

BUDGET FORUM – 27TH SEPTEMBER 2018

SUBJECT: TO CONSULT ON THE CURRENT SPLIT SITE FORMULA FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHYMNI

REPORT BY: JANE SOUTHCOMBE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline and consider the formula funding arrangements for Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, linked directly to the current split site arrangement of the School (7 mile distance between the 2 sites).
- 1.2 The timing of this report links directly to the fact that from September 2017 all age groups from year 7 through to year 11 were taught on both sites. This was the first academic year that this arrangement had been in place. There are 2 distinct catchment areas, with associated feeder schools for the Gelli Haf and the Y Gwyndy sites.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In summary the report reviews the current funding position for YG Cwm Rhymni and considers this in relation to the position with regards to schools currently collaborating with a shared Headteacher in the Borough.
- 2.2 YG Cwm Rhymni is the only Welsh medium secondary school within the Borough. In May 2018 the School Strategy Board agreed that there should be a consultation with regards to the current split site funding arrangement for the school.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The report considers the use of resources within the Directorate to ensure that key strategies are achieved.
- 3.2 Effective financial planning and financial controls contribute to the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. In particular as follows:

A prosperous Wales, aims to improve the educational attainment of children & young people which will enable them to access skills or further education and employment.

A healthier Wales, supporting vulnerable learners can improve their well-being and educational achievement.

A more equal Wales, a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background is; and

A Wales of cohesive communities, improving quality of life with attractive, viable, safe and well connected communities.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 This background to this report follows discussions with YG Cwm Rhymni with regards to the current formula funding arrangements as a split site school. To date the school has been funded as one school with an additional split site lump sum. The split site formula funding allocation recognises the additional financial burden that arises for a school as a direct result of delivery across 2 sites. The timing of this report links directly to the fact that in September 2017, there were 2 clear catchment areas, with year groups 7 through to 11 on both sites. This has impacted on arrangements and costs for day to day operations (Technician / Office & Reception) and site management, together with teaching arrangements and managerial responsibilities (Deputy / Assistant Headteacher arrangements).
- 4.2 A review of pupil numbers across the Authority's secondary schools (including 3 to 18, 11 to 16 and 11 to 19) supports the need for further discussion on this matter. The details of capacity numbers across our secondary schools and the admission numbers (Appendix 1), illustrates the size of the school (including details for each site) in relation to other secondary schools in the Borough.
- 4.3 Within Caerphilly we currently have a number of primary schools that are successfully collaborating with a shared Headteacher. From purely a financial perspective this approach has generated efficiencies with regards to Senior Management costs, essential to the financial sustainability of some of our smaller schools. In the scenario where 2 schools are collaborating with a shared Headteacher, each school is funded separately through the formula funding allocation and consequently receiving any lump sums specific to each identified school.
- 4.4 In the scenario with regards to YG Cwm Rhymni, which is by far our largest Secondary School in the Borough, the benefits of a Headteacher across the "whole" school are already in place. However, the capacity of each individual site, 2 catchment areas and all year groups from years 7 through to year 11 being delivered on both sites, supports the need to review the funding methodology linked to the lump sum allowances.
- 4.5 In financial year 2018/19, all Schools receive a number of lump sum allocations in their formula. Specifically linked to the site there are 3 lump sum allocations (there are also small lump sum allocations linked to a few of the SLA allocations):
1. Funding linked to cover part of the Headteachers salary to allow for non contact time for managerial tasks and leadership costs within the school.
 2. Building maintenance related (low value).
 3. Additional funding – linked primarily to workload, leadership and management.
- 4.6 In the 2018/19 formula YG Cwm Rhymni continued to receive 1 lump sum for each of these elements and then a split site allowance for the lump sum linked to Headteacher / managerial time (50%). In view of the capacity of the school as a whole and the capacity of the individual sites, costs have increased significantly as the school has worked to implement the curriculum over 2 sites 7 miles apart. The financial sustainability of this arrangement is an issue that needs to be considered. Due to the commitment to ensure provision for pupils on the Gwyndy site is equivalent to the Gelli Haf site, some small classes have been maintained on both sites and additional classes have been offered for some subjects even though the total pupil numbers would not in normal circumstances have suggested an additional class was needed. The alternative would be regular travel between sites which comes at a cost and it is not felt would benefit the pupil.
- 4.7 At the moment YG Cwm Rhymni receives one lump sum allocation for each of the 3 areas identified in para 4.5, in addition the School receives an additional 50% of the funding linked to the just 1 of the lump sums. It is proposed that consideration is given to withdrawing the split site allocation and providing the 3 lump sum allocations for each of the sites, linked to the reasons identified in the body of this report.

4.8 Based on the 2018/19 formula funding position the implications of this change in funding arrangements for YG Cwm Rhymni would be circa £120k additional funding.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

5.1 Effective financial management is a key element in ensuring that the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 are met.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No specific equality issues linked to this discussion document. However, a change in funding arrangements could assist with regards to the ability of the School to sustain wider curriculum access across the 2 sites. Funding is obviously just one of the factors that the School would review and consider in its decision making.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 At this point in time if this proposal were to be supported the additional lump sum costs would need to be met from within the existing Schools formula allocation pot. There would be no additional funding for schools as a consequence.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no personnel implications directly linked to this proposal.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 Initial consultation with School Budget Forum.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That School Budget Forum supports the proposal to change the split site funding arrangement for YG Cwm Rhymni from financial year 2018/19 and move to consultation with all Schools, with an agreed timeline.

Author: Jane Southcombe, Finance Manager (Education, Lifelong Learning & Schools)

E-mail: southj@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Sue Richards, Head of Service – Education, Planning & Strategy

Julie Baker, Principal Finance Officer (Schools)

Cheryl Adams, Senior Finance Officer (Schools)