults which will be promoted in the local community and throughout the County Borough. This will contribute towards Welsh Government's ambitious goal of creating a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the Council's WESP by providing opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language.

Welsh Government's Welsh Language Use Survey (2013 – 2015) reported the largest increases in the number of

fluent Welsh speakers in Wales in Rhondda Cynon Taf and in our neighbouring authority Cardiff. By working with the headteacher of the proposed new special school, opportunities for community and third-party use of the facilities at the school to offer Welsh medium learning classes for adult will be promoted in the local community and throughout the County Borough. This will contribute towards Welsh Government's ambitious goal of creating a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the Council's WESP by providing opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language.

The Council has opportunities for internal staff across all services to access free training to improve their Welsh language skills. Welsh Language Services are working to develop technological support for Welsh speakers and learners within the Council to be able to deliver services through the medium of Welsh. All newly recruited

		Council staff are required to undertake Welsh language Level 1 training. This will support the opportunities available for the Council to create a bilingual workforce with the ability to work and deliver services bilingually.		
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## Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

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

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b>Numbers and/or percentages of Welsh speakers</b> e.g Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's <a href="#">Cymraeg 2050 Strategy</a> / <a href="#">RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</a></p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p>	<p>Welsh Government's ambitious Cymraeg 2050 strategy calls for far-reaching changes and boundaries being pushed to increase the numbers learning and using Welsh. To achieve the Cymraeg 2050 targets of reaching a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050, each local authority needs to transform how Welsh is taught to all learners. The headteacher</p>	<p>Welsh for Adults courses for the academic year 2022/23 are being held at Coleg y Cymoedd Llwynypia campus, Gartholwg Lifelong Learning Centre and Treorchy Library. Through utilising the facilities to deliver Welsh for Adults lessons at the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin, this will encourage parents and carers to consider undertaking Welsh lessons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that parents, carers and the wider community are signposted to the Welsh for Adults classes. Marketing and promotion of the classes will be implemented via the Council's website and</li> </ul>



		<p>of the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin will be supported and encouraged to utilise the facilities available to offer opportunities to deliver Welsh for Adults classes for parents, carers and other members of the community. This will support the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy, and the targets set out in the Council's WESP.</p> <p>In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase learners use of the Welsh language in social contexts through implementing the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith/Cymraeg Campus) in Welsh and English medium primary and secondary schools in partnership with the CSCJES. The Siarter Iaith has been implemented in both primary and secondary Welsh medium schools in order to develop learners' use of the Welsh language in different contexts. As of July 2023, all Welsh medium primary schools have achieved the bronze award, 13 have achieved the silver award</p>	<p>These types of lessons would be marketed and promoted throughout the community and neighbouring schools to encourage an uptake amongst parents, carers and the wider community.</p> <p>The Welsh for Adults classes are currently well attended. Learn Welsh Glamorgan have been engaging with schools throughout the County Borough to encourage schools to offer their facilities to deliver Welsh for Adults sessions for the next academic year.</p> <p>The WESP Outcome 7 sub-group provides an effective focus on the challenges faced in terms of the school-based workforce. The group includes local, regional and national officers who are working collaboratively to implement strategies to work towards creating more Welsh speakers to ensure we have a school-based workforce of sufficient size and capability.</p> <p>Monitoring reports prepared by local authorities throughout Wales who currently have</p>	<p>corporate social media platforms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school-based workforce will continue to be supported with continued professional learning and networking, utilising opportunities to share best practices.</li> <li>• To continue working with the CSCJES to promote and increase learners' use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools with all English medium schools being supported to achieve the Cymraeg Campus awards.</li> <li>• The Council's WESP Co-ordinator to work collaboratively with partners in developing and implementing</li> </ul>
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		<p>and 5 have achieved the gold award. Two Welsh medium secondary schools have achieved the bronze award and 1 has received the silver. The Cymraeg Campus has been implemented in both primary and secondary English medium schools in order to develop learners' use of the Welsh language. As of July 2023, 40 English medium primary schools have achieved the bronze award, 10 have achieved the silver award and 2 have achieved the gold award. A total of 5 English medium secondary schools have achieved the bronze award.</p> <p>More recently, CSCJES have begun working with special schools, learning support classes and pupil referral units in Rhondda Cynon Taf to implement the Welsh Language Charter (Cymraeg Campus) programme. To date, 3 special schools/units have achieved the bronze Cymraeg Campus award.</p> <p>In contributing towards the</p>	<p>established Welsh language immersion provision report positive outcomes for learners who have accessed the support, leaving them equipped to start learning in the mainstream Welsh medium classroom.</p> <p>Data and information relating to the Welsh Language Charter is shared with the Council each quarter via the CSCJES Welsh Language Officer.</p>	<p>strategies in line with the Council's WESP to support the delivery of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 vision of a million Welsh speakers, and to contribute towards the development of strategies which promote the Welsh language and Welsh medium education across the County Borough.</p>
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	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>	<p>vision of achieving a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and in line with the commitments outlined in the Council's WESP, ensuring a school-based workforce of sufficient size and capability is vital. In order to create more Welsh speakers, our education system is dependent on its school-based workforce, we must work locally, regionally and nationally to ensure a workforce with robust linguistic skills with the ability to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium education.</p> <p>The aim is to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning and promoting the information use of the Welsh language amongst learners across the education sector. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and in wider contexts is key to ensuring a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners throughout each key stage, offering all learners the opportunity to</p>		
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		<p>become fully bilingual in alignment with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.</p> <p>Whilst pupils who meet criteria to access the Welsh medium peripatetic complex needs service within their mainstream school settings may opt to remain within their Welsh medium mainstream setting rather than accessing the new Welsh medium settings due to the potential increased travel time. 7% of pupils with other identified ALN who previously attended Welsh medium mainstream settings now attend English medium specialist settings. Pupils will now have increased options to access Welsh medium specialist settings.</p>	<p>Having reviewed internal data it was noted that due to a lack of Welsh medium LSC provision, 7% of the total number of pupils accessing specialist settings have previously attended Welsh medium provision.</p>	
<p><b>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</b> e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an</p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p>	<p>The Welsh language now has official status and legislation in place which provides rights for Welsh speakers to receive Welsh language services. The challenge is to expand the opportunities for people to be able to use the Welsh language in their daily life through creating the right conditions for new</p>	<p>Currently learners with significant ALN are receiving English medium specialist support due to the lack of Welsh medium provision available. The opening of these LSCs can only benefit the promotion of the Welsh language.</p> <p>The demand for Welsh for Adults</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of establishing the LSC provision in the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin will be evaluated and demand monitored to ensure the opening of these classes have a positive impact on the</li> </ul>

<p>increase in demand over time</p>		<p>learners of all ages to develop and use their skills from early years, through every stage of compulsory education and post-16 provision, to opportunities for adults to learn Welsh.</p> <p>As mentioned above, the Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus programme is having a positive impact on the promotion of the Welsh language in schools engaged with the programme through providing increased opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language. Although the proposals for the Cynon area of the County Borough and the proposals for Hawthorn Primary School/Hawthorn High may not directly promote the Welsh language, the statutory changes to ALN provision in line with the ALNET Act 2018 and the introduction of the New Curriculum for Wales tied with the rollout of the Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus programme in these schools ensures an increased opportunities for all learners to use the Welsh language, which in turn will support promoting opportunities</p>	<p>classes is evidenced by the popularity of current classes being held, for example at the Gartholwg Lifelong Learning Centre.</p> <p>The new school will be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and the ALNET Act 2018 and such opportunities will be within the heart of the community, so that the local community can safely utilise the facilities.</p> <p>Representatives from Welsh Language, Youth, Leisure, Arts and Culture and Musical Services all form part of the WESP Outcome 5 sub-group which focuses on creating more opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school, therefore information is provided directly. The work underway not only supports the use of Welsh in different contexts in school, but also extends the use of Welsh in different contexts across all service areas and in the wider community which supports the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 vision of increasing the use of the</p>	<p>Welsh language. If positive, opportunities to develop more LSCs like this across the County Borough will be considered. Ensuring inclusion with mainstream pupils is a key principle to ensure learners with ALN have equal opportunities to learn the language and receive their education through the medium of Welsh.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that parents, carers and the wider community are signposted to the Welsh for Adults classes. Marketing and promotion of the classes will be implemented via the Council's website and corporate social media platforms.</li> <li>• Support the headteacher of the</li> </ul>
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		<p>to use Welsh.</p> <p>The proposal to establish two Primary Phase LSCs at the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin will allow for young children to access Welsh medium education at an inclusive school of brand new build, completed to 21<sup>st</sup> Century standard. Establishing Welsh medium LSC provision for children with significant ALN from this young age will enhance pupils' opportunities to continue to learn via the medium of Welsh but in a dedicated class setting alongside their peers who also have additional learning needs rather than via peripatetic teaching.</p> <p>As a result, we will work with the headteacher of the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin to provide opportunities to offer Welsh for Adults classes for anyone looking to learn the language and other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. The school will be designed to be fully</p>	<p>language and ultimately the number of Welsh speakers.</p>	<p>new school to promote community use of the facilities for the purpose of delivering a range of opportunities through the medium of Welsh with support of Welsh language organisations such as Menter Iaith and the Urdd to assist in the promotion of the Welsh language.</p>
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accessible in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the ALNET Act 2018, and a fully integrated community school with dedicated community use areas that the local community can safely utilise.

The Council will continue to adhere to The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 which requires the Council to produce a five year strategy outlining actions which will facilitate and promote the Welsh language.

The Council's Five Year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (2022 – 2027) has been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth for the Welsh language and Welsh medium education. The strategy outlines the Council's commitment to working towards Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 vision of increasing the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of the language in the workplace, via Council services and throughout the community and creating favourable

conditions. Rhondda Cynon Taf Welsh Language Services, Youth Services, Leisure Services and Arts and Culture Services and Musical Services are all working proactively towards developing opportunities for learners and the wider community to use the Welsh language. These include but are not limited to:

**Welsh Language Services:**

- Developing materials to provide to school-based staff to support with their Welsh language skills.
- Exploring the feasibility of Welsh medium learning/support applications being placed on every member of staffs' devices.

**Youth Services:**

- Running trips for Welsh medium learners to provide opportunities to use Welsh in different contexts.
- Creating promotional materials to be placed in youth clubs throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf.



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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Working in partnership with the Urdd and Menter Iaith to develop Welsh Language Youth Forums in all Welsh and English medium secondary schools along with the local college.</li></ul> |  |  |
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**Leisure Services:**

- Working with the Urdd to deliver sport activities for Welsh medium schools and exploring extending this to incorporate English medium schools on a bilingual model of delivery.
- Working with Menter Iaith to develop opportunities to introduce the Welsh language into leisure sessions.

**Arts and Culture Services:**

- Collaborating with Youth Services on a programme of provision across community and cultural venues to encourage the use of the Welsh language and incorporating the Welsh language into community based events.

**Musical Services:**

- Engaging with both Welsh and English medium schools to encourage an uptake in musical services, learners who show an aptitude for any instruments are being encouraged and supported into taking part in the Eisteddfod.

The Council will continue to ensure a clear alignment with the Five Year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. 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 Rhondda Cynon Taf is reaffirmed in the Education & Inclusion Directorate's Education Strategic Plan for 2022–2025.

**Stage 2 – Impact Assessment**

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

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b><u>Compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards</u></b>                      e.g                      increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p>	<p>All processes associated with this proposal will be in accordance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>The proposal to open 2 LSCs in the new Welsh medium school will create Welsh medium ALN job positions for 2 teaching staff and 2 non-teaching staff, increasing the Council's ability to deliver services through the medium of Welsh and contributing towards expanding the Welsh medium ALN workforce available in the County Borough.</p>	<p>Contractual arrangements will ensure that all consultations are undertaken bilingually and all public correspondence in relation to these proposals will be sent out bilingually with Welsh positioned first.</p> <p>The new job positions generated as a result of the LSCs being established will help with increasing the workforce available to support learners with ALN, which is a key target of our WESP, mainly outcome 7 which focuses on increasing the workforce available to teach Welsh as a subject and subjects through the medium of Welsh.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instil contractor awareness of the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards and ensure compliance with these standards.</li> <li>• Work with the new Welsh medium school to ensure new members of staff have received sufficient training to deliver the level of support required through the medium of Welsh.</li> </ul>

			The duties imposed upon us under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales (ALNET) Act 2018 requires all local authorities to ensure there is sufficient provision available through the medium of Welsh for learners with ALN.	
<b>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<p>The opening of these LSCs at the new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin will have a positive impact on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English as at present there are 45 English medium LSCs in the County Borough, whereas there are no Welsh medium primary phase LSCs and this will be the first of its kind here in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Providing opportunities for learners who would previously not be able to access these opportunities will only positively impact on the Welsh language.</p> <p>The new Welsh medium school is being constructed as part of the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning programme which is jointly funded by the Council and</p>	The Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme contains a wide range of schools, both Welsh and English medium, in various parts of the County Borough. This will be the first Welsh medium primary phase LSC provision in the County Borough. If deemed successful, the Council's Access and Inclusion team will explore options to develop more opportunities for learners with ALN to access Welsh medium opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that parents, carers and the wider community are signposted to the Welsh for Adults classes. Marketing and promotion of the classes will be implemented via the Council's website and corporate social media platforms.</li> </ul>

		<p>Welsh Government. The purpose of this programme is to ensure there are good schools so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have equitable access to good Welsh and English medium education. This proposal will help us in achieving this purpose.</p>		
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The new school will incorporate facilities for community use to offer opportunities through the medium of Welsh and staff will be encouraged and supported to undertake any additional learning to improve their Welsh language skills.

### **Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal**

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?

<b>What are you going to do?</b>	<b>When are you going to do it?</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>
Consultation and engagement with stakeholders (as set out in statutory Consultation Document).	The consultation was held between 5 <sup>th</sup> June and 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2023. The feedback from the consultation has been collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in September 2023.	Access & Inclusion Service
Learners at hosting schools	<p>The Council has acknowledged that the voice of children and young people is about involving them as active participants in the development, delivery, management and improvement of their educational and learner experience.</p> <p>Children and young people have a right to express their views in all matters affecting them and for their views to be heard and given due consideration in accordance with their age and maturity. As such, the Council's Access &amp; Inclusion Service will ensure that suitable arrangements are made to involve learners as active participants throughout this consultation process, and if a decision is made to progress the proposal, throughout the implementation process.</p>	Access & Inclusion Service

## **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](mailto: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

<b>Welsh Language Services Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welsh Language pupils with significant ALN that meet the criteria for English provision are supported, but there needs to be clarity on why English medium criteria is used for Welsh Language pupils;</li><li>• The wording throughout could be amended to inspire a pro-active approach. For example, it notes that Welsh Language provision may be extended if the need arises but you could put the provision in place, rather than when the need emerges;</li><li>• There is an opportunity to include a comparison between the proposal and the service in place previously i.e. relocation could have an impact on travel time and may impact where they choose to learn; and</li></ul>	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Comments have been noted and revisions made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The criteria based on the severity and complexity of pupils identified ALN and are language neutral.</li><li>• The ALN Code 2021 stipulates that LAs must develop bilingual ALN provision over time. Section 3.2 of the Code states that one of the principles underpinning the ALN system is A bilingual system where all reasonable steps are taken to deliver ALP in Welsh for children and young people who require support thought the medium of Welsh, with scope for increasing the delivery of ALP in Welsh over time</li><li>• Numbers and /or percentages of Welsh speakers has been updated</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The new service will provide 22 new English placements and 18 new Welsh placements, which in terms of the demographic of the area, is positive but why isn't it seeking complete equality? An opportunity to state that there's 46 English classes and 1 Welsh class.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ALN Code 2021 stipulates that LAs must develop bilingual ALN provision over time. Section 3.2 of the Code states that one of the principles underpinning the ALN system is A bilingual system where all reasonable steps are taken to deliver ALP in Welsh for children and young people who require support through the medium of Welsh, with scope for increasing the delivery of ALP in Welsh over time.</li> </ul>
<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
As above	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>
No comments have been received during the LSC consultation process regarding this assessment	5 <sup>th</sup> June – 14 <sup>th</sup> July	
<b>Objection Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>
No further comments have been received during the objection period that impact on the validity of this assessment.	10 <sup>th</sup> October – 6 <sup>th</sup> November	

### Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

Officers from the Access & Inclusion Service will monitor the proposal throughout the consultation and implementation period.

The Access & Inclusion Service will undertake a 'Lessons Learnt' review at the end of the implementation phase and this will feed into future



projects so that each project improves and benefits from lessons learnt (positive and negative) during previous projects.

## **Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal**

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

In summary, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment identifies only positive impacts with no negative or neutral impacts upon the Welsh Language.

- The impact on Welsh medium Primary Phase pupils with significant additional learning needs is extremely positive as they will have the full benefit of being educated in Welsh medium specialist LSC provisions alongside their mainstream peers through an inclusive model, hosted by a mainstream school.
- The proposal seeks to create Welsh medium specialist LSC provision, in line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act (2018) to develop a bilingual Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system. It also aims to assist with the delivery of strategic priorities within RCTCBC's WESP
- There is an expectation that pupils in all LSCs will have mainstream inclusion opportunities. The LSCs are integral to the ethos of the host schools and families and pupils are treated equitably alongside mainstream peers. The development of Welsh medium LSCs will ensure the LA has LSCs based in a fully accessible and high quality educational environments that has benefited from significant 21<sup>st</sup> Century Modernisation and Investment.
- The proposals also have a positive impact for pupils attending English medium provision due to the proposed increase in Early Years and ASD placements.

<b>Stage 7 – Sign Off</b>			
<b>Name of Officer completing the WLIA</b>	Lisa Carter	<b>Service Director Name:</b>	Gaynor Davies
<b>Position</b>	Inclusion Co-ordinator	<b>I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)</b>	<b>Is implemented with no amendments</b>
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Service Director Signature</b>	<i>Gaynor Davies</i>
<b>Date</b>		<b>Date</b>	