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Date: 18th March 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

A Special meeting of the **Cabinet** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Wednesday, 25th March, 2015** at **2.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

Chris Burns
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of Interest. Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on the agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.	
To receive and consider the following reports on which executive decisions are required: -	
3 Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary: Outcome of the Formal Consultation Process.	1 - 40
4 Education Capital 2015/2016.	41 - 48

A greener place Man gwyrddach



Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs C. Forehead, D.T. Hardacre, K. James, Mrs B. A. Jones, G. Jones, Mrs R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, K.V. Reynolds, T.J. Williams and R. Woodyatt,

And Appropriate Officers



SPECIAL CABINET – 25TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: ABERTYSSWG/PONTLOTTYN PRIMARY: OUTCOME OF THE FORMAL CONSULTATION PROCESS

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the formal consultation process and to determine whether to proceed to Statutory Notice in respect of the above proposal.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 2.1 The report links directly to the Education for Life, sustainability and regeneration strategies, particularly in the context of provision of modern fit for purpose teaching and learning environments.

3. THE REPORT

- 3.1 Cabinet, at its meeting on 29 October 2014, agreed to proceed to a formal consultation process in relation to the above proposal.

- 3.2 A formal consultation process (accompanied by a consultation document) took place between 17 November and 31 December 2014. During this period a series of meetings were also convened which are outlined below:

Thursday 27 November : Drop-in sessions for school pupils, staff, parents/carers, (Rhymney Comprehensive) governing body and public/community meetings.

Thursday 11 December : Drop-in sessions for school pupils, staff, parents/carers (Abertysswg Primary) and governing body meeting.

Monday 15 December : Drop-in sessions for school pupils, staff, parents/carers (Pontlottyn Primary) and governing body meeting.

- 3.3 Following a check of the consultation document, together with Welsh Government observations, an addendum sheet was produced and made available to all in attendance at the 3 days of meetings (see Appendix 1). A summary of main issues arising from the consultative process is outlined below and the accompanying notes of the meetings are attached.

Rhymney Comprehensive (Appendix 2)

- 3.4 Drop-in session (school council):
- Safety of Primary pupils/supervision
 - Construction work/site traffic arrangements
 - After use of existing school buildings.

- 3.5 Drop-in session (other pupils and staff):
- Safe route arrangements
 - Vehicle access.
- 3.6 Governing Body meeting:
- Safe route arrangements
 - Single site management/headteacher arrangements
 - After use of existing school buildings.
- 3.7 Community meeting:
- Safe route arrangements
 - After use of Pontlottyn Primary School building
 - Future property/site maintenance issues.

Abertysswg Primary (Appendix 3)

- 3.8 Drop-in session (staff):
- Future staffing arrangements/job security issues
 - Safe route arrangements
 - Loss of community facilities
 - After use of Abertysswg Primary School building
 - Design of new school
 - Capacity/admission arrangements for new school.
- 3.9 Drop-in session (school council):
- Future staffing arrangements
 - Facilities/arrangements at new school
 - Loss of community facilities/existing school.
- 3.10 Drop-in session (parents/carers):
- Safe route arrangements
 - Distance/attendance
 - Facilities at new school
 - After use of existing school building.
- 3.11 Governing Body meeting:
- Clarification of way forward
 - Educational standards/performance
 - Community links
 - Single site management/headteacher arrangements
 - Safe route arrangements
 - Vote against the proposal.

Pontlottyn Primary (Appendix 4)

- 3.12 Drop-in session (staff)
- Future staffing arrangements/job security issues
 - Design of new school
 - Facilities at new school.
- 3.13 Drop-in session (parents/carers):
- Safe route arrangements
 - Walking distance/transport.

- 3.14 Governing Body meeting:
- Standards/performance
 - Safe route arrangements
 - Supervision
 - Facilities at new school
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Vote in favour of the proposal.

Other Responses (Appendix 5)

- 3.15 These responses are briefly summarised in the Appendix. There are 7 responses in favour of the proposal with 8 against and 1 unsure.
- 3.16 These responses are largely consistent with those outlined in the formal consultation meetings.
- 3.17 In conclusion, the main issues which have arisen during the formal consultation process may be summarised as:
- Acknowledgement that a new school would bring improvements to the teaching and learning environment.
 - That it would result in better and newer facilities and increased resources.
 - Recognition that the site layout proposals are the most optimal given the constraints in developing the school for the 2 communities of Pontlloftyn and Abertysswg.

However, a number of concerns were expressed, mostly in relation to:

- Safe routes to schools/security.
- Increased distances to school and potential effects on attendance. School attendance is a responsibility of parents.
- Loss of community identity.

Two further issues were also raised on a number of occasions, namely:

- After use of existing school buildings.
- Single site management arrangements.

Both these matters were clarified in both the consultation document and in the formal meetings.

- 3.18 Copies of the meeting notes and responses are available in the Members' Resource Area for inspection

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and some low level or minor impact as described below has been identified affecting one or more of the target equality groups.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The bid approval in 2011 amounted to £12m which incorporated Fochriw Primary plus community facilities at Fochriw. CCBC had earmarked its £6m match funding share (50%) for this project. Because Fochriw Primary has since been dropped from the proposals that element of expenditure, for the provision of replacement community facilities in Fochriw, is no longer appropriate. Moreover, the new replacement school will need to be smaller than was originally proposed as it excludes Fochriw pupils. For these reasons the original figure of £12 million is no longer relevant.

- 5.2 Following submission of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) to the Welsh Government, a communication was received on 17 December 2014 which indicates that Welsh Government consider a total project sum of £6m build cost, plus a reasonable sum for additional costs to be appropriate for the project. The reasonable expectation, including the ancillary and abnormal works outlined below, is a final project cost of circa £8m.
- 5.3 It is evident that there will be unusually high additional costs to the project, which is planned to be built on the Rhymney Comprehensive School site, including:
- Land acquisitions (potentially both Pontlottyn and Abertysswg) to facilitate safe routes to school
 - Safe route provision
 - Playing field re-alignment
 - Flood alleviation works
- 5.4 Detailed work is still on-going to determine the best precise location for the new school building within the Upper Rhymney Valley Comprehensive site. This is in part to address some of the observations detailed in the consultation regarding the relationship between the primary and secondary school buildings, shared drop-off points and such like, and also to ensure that the overall cost is within the parameters set by Welsh Government as to total cost.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A very small number of staff may be affected by the proposal and will be dependant upon budget availability, staffing structures and staffing changes in the next 2 years.
- 6.2 Trade unions will be engaged in the process leading to the staffing of the new school.

7. CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 Detailed consultations have taken place as referred to in the report and comments have been reflected in the report and/or the accompanying notes of meetings.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the outcome of the consultation process, including the updated financial information from the Welsh Government and to determine whether to proceed to Statutory Notice.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To decide whether to proceed with the publication of a Statutory Notice.

10. STATUTORY POWER

- 10.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
The Education (Maintained Special Schools) (Wales) Regulations 1999
The Learning and Skills Act 2000
The School Organisation Code. Welsh Government (2013)
Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014.
- 10.2 This is a Cabinet function.

Author: Bleddyn Hopkins, Assistant Director 21st Century Schools
E-Mail: hopkib@caerphilly.gov.uk
Consultees: Chris Burns, Chief Executive
Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151
Councillor R. Passmore, Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning
A. Price, Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer/Head of Democratic Services

Background Papers:
21st Century Schools files
Council report 23 November 2010 (SOP)
Council report 3 November 2011 (SOP2)
Cabinet report 29 October 2014
Welsh Government approval letter 5 December 2011

Appendices:
Appendix 1: Summary of other responses
Appendix 2: Notes of meetings at Rhymney Comprehensive School
Appendix 3: Notes of meetings at Abertysswg Primary School
Appendix 4: Notes of meetings at Pontlottyn Primary School
Appendix 5: Addendum to consultation document

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Consultees should be aware that responses to consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal and that objections can only be registered following publication of the statutory notice. It is envisaged that any statutory notice will be published in the Spring Term 2015.

Secondary Provision

The proposal involves establishing a new build primary school on the site of Rhymney Comprehensive School. The primary school pupils will benefit from the use of play areas and potentially specialist curriculum areas etc which will aid them in transition. Preliminary discussions have taken place with Rhymney Comprehensive School and the proposal to have a new primary school on the same site does not seem to have any detrimental effect on the Comprehensive school's ability to deliver the curriculum.

ERRATUM – PAGE 5

PLEASE NOTE THE PARAGRAPH UNDER THE FIRST TABLE SHOULD READ:
'The deadline for responses is Wednesday 31st December 2014' and not 'The deadline for responses is Friday 31st December 2015.'

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DROP-IN SESSIONS FOR PUPILS, STAFF AND PARENTS/CARERS HELD AT RHYMNEY COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL 27th NOVEMBER 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Rhianon Passmore – Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning

Bleddyn Hopkins – Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools

Keri Cole – Manager, Learning, Education and Inclusion

Julian Harding – Lead Designer, Building Consultancy

Julian Williams – Senior Officer, School Admissions & Exclusions

The first group to attend the Drop-In session were representatives of the Rhymney Comprehensive School Council.

Statement. This proposal has no benefit for Rhymney Comprehensive School, in fact with the primary pupils sharing our facilities we will be worse off.

A. Preliminary discussions have taken place with Rhymney Comprehensive School and the proposal to have a new primary school on the same site does not seem to have any detrimental effect on the Comprehensive school's ability to deliver the curriculum.

Statement. When we are undertaking controlled experiments in a laboratory I think it will be very off putting to have 30 noisy primary aged children watching what we are doing.

A. There will be close consultation between the Primary and Secondary schools regarding any visits. Any controlled experiments may be watched by children under the supervision of adult staff.

Statement. I do not think it will be safe to have a 3 year old wandering around a Secondary school.

A. As stated previously, any primary aged child that is on the Secondary school site will be closely supervised by staff.

Statement. Rhymney Comprehensive School has 7 feeder primary schools. If Abertysswg and Pontlottyn merge then transition for them will be easier whereas the 5 remaining feeder schools will find transition harder. You should build a new primary school for all feeder schools, a super school.

A. It would be nice to have a new primary school for all feeder schools but that would not be practical as the new school would have 1100 pupils and would be larger than the Secondary School. Initially we did look at the possibility of including Fochriw Primary School in the proposal but following a survey of residents we decided to exclude Fochriw because of the negative response of the residents for reasons such as transport in adverse weather conditions or when a child is ill and needs to be collected, transport of young children and the effect on/loss of community values. Transition works well currently and this proposal would improve matters and not have a detrimental effect on it.

Q. Will the primary and secondary schools have the same pick up points?

A. The potential site plan on page 17 of the consultation document was referred to and the pupils were shown the proposed separate primary and secondary pick up and drop off points.

Q. Will the catchment areas of Phillipstown Primary and Whiterose Primary schools still be changing?

A. It has never been our intention to change the catchment area of any of the Rhymney Comprehensive feeder Primary schools catchment areas. The only change proposed would be that the catchment areas of Abertysswg and Pontlottyn Primary Schools would be amalgamated into one catchment area that would feed the new Primary school.

Q. How will the construction of the new Primary School affect the Secondary School?

A. We have built a number of new schools recently on the same site as schools in use, such as Cwm Ifor Primary and Greenhill Primary. Another example was the recent extension to Rhymney Comprehensive. The construction site would be fenced off and the construction traffic would be regulated during school times.

Q. With heavy machinery on site it is inevitable that teenagers will try and gain access to them. What measures will be put in place to stop this?

A. The building contractor would make suitable safety and security arrangements.

Statement. The primary children will be able to view what the secondary children are doing. The secondary children tend to smoke down by the tennis courts and that is one of the nearest points to the construction site.

A. The construction workers in close proximity would likely be a deterrent to pupils smoking in that area. The smoking will be noted for the attention of the Headteacher.

Q. How will the construction site affect the local Community?

A. There should be an opportunity to employ local people on the construction. Contractors would also have to adhere to Building related regulations such as noise levels and start and finish times.

Q. What will happen to the old school buildings?

A. As both Primary schools are owned by the Council, it is for the Council to determine future use. Concerns have been expressed regarding the potential future use of the Abertysswg School site. The Council has committed to a planning development brief for the site which would provide the local community with the opportunity to propose future use options.

The representatives of the School Council left the session.

Queries raised by other pupils and staff that were not covered above :

Q. Page 7 of the Consultation document states that 85.6% were against the proposal so why are you proceeding with it?

A. Page 7 refers to the consultation that took place with residents of Fochriw to see if they should be included in the proposal. As you say 85.6% were against Fochriw being included for a variety of reasons but mainly to do with transportation, so the Council decided to exclude Fochriw from the proposal.

Q. The possible site plan on page 17 of the consultation document refers to a site entrance for vehicles to the lower car park. I don't think the bend is large enough for a bus to get round and there is not much scope for road improvements?

A. The proposed safe route is not on the lower car park area but a new area close to the existing footbridge.

Statement. This proposal will cause traffic congestion. There is no traffic congestion in neither Abertysswg or Pontlottyn at present.

A. There is congestion experienced at most school sites, in particular at the start and finish of the school day.

Q. The Possible Site Plan on page 17 of the Consultation document shows an ecology area. What will this consist of?

A. We haven't gone into fine detail as yet. We will consult with school representatives as to ideas.

Q. Will any vehicles need access to the Primary site through the Secondary School gate?

A. There would be access envisaged for delivery vehicles, emergency vehicles and disabled drivers/vehicles.

The Drop-In session for pupils and staff closed at 2.00p.m.

At the Drop-In session for parents/carers held between 2.00p.m. and 5.00p.m. 1 person turned up, who was unable to attend the public/community meeting and was in favour of the proposal.

The Drop-In session for parents/carers closed at 5.00p.m.

Governing Body meeting at Rhymney Comprehensive School
27th November 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Rhianon Passmore – Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning

Bleddyn Hopkins – Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools

Keri Cole – Manager, Learning, Education and Inclusion

Sue Richards – Principal Finance Officer

Andrea West – Senior School Admissions and Exclusions Officer

Concerns: Abertysswg car park at the end of Westville has uneven land. How are people going to get in and out in bad weather?

A. Site visits have taken place to consider as part of the safe route to schools proposal.

Q. In the adverse weather are the paths going to be cleared as this will affect attendance. The parents will be unable to walk the route in the snow and it will not be accessible to pushchairs etc.

A. There are options for schools to purchase snow clearing services during periods of adverse weather should the governing body wish.

Q. At present there is a winter maintenance plan which only applies to the bus routes. It is a long way to go to clear paths. The Council do not clear side roads etc.

A. As stated above, options do exist to purchase snow clearing services.

Q. What access will there be to the turning and parking points?

A. There is a larger scale map available (tabled). Access is by the viaduct down to the present footbridge. There are separate Primary and Secondary aged drop off areas and parking proposed.

Q. What about congestion?

A. There have been discussions and a site visit with Highways Officers to discuss this as an access route and this will likely need some form of traffic control.

Q. I assume from the plans of the school that teachers etc would be encouraged to use the offsite parking.

A. Yes. It is proposed to have restricted vehicle access to the site e.g. emergency vehicles, delivery vehicles and disabled drivers/vehicles. It is proposed to have offsite parking for Primary school staff and parents. This is still work in progress and there will need to be further consultation regarding the detail.

Q. Will off site parking include the Comprehensive school ?

A. There will be facilities for parents (and staff if they wish) but no changes are proposed to existing Secondary staff parking.

Q. Are we going to have 2 separate schools? Why the change from the original consultation.

A. There are various options to consider eg single campus, federation etc. The option we have consulted upon is a status quo situation of one Primary and one Secondary. Cabinet has agreed to consider federation arrangements for Fochriw

Primary. If and when a Primary school governing body is established, we can consider different options.

Q. Will there be one Headteacher for all of this? It was mentioned in the Heads interview for this school.

A. We have not stated that in the consultation document but it is one of the considerations for the future, as outlined above.

Statement. There has been no commitment to a single headteacher but that remains an option, subject to consultation with the respective governing bodies.

Q. The perception across Caerphilly is this is going to be a single 3 – 18 school.

A. There are different options but the consultation document outlines the present proposal.

Q. Why did Human Resources put out this advertisement when the Headteacher was appointed ? It states that the person appointed would eventually be in charge of a 3 -18 school. Can you check with them?

A. We will explore this. We would have to follow a process to explore different options, including consultation with the respective governing bodies. There are new Welsh Government regulations in terms of governance which we would have regard to. These regulations would be followed in respect of the Fochriw federation proposal, for example.

Q. If Abertysswg and Pontlottyn Primaries come, how do you then pursue a single headteacher 3 -18 proposal. There is nothing positive for our school in this document.

A. The process would be as outlined previously. The benefits for the Primary school children have been outlined and after all they will be your (secondary school) future children.

Statement. I am very surprised at what has come out in this document.

A. You have made your position clear.

Statement. The way it was first packaged was as a 3 – 18 school. It was in Newline and that is what the community expects. There now appears to have been a miscommunication. This is bad publicity.

A. It could still be a single 3 – 18 school eventually. This would need to be considered by the respective governing bodies.

Q. What about the layout? There will be 2 separate schools. How are we going to manage the separation?

A. We would anticipate that the schools will work together to establish this. There needs to be discussion between the two Governing Bodies to resolve this.

Q. How do you envisage that we share facilities?

A. This would need to be discussed by the respective governing bodies and senior school staff.

Q. Would funding be available to plan etc?

A. What we are talking about tonight is about the principles and not a detailed plan. There is no specific funding outlined for this purpose as the funding secured is of a capital nature.

Q. The concerns expressed now need to be given consideration.

A. This needs to be managed for the best of all learners.

Statement. The difference is the consultation is either a single 3 -18 school or separate Primary and Secondary schools.

A. The consultation document is clear and is a statement of our present position.

Q. What will happen next?

A. The formal consultation period commenced on the 17th November and ends 31st December. A series of formal meetings are outlined in the consultation document. All views and comments will be summarised and presented to Cabinet in early February 2015 for them to decide whether to proceed with publishing a Statutory Notice. If this proceeds, it is envisaged for around March 2015 with a final decision likely around June 2015. If the proposal gets agreed then, the building should start in the Autumn term 2015 with a planned school opening date of January 2017.

A. As soon as the Governing Body of the new school is established, we can discuss issues of management e.g. 3 -18 arrangements, working as a shared site.

Q. What does call in mean?

A. If, for example, the Welsh Government believe the process may have been flawed and can decide against the proposal or ask the Authority to reconsider.

Statement. The Governing Body of the new school can have a meaningful dialogue and can consider options. They will need to have regard to the recently produced governance regulations.

Statement. The fundamental management of the new school appears to have been left until the last minute. They need to engage before.

Statement. Surely this is the Authority's gift to guide the future of the new school.

A. There will be a temporary Governing Body in place until permanent arrangements are in place.

Statement. We would speak to school staff, the wider community and Governing Body around the design of the new school. We have statutory process to conclude. The successful conclusion of the Statutory Notice would give us the opportunity to proceed with the school design, safe routes to schools and anything else involved. The planning application would need to be drawn up and build go out to tender.

Statement. You have 2 issues – physical build and the more challenging point of which option. There needs to be a more informed approach. Can you look at existing 3 -18 schools etc.

Statement. You have set expectations with this document which is 2 separate schools. The temporary Governing Body would need to be involved in everything.

A. We have clearly outlined our present position in the consultation document. We can then look at other options at a future date if that is the wish of the respective governing bodies. This would involve due process, similar to any other significant changes e.g. removal of 6th forms.

Statement. The first job would be to appoint a new Headteacher in the new school.

A. The first job would likely be to decide a structure for the new arrangements.

Q. Can you point me towards good examples of both processes so that I can give them both due consideration ?

Statement. Propose a working group be set up to look at this. It should involve Headteacher and there needs to be more fact finding. You need to involve stakeholders with agreed actions for everyone.

Q. Moving forward, if this consultation is adopted what will happen to the current school sites. We are a close community. The schools are at present the heart of both communities.

A. There has been a lot of discussion around this so that we do not end up with derelict buildings. We would usually declare them surplus to Education requirements. In relation to Abertysswg Primary, the Council has committed to consult the community via a planning development brief.

Q. Can the plaques in the current schools be placed somewhere where they can be seen?

A. There will be due consideration of this as we have had past experience of this in other schools e.g. Lewis School Pengam memorial.

Community Meeting at Rhymney Comprehensive School
27th November 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Rhianon Passmore – Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning

Bleddyn Hopkins – Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools

Keri Cole – Manager, Learning, Education and Inclusion

Sue Richards – Principal Finance Officer

Andrea West – Senior School Admissions and Exclusions Officer

A total of 3 local residents, plus a relative of one of the residents, attended the meeting.

There was an introduction given by Cllr Passmore regarding the proposal. Mr Hopkins further outlined the proposal and anticipated timescales, including the formal consultation period of 17th November to 31st December 2014.

Cllr Passmore stated that this is an excellent opportunity to improve the learning environment. If people have concerns or worries this is the opportunity to bring them forward for discussion.

Q. From the schools point of view I hope the school turns out well. However I have concerns regarding the vehicle access for two cars at the end of my family's land. Will it affect my access to my property? Is there a road to the car park? Will the access route come under the viaduct ?

A. Yes the proposed access will be under the viaduct. Planning and Highways will need to give the matter further consideration.

Q. How do we control the volume of school transport and public traffic?

Statement. I live next door to the current school and it is a problem and I have lived with it for many years.

Statement. The area needs to be gated off.

A. We will review the safe route arrangements with Highways to ensure e.g. traffic control, if deemed necessary.

Q. Will there be double parking under the viaduct?

A. There is insufficient width for 2 lanes of traffic simultaneously, plus pedestrian access. There is a provisional area for Secondary drop off and parking with separate areas for the Primary and then over a new footbridge. There is proposed for Primary site access for emergency, delivery and disabled drivers/vehicles.

Q. What is going to happen to Pontlottyn School?

A. This would be determined by Council in the event that Education declared the site surplus to our requirements.

Statement. Pavements will narrow the road.

A. There needs to be some sort of traffic control in place.

Q. Will it affect the value of my house? I have recently had it valued. I am concerned that if the school is open until 8pm at night for sporting facilities it could increase the anti-social behaviour around my home.

Statement. Residents currently have access to the parking lot at Pontlottyn Primary and there is an easement in place. Will this be removed? The common boundary wall of Pontlottyn Primary School is shared with other properties. Maintenance of the wall would need to be part of the sale conditions.

A. Please can you complete the pro-forma contained within the consultation document outlining your concerns in order that we can note these and refer them to the specialist officers for their consideration.

Statement. These meetings do not appear to have been advertised well.

A. They were published in the Western Mail and the Caerphilly Observer has reported on it.

Statement. They could have been displayed in Council Offices and local display boards.

A. Details were distributed extensively to a range of consultees and advertised in newspapers.

Statement. We are not opposed to the new school but want to ensure that there is a safe route to the school.

Q. Is the existing footpath staying as this path is well used by the community and local dog walkers.

A. The path will remain if it is the one outside the present school grounds.

Statement. I have horses there so you will need to ensure that secure fencing is in place prior to the work starting to make sure they do not escape.

A. Noted.

Those in attendance were reminded that the pro-forma contained with the consultation document needs to be returned by the 31st December 2014.

All attendees asked for a copy of these notes to be forwarded to them.

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DROP-IN SESSIONS FOR PUPILS, STAFF AND PARENTS/CARERS HELD AT ABERTYSSWG PRIMARY SCHOOL 11th DECEMBER 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Bleddyn Hopkins – Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools

Keri Cole – Manager, Learning, Education and Inclusion

Andrea Davies – Advisor, Additional Learning Needs

Mark Williams – Manager, Building Consultancy

Julian Williams – Senior Officer, School Admissions & Exclusions

Drop-In Session with Staff

Q. What is the position with regard to staff?

A. When the Governing Body of the proposed new school is formed they will take account of the formula budget and appoint staff appropriately. Based on projected pupil numbers, there should not be a need to reduce the number of teaching staff.

Q. The Support Staff are the most worried about their jobs?

A. It is difficult to comment on personal circumstances. Some support staff are shared and the authority would look at various options, such as cross matching, redeployment, voluntary early redundancies etc.

Q. My post is Deputy Headteacher of Abertysswg Primary but I am seconded from Tiryberth Primary?

A. The Governing Body will need to consider the staffing structure, but the proposed new primary school would need a Deputy Headteacher.

Q. When will the proposed new school be ready?

A. The proposed date is January 2017. The temporary Governing Body will be formed early and will appoint staff well in advance of this date.

Q. Will the Governing Body be totally new or will it be made up of members of the two current Governing Bodies?

A. The new Governing Body will likely comprise a combination of new and existing governors.

Q. What is the position regarding teaching assistants?

A. That will be for the Governing Body to determine. The budget should not result in any reduction in permanent teaching assistants.

Q. The safe route cycle path at the lower end nearest to Abertysswg is a disgrace. It floods, it's overgrown and full of dog mess. What will be done about this?

A. We would look at these issues with the relevant officers.

Statement. We will lose the community if we go to the proposed new school. We use the church and the Post Office.

Q. What will happen to the existing building?

A. Concerns have been expressed regarding the potential future use of the present Abertysswg School site. The Council has committed to a planning development brief for the site which would involve consultation with the local community.

Q. How does Redeployment work? I wouldn't want to travel to Risca for example.

A. The Council would look at individual circumstances and take travelling times into account. You would also be able to state your preferred options if the situation arises, albeit there could be no guarantees.

Q. Will parents have input into the proposed new school?

A. We will wish to consult with a cross section of the community and have already met with the parent network. We would probably work with a group of representatives from both schools as well.

Q. Will we have to re-apply for our jobs?

A. When the Governing Body of the proposed new school is formed they will take account of the formula budget and appoint staff appropriately. Based on projected pupil numbers, there should not be a need to reduce teaching staff.

Statement. We may lose children to the Welsh school because they are provided with transport or we may gain children as there is possibly a housing development in our catchment area.

Q. If I am on Maternity leave when all this takes place will I be protected?

A. You will still be an employee so you will be given the same employment rights.

Q. Is the lower parking area that is shown on the possible site plan for staff parking as well?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you stop Secondary pupils walking through the proposed new primary school site to get to Rhymney Comprehensive?

A. They would not be walking through the Primary school site. Security access is something that will be considered.

Q. Will we as staff have input into the proposed new school?

A. Yes, at the design stage staff will be consulted. We would normally give a range of options and ask for views.

Q. What about other facilities? Will we lose Flying Start?

A. We are looking to provide an Integrated Children's Centre on the site. We would look to replicate what you already have.

Q. Will children from out of the catchment be accommodated at the proposed new school? What about siblings in the future?

A. The criteria for pupil entry are stated in the Council's admissions policy, which would apply. The capacity of the proposed new school is 270 with an admission number of 38 so children will be admitted up to this latter number in each year group in accordance with admission criteria.

Q. How is the capacity calculated?

A. It is calculated in accordance with Welsh Governments regulations. It is based primarily on the number and size of the general teaching areas in the school.

Q. I thought that you would build a school big enough to accommodate Fochriw children in 5 years time?

A. We have consulted with the residents of Fochriw and in excess of 85% of those who responded did not want to be part of this proposal. They raised valid reasons, including transport and adverse weather issues.

Q. The Fochriw school building is similar to the Abertysswg school building?

A. Fochriw Primary has 4 classrooms all of which are fit for purpose size for 30 pupils plus teacher, i.e. larger than 55.8m², whereas Abertysswg Primary only has 1 out of 6 classrooms that is of a fit for purpose size.

Q. What is the situation with regards to the cooks?

A. Caerphilly catering would determine a staffing structure based on the new school/number of pupils. The Council would adopt its employment policies in allocation of staff.

Q. I am a casual worker and have been here for over 3 years. Would I be protected?

A. We would recommend any individual queries are checked with your respective Unions, regarding your Employment Rights.

Drop-In session with the Abertysswg Primary School Council (Year 2 to Year 6)

Q. Will we still have the same teachers?

A. Most, if not all, of the teaching staff should transfer to the new school. Some of you would have the same teachers but many of you will have new teachers as the school will have more children and you will have moved into different year groups.

Q. Why are you shutting our school down?

A. We are trying to give you a better school in which to be taught. The school council were shown pictures of 2 recent school builds (Cwm Ifor Primary and Greenhill Primary).

Q. The Comprehensive children smoke and take drugs?

A. You will be closely supervised in school and staff will look to keep you safe at all times.

Q. How many teachers will there be?

A. That will be up to the Governing Body. The proposed new school will have 9 classrooms, plus Nursery.

Q. Will the rugby pitch on the plan be for the Comprehensive and the Primary?

A. It will be mainly for the Comprehensive but the Headteacher of the Primary will arrange times for you to use it as well as other facilities like the hall and laboratories.

Q. Will we still have the same Headteacher?

A. That will be up to the Governing Body.

Q. What will the proposed new school be called?

A. That will be up to the Governing Body who may ask for ideas from the children.

Q. What will the current site be used for?

A. The Council will talk to residents about the future use of the site.

Q. What will happen to the nice things in the school such as the mural?

A. You could speak to your teacher and ask them if they can be taken to the proposed new school.

Q. Will we take the laptops as well?

A. Yes you can take them with you and you will probably have new ones.

Q. Will the whiteboards go with us?

A. It depends on how old they are and how easy it would be to remove them. You will probably take some and have new ones.

Q. What is the point of closing this school and opening a new one as you will be spending more money?

A. It is not about the money, it is about trying to provide you with a better learning environment.

Statement. All we have in the community is the school, a shop and the fish shop.

A. The proposed new school is not far away and is still in Abertysswg.

Q. Couldn't you just improve our school?

A. Your school is over 110 years old so it would be extremely difficult to adapt it to the standards that a new school can provide you with.

Q. Parents want children to go to a small school?

A. The proposed new school is of a medium size. We have a primary school in Oakdale that has over 600 children.

Q. What sacrifices will we have to make?

A. You will be expected to travel a bit further to school. That is the main difference but you would have a better school building for teaching and learning.

Q. Will we still have an after school club?

A. That will be up to the Governing Body.

Q. Will we still have the same children in the class?

A. Currently you have more than 1 year group in a class. In the proposed new school all the children in your class will likely be from the same year as you, so some children will be the same and some will be new.

Q. What will the school look like?

A. The school council were shown pictures of the 2 schools mentioned earlier as examples of what the proposed new school could look like.

Q. Will the teachers rush us with our work?

A. The teachers will treat you in the same way as they treat you at this school.

Q. Will we have to walk to school or will we have a bus?

A. You will have to walk.

Q. We have managed for 111 years so why change now?

A. We have the opportunity of providing you with a learning environment fit for the 21st Century.

Q. Will the school day be the same length?

A. The school day will be the same length, although the start and finish times may be different.

Q. What will the school badges look like?

A. That will be up to the Governing Body. They will probably ask the children for ideas.

Q. Will we still have school trips?

A. That will be up to the Governing Body but it need not be any different to what it is now.

Q. Will we still have Maths tests?

A. Yes.

Q. How many teachers will be in the yard to look after the children at break times?

A. That will be up to the Headteacher.

Q. Where will we eat packed lunch?

A. The dining area will be big enough for school dinners and those having packed lunch.

Q. How far will the school be from here?

A. The school council were shown on the proposed site plan.

Q. Will we take our sports equipment with us?

A. Yes if it is good condition and you will probably have new sports equipment.

Q. The car park is close to houses so it will be noisy for residents?

A. The proposed car park isn't near any houses.

Q. At the moment, every morning, we choose what we want for dinner. Will that continue?

A. That will be up to the Governing Body. Caerphilly catering will continue to provide the meals.

Q. The school has pulled the community together. Losing it will pull the community apart?

A. The proposed new school is not far away and it is still in Abertysswg.

Q. Will we still have a school council?

A. Yes.

Q. We have spent a lot of money on the library recently and you're going to knock it down. It was a waste of money?

A. The library will still have to be used for the next 2 years and many of the books can transfer to the new school and possibly some of the furniture.

Drop-In Session with Parents/Carers – 6 parents attended

Q. Is Fochriw out of the equation?

A. Yes. We have consulted with the residents of Fochriw and in excess of 85% of those who responded did not want to be part of this proposal. They raised valid reasons, including transport and adverse weather issues.

Q. The safe route cycle path at the lower end nearest to Abertysswg is a disgrace. It floods, it's overgrown and full of dog mess and it's where the Comprehensive pupils smoke and take drugs. What will be done about this?

A. We will look to refer these matters to appropriate officers.

Statement. We do not think that parents from the top estate will send their children to school during periods of inclement weather.

A. It could be that the school try an initiative such as the walking bus which is run very successfully at other Primary schools.

Statement. I don't think that having all classes over 30 is good for the children.

A. At present there are up to 3 year groups in 1 class which does not make it easy for a teacher. At the proposed new school, most pupils can be accommodated in single year group classes. Classes should not be more than 30.

Statement. It's all down to money or the lack of it from Welsh Government.

A. The situation will be getting worse over the next few years with the budget cuts that have been announced.

Q. What about the school uniform? Parents will have to buy one for September 2016 and another for January 2017 when the children move to the new school.

A. This will be looked at by the Governing Body well in advance of the opening of the proposed new school.

Q. What will happen to the current building as we don't want an empty building with smashed windows at the start of the village.

A. Concerns have been expressed regarding the potential future use of the present Abertysswg School site. The Council would commit to a planning development brief for the site which would result in the community being consulted as to future use.

Statement. The lower car park should be much closer to the new school.

A. That is something that we are considering and has been raised previously.

Statement. Our main concerns are the location of the new school and the interaction with Comprehensive aged children.

A. We don't realistically have a choice with the location and security issues will be looked at regarding safe routes arrangements for the different aged pupils.

ABERTYSSWG PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
11th DECEMBER 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Bleddyn Hopkins – Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools

Keri Cole – Manager, Learning, Education and Inclusion

Julian Williams – Senior Officer, School Admissions & Exclusions

Q. Will the views of all interested parties be conveyed to Council Members?

A. A summary of the key issues will be included in the report to Members and notes of the actual meetings and copies of the response pro-forma will be available in the Members library.

Q. The perception of residents is that this proposal is taking place whether they like it or not?

A. We haven't said that but it's what people assume. There are statutory processes to follow before any final decision.

Q. Can we attend the Cabinet meeting to listen to the debate?

A. Yes, it will be a public meeting but we suggest you contact the Council (Committee Services) before hand as spaces may be limited.

Q. Will the 3 school meetings be itemised?

A. Yes, there will be notes of each meeting summarising the issues raised.

Q. How was the public meeting in Rhymney Comprehensive school advertised?

A. It is on page 5 of the Consultation Document. It was advertised on 13th November in the Western Mail of which we have a copy of the press cutting. It was also referred to in articles in the Caerphilly Observer, the Rhymney Valley Express and on the Caerphilly Council website.

Q. Don't you think that public notices should have been put up in the village?

A. It is not a requirement of Welsh Government to hold a public meeting but as an Authority we decided that it was best to do so and were advised by our communications department that advertising in the Western Mail was the best way to advertise it to achieve maximum coverage.

Q. Many elderly people feel very strongly about the proposal but wouldn't go to Rhymney Comprehensive School?

A. As the proposal concerned Abertysswg and Pontlottyn we thought it best to hold the public meeting in a neutral venue.

Q. This proposal is about the education of children. Abertysswg is in a deprived area which results in children being slow learners and putting them in larger classes will hinder their progress. What evidence have you got that amalgamation improves educational outcomes?

A. Where a child lives does not affect their ability to learn unless they have special educational needs. However there is a link between learning and the environment a child is taught in. Most of the points raised today have been about geography and distance and not on the environment that the children will be taught in if this proposal goes ahead. We believe that the size of the proposed school is just right as it is easier for teachers to teach single year groups rather than having to teach 3 year groups in 1 class. Whiterose Primary and St Gwladys Bargoed schools are good examples of successful amalgamations. The size of a school does not affect the ability to learn. Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary in Oakdale has over 600 children and has just had an excellent Inspection. Leadership and Management is the key to success. Take Physical Education for an example it would be much better to have a flat yard and green areas for play and exercise. The 2 most important principles of Welsh Governments 21st century schools strategy are Raising Standards and improving school buildings. ESTYN has produced a report evidencing that standards have improved in new and amalgamated schools.

Q. How did Whiterose Primary School do?

A. They were in special measures but are out now and standards are improving. We undertook a 10 year analysis of St Gwladys Bargoed School and found significant improvements.

Q. With the current school there are links with the community and links with the church?

A. We don't see why this should stop. The proposed school is not far away and is situated in Abertysswg.

Q. I have to question the management structure of the new school. I was under the impression that it would be a 3 to 18 establishment run by the Headteacher of Rhymney Comprehensive School?

A. As you are aware this matter was raised at the Rhymney Comprehensive governing body meeting. We have sought the views of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning concerning this and she has assured us that there was no commitment to this. We have acknowledge that there are a range of options which we can consider with governors in the future.

Q. Rob Davies was interviewed as Headteacher of a 3 to 18 school?

A. That is clearly not the information we have been given. If you provide proof of that we will look into it further. We were not at the interview so cannot comment further at present.

Q. We have concerns about attendance, especially from the area of Greensway.

A. The school are developing good strategies to improve attendance levels.

Statement. The paths are not gritted, children will have to share paths with older children. The drop-off point at the lower end of the site needs to be closer to the proposed school.

A. Admittedly this is a complex safe route. The paths will have to be looked at.

Q. We report the number of lamps that are not working and months later nothing has changed?

A. We will advise Highways of your concerns.

Q. What can you do to improve the safe route?

A. With regard to the path at the lower end of the site there is the possibility of widening the path for vehicle access with a turning point nearer the proposed new school. We would not want vehicles on the school site. We would also look at having separate Primary and Secondary access points in that vicinity.

Q. Would emergency vehicles have access through the Comprehensive school site?

A. Yes, Emergency, Delivery and Disabled vehicles.

Q. Has approval been given for access off the new road?

A. We have met with a Highways officer and there has been preliminary approval.

Q. There is a lot of congestion outside Rhymney Comprehensive at present?

A. With this proposal we have the opportunity to look at congestion and take traffic off the main road.

Q. What about gritting?

A. That would be a matter for the school to consider. Many schools purchase this additional service

Statement. That would be a further cost to the school along with the rates.

A. Yes it would. Rates should not result in an additional burden as this is reflected in the formula budget. There would be savings with regard to energy costs and day to day building maintenance.

Statement. You are going to rip the heart out of the village.

Statement. We never asked for this.

Statement. We don't have anything north of the Rhymney bridge so why do we have to have this?

A. Members wanted to support this area which experiences high levels of social deprivation.

Statement. If you provide transport for everyone it would be a good proposal.

Statement (by Assistant Director). I am sensing a substantial amount of negativity to the proposal. Is it fair to say that we have done the best that we can in the circumstances? Would you be willing to vote on the proposal?

Statement (by Chair of Governors). It was confirmed the Council had done the best it could in the circumstances with the proposal. The Chair was happy to proceed to a vote but advised it should be noted that this isn't a full Governing Body.

A vote was taken and all 7 Governors voted against the proposal. The acting Headteacher abstained.

Meeting Ended

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DROP-IN SESSIONS FOR PUPILS, STAFF AND PARENTS/CARERS HELD AT PONTLOTTYN PRIMARY SCHOOL 15th DECEMBER 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Rhianon Passmore, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Bleddyn Hopkins – Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools

Keri Cole – Manager, Learning, Education and Inclusion

Mark Williams – Manager, Building Consultancy

Julian Williams – Senior Officer, School Admissions & Exclusions

Drop-In Session with Staff

Q. I am going on maternity leave will I be kept in the loop?

A. Yes, the school should keep you advised of progress.

Q. Would the headship be advertised prior to Helen Leaman retiring?

A. That will be a decision for the new Governing Body.

Q. Will all staff appointments be made at the same time?

A. Again that will be a matter for the new Governing Body but the usual practice is for this process to be staggered over time.

Q. When will all the jobs be put in place?

A. The process would likely commence about a year prior to the school opening in January 2017.

Q. Will the Governing Body be totally new or will it be made up of members of the two current Governing Bodies?

A. The new Governing Body positions will be filled, as appropriate, but it would be usual to have a mix of existing and new governors in such situations.

Q. Is it just the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher jobs that will be advertised?

A. We would imagine that the vast majority of permanent staff will be slotted in.

Q. Will the teaching staff be involved in the design as when we visited Cwm Ifor Primary we thought the classrooms were very small?

A. The design of Cwm Ifor was driven by school staff and is open plan. The Headteacher and staff will be involved. An option is to have open plan for Key Stage 1 and more formal size compliant classrooms for Key Stage 2.

Statement. As staff we are quite excited at the prospect of a new school.

A. It will be a better teaching environment, both inside and outside. The biggest differences we notice with new schools are the acoustics and energy efficiency.

Q. Will we have new resources and technology or would we transfer equipment from the school?

A. We would make some funding available for the new school, although it is likely that some existing equipment will transfer, especially if it is in good condition.

Q. How will the transition between the old and new schools take place?

A. We would let the school have 2 or 3 closure days at either/or the end of the Autumn Term and the start of the Spring Term.

Q. Will staff be expected to move equipment?

A. No, we will employ external contractors to do that.

Q. Will there be too many staff for the new school?

A. There will be less of a budget as only one lump sum is payable, although there will only one Headteacher instead of two. The detailed staffing structure will need to be considered by the governing body.

Q. If there is a reduction in staff when will we know?

A. That would be up to the new Governing Body but we would expect typically a term's notice.

Q. Will the new Primary school be under the control of Rhymney Comprehensive?

A. No, they will be separate. Maybe in the future we could look at a campus manager for 3-18 or we could look at federation, as is being proposed for Fochriw.

Q. What will happen to the cook as there are currently 2?

A. That will be for Caerphilly catering to decide. We have 2 years to manage the process and would look to avoid any compulsory redundancies, whenever possible.

Q. If the Deputy Headteacher of Abertysswg Primary got the Headship could she employ all Abertysswg staff?

A. The appointment of staff would be for the new governing body. We don't see any reasons why the number of permanent teaching staff should decrease, for example.

Q. Will staff be interviewed?

A. This will be a matter for the new governing body but it is likely a number of staff would merely be slotted in.

Q. Will there be a full-time nursery?

A. The Local Authority provides funding for part-time nursery so it would be up to the new governing body to decide whether it wishes to provide funding for full-time. We have proposed an Integrated Children's Centre which could provide wrap around care and Flying Start facilities. The best example of an Integrated Children's Centre is St James Primary in Caerphilly.

Q. Will we get input into the design?

A. Yes we would consult with staff, parents and children.

Q. How many teaching assistants in Abertysswg Primary are permanent?

A. We are not sure. We have spoken to the two Headteachers and they do not see an issue with the deployment of the teaching assistants.

Drop-In Session with Parents/Carers – 4 parents attended

Q. The Headteacher of a super school in Cardiff has been suspended so it can't be good educationally?

A. It is not planned as a super school. It is a new Primary school for 3-11 year olds on the Comprehensive School site.

Q. There will be a further distance to travel to school and the young children will have to walk past older children dealing drugs and causing anti-social behaviour?

A. The Local Authority would presently provide transport if the children reside more than a mile and a half from the proposed new school and it is their catchment school. We have undertaken an analysis and no one would be living further than a mile and a half. We have also planned safe routes. The alleged drug taking has been mentioned previously so the appropriate staff will be informed.

Q. Will it be a robot school just full of computers?

A. It will be a normal primary school with up to date technology to enhance learning.

Q. Will there be a need for traffic control by the viaduct?

A. This is the likely outcome we will need to pursue.

Q. The two communities are historically separate. Pontlloyn results are good so will the amalgamation bring standards down?

A. We don't see any reasons why standards should drop.

Q. We believe that every village should have a local school. Why don't you just spend the money on the current schools? Taking the school away will take the heart out of the community.

A. There are only limited adaptations that could be undertaken at the two existing schools.

Q. Will there be a sheltered walkway to the new school?

A. No that would be impracticable as it would be too far and could lead to more anti-social behaviour.

Q. My worry is about the river and the safety of the children?

A. The safe routes will be looked at to safeguard the safety of the children as that is paramount.

Q. What will the class sizes be for the new school?

A. No classes can exceed 30 children. There would be an advantage of classes at the new school as they will all probably have single year groups instead of the current situation where two or three year groups are in one class.

Statement. If you provide transport then we would be happy with the proposed new school. A sheet was shown with public transport costs per day with a local company.

The details were:

Fochriw

Taxi Car - £13.00 Return

Taxi Minibus - £19.80 Return

Stagecoach Bus - £3.60 Adult Return

Stagecoach Bus - £2.40 Child Return

Pontlloftyn

Taxi Car - £8.80 Return

Taxi Minibus - £15.60 Return

Stagecoach Bus - £2.50 Adult Return

Stagecoach Bus - £1.70 Child Return

Abertysswg

Taxi Car - £6.00 Return

Taxi Minibus - £9.00 Return

Stagecoach Bus - £1.80 Adult Return

Stagecoach Bus - £1.20 Child Return

A. We could not provide transport to you as this would be against policy.

Drop-In Session Ended

PONTLOTTYN PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

15th DECEMBER 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Rhianon Passmore, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning
Bleddyn Hopkins – Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools
Keri Cole – Manager, Learning, Education and Inclusion
Julian Williams – Senior Officer, School Admissions & Exclusions

Q. Performance of both schools are clearly outlined in the consultation document, Pontlottyn rated as good and Abertysswg being adequate. I have an understanding that when two new schools unite as one, all accreditations cease and the wheel is re-invented. This is poor, as all hard work that has been put in place over the last 10 years will be redundant. Pontlottyn is proud of all the accreditations which can be viewed in the reception area. When I chose Pontlottyn school for my child's education, a lot of these accreditations were instrumental in the decision making process. How will future parents make this important decision about their child's education placement of there is no accreditation to aid the decision.

A. Both schools have a range of accreditations. It will be an interesting challenge for the new school to obtain new accreditations as the processes are important not just the plaque on the wall. Regarding new parents, the Headteacher can advise of the achievements of both former schools and the challenges that the new school will face.

Q. What are the Councils plans with leadership of the new school. As Abertysswg School has an acting Headteacher and Pontlottyn school's Headteacher is close to retirement age. Could the Council please clarify this?

A. A new Governing Body will be formed who will appoint the Headteacher and will structure the school based on the budget available.

Q. On page 13 of the Consultation document it states that 'nearly' all Abertysswg children behave well. How many children is 'Nearly'? As Pontlottyn school's behaviour is good I am concerned this will affect the children that want to learn. Could we have further information with regards to 'however' comments on page 13. Abertysswg school has a weak record of raising standards and recent initiatives are not fully established in the life and work of the school?

A. There is no problem with behaviour at Abertysswg. There have not been any permanent exclusions and very low number of fixed term exclusions. Estyn's definition of 'nearly' is 97%. Estyn's inspections are getting harder and there is a new Headteacher and management structure at the school. The Education Achievement Service has no concerns with Abertysswg school and the attendance rate has increased by 3% recently.

Q. Some parents' comments are based upon sharing entrances with older Rhymney Comprehensive students which concerns us as this can be very overpowering for younger children. There have also been accusations of anti-social behaviour within the recreational areas next to the Comprehensive school. Parents do not want their children to witness this behaviour?

A. As with a primary school, at the moment there is a separate area for Nursery children. In the same way, the primary site would be separate from the Comprehensive. We would liaise with the school to have the appropriate security in place. With regard to anti-social behaviour, having a primary school on the site should act as a deterrent.

Q. With regard to the new access bridge will pupils walk under or over the bridge? Rail tracks are extremely dangerous. Also in the winter months the steps will need to be gritted. Experience has shown that at present the routes currently used for the route to school are not maintained, examples of which are the link steps by Merchant Street and Farm Road which are extremely hazardous when ice arrives and the pathway down from Sunny View to Merchant Street is trip hazardous?

A. Referring to the site plan on page 17 of the Consultation document, the access bridge is the footbridge over the river and therefore not near the railway. Gritting will have to be considered by the school as part of a winter maintenance service.

Q. How will the Comprehensive and Primary school children be segregated, fencing, security etc. At present members of the public can easily gain access to the Comprehensive. I have known for primary schools in other cities to have lock down facilities at a push of a button and several security activations throughout the boundary. If the school is going to be state of the art, could we have state of the art security?

A. The Council will liaise with the school regarding the most appropriate security measures but we would not envisage the lock down arrangements you refer to.

Q. There are concerns about the safe route to school. As we have raised concerns about the safe route to our current school, this includes the Farm Road /Fochriw Road bend being very dangerous, lorries exceeding weight limit, cars breaking speed limit, narrow paths, lorries and cars mounting curbs, no 20 mile speed limit outside the school, unlike other schools. It will be further to walk to the new school for some of our pupils so further hazards?

A. We have arranged the site to avoid congestion and traffic on the Primary school site will be kept to a minimum. The site is a compromise between Abertysswg and Pontlottyn. The Headteacher will contact Highways regarding 20 mile speed limit signs and will receive the support of the Education Department.

Q. On page 20 of the consultation document it states that all pupils will be supervised closely at all times. With reference to the Comprehensive, I have to dispute this, there has been an instance of two students hitching lifts home last summer in school time, stopping a number of strange vehicles and even asking me if I had a vehicle to take them home. It transpired that the two students who were 11 years of age left school in the afternoon after a disagreement in the classroom. These students were not safeguarded in my opinion. This may be a one off that I came across but how do you control 800 students? Could the Council clarify what the procedures are for supervising and the wandering of students within school hours, such as lunch time, or being withdrawn from the classroom for behaviour reasons etc?

A. There are obviously safeguarding issues here that need to be addressed and these will be followed up. Schools are in charge of students when they are on the school grounds and if children do abscond then school management have to look into it and follow truancy procedures.

Q. On page 20 it states that up to date facilities will be used by communities but in what context? It sounds positive as we don't have a community centre. I have been known to frequent Rhymney Comprehensive for community activities and it has been noted that the lights outside leading down from the Abertysswg entrance are in a poor state and the sports hall has poor hygiene facilities, no soap, no hand driers, missing toilet seat, this gives a very poor impression of what the Comprehensive School has to offer. All problems have been noted and forwarded to the necessary departments for action?

A. An annual audit is undertaken of all schools to check facilities and regular hygiene inspections take place. This will be followed up with the school.

Q. Are there any future roads to be introduced in and around the school? As recent media reports state health issues with the environment air qualities.

A. Highways funding has been agreed for a feasibility study re the Heads of the Valley. It could happen longer term but nothing in the foreseeable future.

Q. Are there any plans to curb traffic at the entrance to Abertysswg?

A. Highways have looked at it and are not proposing anything with regard to the school. We will encourage parents to drop children off, or preferably walk using the safe route.

Q. Younger children can find the anti-social behaviour overpowering?

A. We were not aware of the anti-social behaviour until the parents meeting and the Cabinet Member for Education and lifelong Learning is going to follow it up.

Statement. Finally please take great consideration on any job losses, as all our teachers, teaching assistants, catering staff, dinner ladies, caretaker, each person involved in the school are highly valued members of a team, which has helped us strive to being a 'GOOD' rated school. We do not want our standards to be compromised in any way or morale to drop, as a result of the new school being developed.

A. Noted.

Statement. This is a fantastic opportunity but there are issues with traffic.

A. The main issues are the location of the proposed new school, traffic, increased distance and anti-social behaviour.

Statement by Assistant Director. Would you be willing to vote on the proposal?

Reply by Chair of Governors. Yes.

A vote was taken and all 9 Governors voted in favour of the proposal.

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Abertysswg and Pontlottyn Consultation Responses

Agree with the Proposal

1. For the reasons in the Consultation Document – Parent (Abertysswg)
2. No alternative has been proposed – 2 Parents (Abertysswg)
3. Better facilities e.g. larger classrooms & hall – 2 Parents (Abertysswg)
4. Newer facilities. Children from 2 villages can mix. Increased learning opportunities. Opportunities for newly qualified staff. Easier transition. Less mixed classes. – Parent (Abertysswg)
5. In need of a new school in Pontlottyn but with 11 concerns that were addressed at the Governing Body Consultation Meeting – Parent Governor (Pontlottyn)
6. Has a number of concerns over the future maintenance and disposal of Pontlottyn Primary School – 2 Residents (Pontlottyn)
7. For the reasons in the Consultation Document although the Document does not provide an analysis of potential costs of safe routes to schools; does not identify or propose a staffing structure for the replacement school; does not include recent end of Foundation Phase and key stage 2 data and has not commented on comparisons with similar schools based on entitlement to free school meals; does not include the local authority's current view and categorisation on the quality of leadership, and outcomes; and does not evaluate the implications for any pre-school educational providers in the locality - Estyn

Disagree with the Proposal

1. Larger classes. After school activities – Parent (Abertysswg)
2. Out of town location. Attendance will drop – Parent (Abertysswg)
3. Too far to walk. Bigger school so less empathy for needy children – Carer (Abertysswg)
4. Should have local school. 3 & 18 yr olds together not appropriate. Weather conditions. Transport of 3 yr olds. Job losses – Not Known
5. Safe Route shared with older children. Parking too far away – Parent (Abertysswg)
6. Current school has better amenities. New building will not be as robust. Poor location. Lack of parking. Poor access. Loss of rugby pitch for Comp school – Resident (Abertysswg)
7. Rip heart out of village. Job losses. Attendance will drop. Distance for young children. Vehicles can not get to school. Cost of school uniforms in January – Parent (Abertysswg)
8. Effect on Community. Children's safety. Children's Education. Larger class sizes. State of Safe Route. Access to school site – Parent (Not Known)

Not Sure

1. There is a need for a new modern school but access not sufficient. Safe route shared with older children – Parent (Abertysswg)

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SPECIAL CABINET – 25TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: EDUCATION CAPITAL 2015/16

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- 1.1 The report was considered by the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on 24th February 2015.
- 1.2 The report advised of the proposals for the 2015/16 Education Capital Programme and the allocation of Education capital budgets for the 2015/16 financial year in the context of the 3-year capital programme 2014/15 – 2016/17.
- 1.3 Following detailed consideration, Members noted the identified proposals as outlined in the report and that it would now be presented to Cabinet for consideration.
- 1.4 Members are asked to consider the recommendation.

Author: Charlotte Evans, Committee Services Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 The Education for Life Scrutiny Committee Report dated 24th February 2015.

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EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 24TH FEBRUARY 2015

SUBJECT: EDUCATION CAPITAL 2015/16

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on proposals for the 2015/16 Education Capital Programme which are planned to be considered by Cabinet on 1st April 2015.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report identifies proposals for the allocation of Education capital budgets for the 2015/16 financial year in the context of the 3-year capital programme 2014/15 - 2016/17.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The report considers the use of capital resources within Education to ensure the Council's key strategies are best achieved.
- 3.2 The report links directly to the Education for Life, sustainability, regeneration and equality strategies. The report also links to the Learning theme of Caerphilly Delivers, the Local Service Board single integrated plan.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Special Council, at its meeting on 26th February 2014, agreed a medium term financial strategy 2014/17. The proposals included a 3-year indicative forward capital programme for Education, as follows:-

Scheme	Indicative		
	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000
Accommodation Requirements	200	225	225
Asset Management Strategy	600	600	600
Health and Safety	300	300	300
School Security	100	100	100
School Boiler Replacement Programme	224	220	220
Total	1,424	1,445	1,445

- 4.2 Scrutiny, at its meeting on 8th July 2014, were apprised of the budgetary pressures being faced and the need for ongoing funding, especially in the context of asbestos (2014/15) and electrical

rewiring works (rolling programme).

4.3 In this context, it is proposed to allocate a sum of £2m towards electrical rewiring works in schools over the 3 year period 2014/15 - 2016/17, funded as follows:-

- Asset Management 300k p.a. = 900k
- Health & Safety 300k p.a. in 2015/16 + 2016/17 = 600k
- School Security and Boiler Replacement 250k p.a. in 2015/16 + 2016/17 = 500k

4.4 On this basis, the residual capital budgets available for 2015/16 + 2016/17 would be as follows:-

	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000
Additional Accommodation	225	225
Asset Management	300	300
School Boiler Replacement	70	70

The revenue/capital (50/50) budget is presently 325k and will be reviewed in the context of the MTFP.

The detailed proposals for 2015/16 are outlined below and in the Appendix.

Additional Accommodation

4.5 As in recent years, the annual capital allocation equates to circa 1 additional classroom per annum. Based upon the updated school places plan considered by Scrutiny, at its meeting on 4 November 2014, the 1st priority scheme for 2015/16 to cater for in-catchment demand has been identified as Y G Cwm Gwyddon and it is proposed to allocate the 225k for that purpose.

Asset Management

4.6 The sum of £300,000 for 2015/16 is proposed to be allocated to the identified highest priority schemes, as assessed by Building Consultancy, as follows:-

School	Description of Bid	£'000
Bedwas High	B Block asbestos sheet roof renewal/upgrade	80
Cwmaber Infants	Nursery block roof renewal/upgrade	50
Pengam Primary	Commence roof renewal/upgrade	60
Ty Sign Primary	Continuation of phased/elevation of curtain walling	110

School Boiler Replacements

4.7 The residual sum of 70k in 2015/16 would typically fund 1 Primary school replacement boiler and the identified priority scheme is in relation to Cwmaber Infants.

Revenue/Capital

4.8 It is proposed to utilise these monies to support schemes funded 50/50 with schools. Given the bids submitted in accordance with this requirement, the following are proposed for support (costs shown are the estimated gross amount):

School	Description of Bid	£'000
Cefn Fforest Primary	Replacement heating systems	30
Coedybrain Primary	Damp and wood block flooring	15
Fleur De Lys Primary	Windows replacement (phase 2)	25
Glyngaer Primary	Ceilings replacement	20
Libanus Primary	Re-pointing and repair of external wall	15
Maesycwmmwr Primary	Adaptations re ICT & PPA	20
Nant Y Parc Primary	Toilet upgrades	15
Pantside Primary	Toilet upgrades (junior boys)	12
Plasyfelin Primary	Adaptations	30
Rhydri Primary	Soft Play	20
St. Gwladys Primary	Staff toilets	10
YG Cwm Derwen	Kitchen Flooring & Tiling	10
Trinity Fields	Adaptations	40
Bedwas High	Toilet upgrade C block boys	22
Heolddu Comprehensive	Toilet upgrades B, C & D block (phase 1)	40
Rhymney Comprehensive	Roofing upgrades	40
St. Cenydd Comprehensive	Refurbish science laboratory	40

- 4.9 These schemes would commit circa 50% of the available budget and will allow further 50/50 links to be progressed during the financial year, if approved.

Flying Start Capital

- 4.10 The Welsh Government (WG) has approved 3 bids for Caerphilly for 2015/16 amounting to 856k as follows:-

School	Description of Bid	£'000
Blackwood Primary	Building containing childcare, multi agency office space, parenting and crèche spaces, toilets and kitchen	356
YGG Caerffili	Building containing childcare, multi agency office space, parenting room crèche, toilets and kitchen	353
Plasyfelin Primary	Demountable to include childcare, small office, kitchen and toilets	147
Total		856

- 4.11 Circa 200-250k of the Blackwood Primary scheme will be spent in 2014/15 as an agreed virement with the Welsh Government.
- 4.12 These will be progressed to ensure completion by the end of the 2015/16 financial year in accordance with grant terms and conditions.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Many of the initiatives contained within the Education capital budget seek to address equality issues. Examples include accessibility issues in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 toilet upgrades, enhancements to accommodation. Improvements to existing buildings are also covered by the Access budget held by Corporate Property.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These have been outlined in the report.

6.2 The report sets out the proposals for the 2015/16 financial year and identifies some potential future liabilities.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No direct personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are requested to note proposals to utilise the Education capital budget for 2015/16 as outlined in the report which will be reported to Cabinet, at its meeting on 1st April 2015.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To apprise Members of proposals for the Education capital budget for 2015/16.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
The Learning and Skills Act 2000
Equality Act 2010

Author: Bleddyn Hopkins, Assistant Director, Our Schools Our Future
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Consultees: Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Keri Cole, Manager, Learning Education & Inclusion
Tony Maher, Assistant Director, Planning & Strategy
Councillor Rhianon Passmore, Cabinet Member, Education & Lifelong Learning
Councillor Wynne David, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor James Pritchard, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Gail Williams, Acting Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Angharad Price, Solicitor/Deputy Monitoring Officer
Gareth Hardacre, Head of People Management and Development
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
Mark Williams, Manager, Building Consultancy Services
Donna Jones, Health & Safety Manager
David A Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)
Mike Lewis, Principal Accountant – Education Central
Sarah Mutch, Flying Start Co-ordinator.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Proposed Capital Schemes 2015/16

Background Papers:

17th Edition Electrical Works (Cabinet Report 4th February 2015)

Capital Bid Pro-Formas 2015/16

Flying Start Capital Approvals (Welsh Government)

Proposed Capital Schemes 2015/16

<u>Category/School</u>	<u>Description of Bid</u>	<u>£'000</u>
<u>ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION</u>		
Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Gwyddon	Additional classroom accommodation	225
<u>ASSET MANAGEMENT</u>		
Bedwas High	B Block asbestos sheet roof renewal/upgrade	80
Cwmaber Infants	Nursery block roof renewal/upgrade	50
Pengam Primary	Commence roof renewal/upgrade	60
Ty Sign Primary	Continuation of phased/elevation of curtain walling	110
<u>BOILER REPLACEMENT</u>		
Cwmaber Infants	Replacement boiler	70
<u>REVENUE/CAPITAL (50/50)</u>		
Cefn Fforest Primary	Replacement heating systems	30
Coedybrain Primary	Damp and wood block flooring	15
Fleur De Lys Primary	Windows replacement (phase 2)	25
Glyngaer Primary	Ceilings replacement	20
Libanus Primary	Re-pointing and repair of external wall	15
Maesycwmmmer Primary	Adaptations re ICT & PPA	20
Nant Y Parc Primary	Toilet upgrades	15
Pantside Primary	Toilet upgrades (junior boys)	12
Plasyfelin Primary	Adaptations	30
Rhydri Primary	Soft Play	20
St. Gwladys Primary	Staff toilets	10
YG Cwm Derwen	Kitchen Flooring & Tiling	10
Trinity Fields	Adaptations	40
Bedwas High	Toilet upgrade C block boys	22
Heolddu Comprehensive	Toilet upgrades B, C & D block (phase 1)	40
Rhymney Comprehensive	Roofing upgrades	40
St. Cenydd Comprehensive	Refurbish science laboratory	40

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SPECIAL CABINET – 25TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: VELOTHON WALES 2015

REPORT BY: MARKETING & EVENTS MANAGER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks to update Members on the Welsh Government's initiative to attract a major new cycling sportive event on closed roads in the summer of 2015 and to ask Members to agree to consult on the road closures necessary for the event to take place.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Major Events Unit (MEU) of Welsh Government is supporting the Event Organiser, Lagardère Unlimited UK to establish a new cycling event called 'Velothon Wales' in June 2015 as part of a planned global roll out of the UCI Velothon Majors Series. The event will involve establishing three routes: a 50km and a 140km route for up to 15,000 cyclists to take place as a sportive (mass participation) event followed by a 194km UCI classed race for up to 200 elite (Professional) cyclists.
- 2.2 In order to cater for the event, roads along the proposed routes will need to be fully closed for up to 8 or more hours to allow the installation of essential Traffic Management arrangements and to permit the safe passage of the participating cyclists. This will rely heavily on the support of the local authorities directly affected by the proposals (Cardiff City Council, Newport City Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Torfaen County Borough Council and Caerphilly County Borough Council) to instigate the necessary road closures under its traffic powers in order to allow the Event Organisers to safely deliver the event. The UCI have granted the proposed elite race 1:1 classification, the third highest status they can award.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 This is a major event which will bring many visitors into the area and which will be a showcase for Wales as a tourism destination.
- 3.2 The event supports the Single Integrated Plan 'Prosperous Caerphilly' priority measure 1 'Improve local employment opportunities including access to opportunities across a wider geographic area' and Healthier Caerphilly priority measure 2, 'Improve lifestyles of the population in the county borough so that people recognise and take responsibility for their own health and well-being, and make use of the opportunities and support available to them'
- 3.3 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The staging of the event supports a number of Activity aims within the strategy including 'Increasing economic activity' and 'Protecting and developing the economy' and Service Improvement Objectives EDKO5, 'Increase the range of employment opportunities for local residents' and EDKO6 'Increase the number of tourists visiting Caerphilly County Borough'.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Initially suggested in 2011, the Head of Regeneration & Planning and the Group Manager for Business Enterprise Support were invited to attend a meeting organised by Welsh Government's Major Events Unit (MEU) in November 2013 to preview a revised proposal for the staging of the Velothon Wales concept. A working group of Local Authority Event / Highways Officers subsequently met with the event organisers and the MEU to discuss the proposed event in more detail. Concerns were raised through this working group in relation to the costs and implementation of the Traffic Management Plan to Welsh Government highlighting the difficult financial position that Local Authorities across Wales were facing and the potential disruption of the proposals.
- 4.2 A communication from the MEU in early April 2014 confirmed that the MEU would be submitting a business case to support the hosting of the event, including financial support for the implementation of the required road closures and that they would be seeking the following in-kind support from the Local Authorities involved:
- Traffic Orders (which the Authority is empowered to make pursuant to the Act specified in the Statutory Powers paragraph)
 - Policing costs
 - Parking Suspension
 - Bus Stop suspensions
 - Removal of any illegally parked vehicles
 - Street Cleansing
 - Pothole Repairs
 - Permission for the erection of publicity banners in prominent locations along the route up to 3 weeks prior to event
 - Active business and resident communication including notification of all churches, hospitals, taxis, bus companies, emergency services
 - Provision of suitable spaces/venues along the course for drink stations / aid stations
- 4.3 The Leader of the Council, Cllr Andrews, was formally asked for the Council's support for the staging of the event on closed roads by the Minister (EST) on 7th April 2014. Cllr Andrews responded on behalf the Council on 9th April 2014 that Caerphilly County Borough Council supported the event. At this stage there were no details available as to the exact route and the nature and duration of the road closures.
- 4.4 At a meeting organised by the MEU on 20th May 2014, it was confirmed that the Welsh Government Minister for Economy, Science and Transport had 'received unanimous support from the Leaders of all 5 authorities and that the Minister was content in principle that a significant element of the costs (and especially the unavoidable cash cost implications) should be borne by the Welsh Government in the first year'. Confirmation was also received that the organisers wanted to look at a 120km and 200km route (previously a 60km and 120km route) that would involve a greater transit through Monmouthshire County.
- 4.5 The Event Organiser set up a series of route meetings with members of the five local authorities, Emergency Services and the South Wales Trunk Road Agency from July 2014 to look at the specifics of the Traffic Management plan requirements for the proposed routes.
- 4.6 At a Velothon planning meeting held on 24th July 2014, Lagardère Unlimited UK confirmed that following a review of participation potential a third route, at 50km (similar to the earlier 60km proposal) would be added to the choice of rides, with the shortest route starting between 07:00 and 08:00 hours and finishing by 09:30 hours, running from Newport to Cardiff via Lower Machen and Caerphilly.
- 4.7 In August 2014, Lagardère Unlimited UK launched the event to the public with a capacity set at 15,000 cyclists.

- 4.8 A Traffic Management contractor was appointed in October 2014 and Officers from the authority continued to meet with the Event Organiser and their appointed representatives to look at the proposed routes and to feed back Cabinet concerns to the Event Organiser.
- 4.9 Over the subsequent period Council Officers from various departments including Traffic Management, Highways, Public Transport, Communications, Legal and Insurance have met with the Event Organiser and their representatives to discuss the central issues and to look at minimising the potential impact of residents, where practical, during the main mass participation route. A number of mitigation measures have been proposed to the Event Organiser in respect of Crumlin Road, Panside, Mornington Meadows and Maes-y-cwmmer.
- 4.10 A detailed Traffic Management Plan based on the proposed routes was received by Officers on 27th January 2015. The Event Organiser, Lagardère Unlimited UK was invited to meet informally with Cabinet Members on the 18th February 2015. At this meeting Members' concerns regarding the impact of the proposed road closures were again outlined to the Event Organiser. Agreement was reached that the Event Organiser would review its plans for Maes-y-cwmmer in particular as this was an area that was potentially significantly affected by the proposed route and that the Council would continue to offer its support for the staging of the event because of its significant impact to the region and country.
- 4.11 The Event Organiser is due to present their Event Safety Plans to a Gwent Safety Advisory Group for scrutiny on 20th April 2015.
- 4.12 The proposed 50km circuit will mean roads along the route could be closed through Draethen, Nant y cwm and Van Road from possibly 07:00 to 09:30 hours with vehicle movements restricted to local access requirements from 05:30 to 07:00 hours.
- 4.13 The proposed 140km (mass participation) route will mean roads closed along the route from Hafodrynys and through Caerphilly via the A472 and A469 between 07:00 and potentially 18:00 hours, restricting vehicle access across and along these roads and effectively isolating local communities, businesses, churches and other stakeholders. There is potential for restricted trading for businesses affected by this route and normal Sunday bus timetables will be impossible to maintain.
- 4.14 The proposed 140km (mass participation) and Elite (Professional) race will require road closures as per a proposed road closure timetable attached at Appendix 1. The Elite race will follow the Mass Participation event and will involve a rolling road closure, allowing vehicles to cross at designated Emergency and Local Access Points (ELAP) for a period of time in between the last mass participation cyclist crossing through the county borough and the arrival of the first Elite cyclists. However, the Elite route involves the cyclists covering three laps of Caerphilly Mountain and will therefore affect a larger number of residents in the Caerphilly basin as part of the rolling road closure operation than for the mass participation event from potentially 15:45 to 17:30 hours.
- 4.15. As a result of the planned road closure programme for the event there is the potential to cause significant disruption. The Event Organisers have proposed mitigation to reduce disruption in some areas but officers remain concerned about the numbers of stakeholders that may be directly affected by the proposed routes passing their place of residence. Businesses, local churches, taxi companies, public transport providers, carers, health workers and other workers and stakeholders will be impacted by the extensive road closures that are required for the safe staging of the event.
- 4.16 The Event Organiser has engaged consultants to implement a Stakeholder Communications and Engagement Plan with those directly affected by the proposed routes. A helpline is being set up by the Event Organiser so that the public can engage directly with the Event Organiser. The Council will continue to work with the Event Organiser to identify any further changes to the proposed Traffic Management Plan to reduce the number of people directly affected by the proposed routes and to identify potential parking locations outside these routes to reduce the number of stakeholders becoming isolated during the event.

- 4.17 Officers are concerned that some businesses may be effectively prevented from trading for the day or longer as a result of the proposed road closures. Officers have made it clear to the Event Organiser that the Council is not prepared to accept any liability for any claims arising out of the event and will be seeking to obtain a suitable indemnity. The Event Organiser has agreed this in principle but the final terms are yet to be agreed. The Council has written to the First Minister seeking some direction as to whether the Welsh Government wishes local authorities to progress the Road Closures in spite of the concerns around disruption and safety. A response from the Minister Mrs Edwina Hart has reaffirmed the strong support of the Welsh Government for the event. A copy of this letter is attached to this report.
- 4.18 In addition there is also a need for regard to safety in respect of:
- (a) The physical condition of the highway.
 - (b) Road user conflict where vehicle / road users do not comply with the Traffic Management measures that will need to be implemented to secure the proposed road closures required or where the proposed Traffic Management measures are not robustly implemented or devised.
- 4.19 In order to mitigate and minimise the risk the following actions have been agreed with the Event organiser :-
- (a) In respect of the road condition, the organisers have undertaken a winter inspection of the road surface along the proposed routes and are due to undertake a further pre-event inspection. In order that the Council satisfies itself that it is also performing its statutory obligations a representative of the Highways Inspection team may accompany the Event Organiser on their pre-event inspection of the proposed routes in order to identify areas that need remedial work. Temporary measures identified on the day of the event would be undertaken by the Event Organiser and its contractors.
 - (b) The Event Organiser has engaged a Traffic Management company to devise and implement a Traffic Management Plan that the Council's Traffic Management and Highway's departments can scrutinise before any Road Closure Notices are considered under Local Authority traffic powers.
 - (a) The Event Organiser is presenting their Event Safety Plan to a Gwent Safety Advisory Group on 20 April 2015 at which the Council will have representation.
 - (b) A pre-event Scenario Planning exercise is being planned prior to the event at which Council Officers will be able to participate.
 - (c) Highways Officers have asked to take part in the advance route inspection on the day of the event to assess whether the Traffic Management Plans are being implemented as proposed.
 - (d) Home Office guidance document 'The Good Practice Safety Guide for small and sporting events taking place on the highway, roads and public places responsibility for public safety with the organiser. The Responsibility of devising and operationally implementing a Traffic Management Plan for the event rests with the event organiser, Lagardère Unlimited UK.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Two of the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives (numbers 3 and 4) are relevant to this report in that they cover matters relating to Physical Access and Communication Access for various individuals and groups covered by Equalities and Welsh Language legislation.
- 5.2 Economic regeneration and tourism issues are strongly influenced by these and due consideration of the Strategic Equality Objectives and related actions can contribute to the success of tourism projects and events for example by attracting wider audiences.

- 5.3 There is potential for the impact of the road closures, and interruptions to public transport, to affect certain groups more than others, and this will be subject to further evaluation should Members agree to proceed to consultation.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Lagardère's Unlimited UK's Event Director reaffirmed on 16th October 2014 that there was no financial obligation on the authority in relation to the staging of the event but that they were looking for an agreement that Caerphilly County Borough Council will commit to helping make the event a success through participating in planning meetings and by helping to promote the event through the channels it has at its disposal.
- 6.2 Funding has been allocated from within the Event Organiser's event budget to undertake stakeholder engagement, including establishing a contact phone line for 'further information' enquiries, holding public meeting's where appropriate and undertaking letter drops to stakeholders directly affected along the proposed routes.
- 6.3 The Traffic Management Unit have estimated that they would need to provide approximately 124 staff hours in order to scrutinise the Traffic Management Plans and attend appropriate meetings.
- 6.3 There could be a relatively low financial cost to the authority of Officers attending the event on the day in order to protect local stakeholder interests although a request could be passed to the Event Organiser to pay for these additional costs.
- 6.4 Minor repairs required to the Highway identified as a result of the Event Organiser's pre-race route inspection road will be paid for by the Event Organiser.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None the additional work will be met within existing staffing resources.
- 7.2 In order to protect the authority's interests and to support the staging of the event nominated Officers have been invited to participate in the running of the Command, Communication and Control centre on the day of the event. Officers have also requested that they are present on the day of the event in the Advance Route Inspection vehicle to ensure that the Traffic Management Plans are being implemented as proposed.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The proposed road closures, if Cabinet agrees, will be subject to extensive formal consultations.
- 8.2 An information session for Members has been arranged for the afternoon of Monday, 23rd March where the organisers will be available to outline the traffic management arrangements.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Following the recent receipt of the proposed routes and associated Traffic Management Plans that Members consider whether to agree to consult on the proposals in co-ordination with the Event Organisers engagement plans.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The proposed event is a new event that requires a strong multi agency partnership approach across the region in order to deliver a successful event for the region and for Wales.
- 10.2 There are potentially significant health, well-being and economic benefits to be derived from the staging of the event. For example, 35% of adults across the UK are considered as cyclists whereas in Wales the percentage of adults considered as cyclists is 30%, significantly below the UK average. The direct economic impact of the event is estimated at in excess of £3m to the Welsh economy.
- 10.3 The promotion of cycling fits the Council's sustainability objectives and endorses the recent investment in its green infrastructure.

11 STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000. The Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 as amended by Road Traffic Regulation (Special Events) Act 1994.

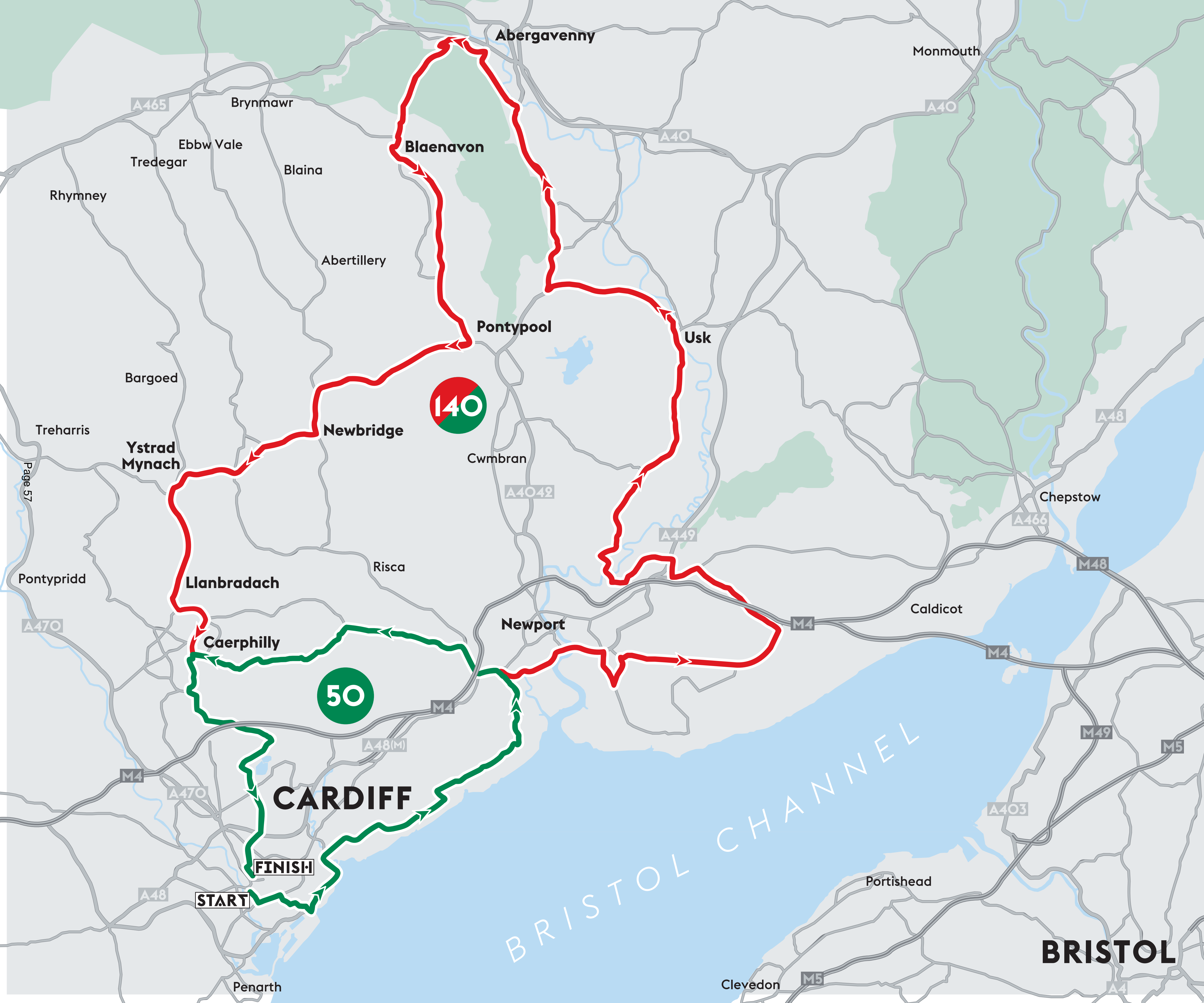
Author: Paul Hudson, Events and Marketing Manager
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration and Planning
Clive Campbell, Transportation Engineering Manager
Ian MacVicar, Group Manager Operations
Gail Williams, Principal Solicitor
Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Cllr K Reynolds, Leader

Appendix 1 - Proposed Road Closure Timetable

Appendix 2 - Proposed Route

Appendix 3 - Letter received from Mrs Edwina Hart AM, Minister for Economy, Science and Transport dated 10th March 2015

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Abergavenny

Monmouth

A465

Brynmawr

A40

Blaenavon

A40

Ebbw Vale
Tredegar

Blaina

Rhymney

Abertillery

Pontypool

Usk

140

Newbridge

Cwmbran

A4042

A449

Treharris

Ystrad
Mynach

Bargoed

A48

Chepstow

A466

M48

Risca

Llanbradach

Newport

M4

Caldicot

Pontypridd

A470

Caerphilly

M4

50

M4

A48(M)

CARDIFF

FINISH

START

BRISTOL CHANNEL

BRISTOL

Portishead

Penarth

Clevedon

M5

A4

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Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref KR/AW(1)
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/00988/15

Cllr Keith Reynolds
Leader
Caerphilly CBC

keithreynolds@caerphilly.gov.uk

10 March 2015

Dear Keith

Thank you for your letter of 23 February to the First Minister of Wales in relation to the UCI Velothon Wales cycling event scheduled for 14 June 2015. I am replying as Major Events and Transport fall within my portfolio responsibilities.

I understand your concerns in relation to the potential impact of necessary road closures. There is no doubt that an event of this scale requires a huge logistical challenge for all five local authorities through which the 190km closed road route will pass. I have been assured that the organisers are taking all possible steps to work proactively with the affected local authorities to mitigate the impact as far as possible and to minimise unavoidable disruption for local residents and businesses, whilst making sure that they are fully informed what to expect well in advance of the event.

It is the biggest and highest profile mass participation and professional cycling event ever to be held in this country, and we have made a significant financial contribution to securing this event for South Wales. It will ensure a significant economic, social and cultural legacy for the region and further raise Wales' international profile and reputation as a tourism and events destination.

The event will provide another opportunity to showcase some of our most historic landmarks including Caerphilly Castle which has featured so prominently in the Tour of Britain in recent years.

It is also important that, in building Wales' position in a fiercely competitive global market, we are able to demonstrate a strong 'Team Wales' partnership. A clear sense of unity of purpose across all partners is vital if we are to ensure the successful delivery of this major event.

I'd like to thank you and your colleagues for your support so far for Velothon Wales and I hope that you will continue to work constructively with the events organisers to make sure that this event will cause as little disruption as possible and be the success we all want it to be.

Edwina Hart