



CABINET – 11TH JULY 2018

**SUBJECT: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION BAND A
PROGRAMME – UPDATE AND PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF
UNDERSPEND**

REPORT BY: CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the financial position of the Band A programme and to seek agreement for the projected underspend to be allocated to a refurbishment project at Trinity Fields Special School, subject to approval of the business case by Welsh Government.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides an update to Members on the current financial position of the Band A 21st Century School and Education Programme (£56.5 million).
- 2.2 Based on the projected outturn figures identified in 4.3 below, the current projected underspend within the Band A programme is £940,120. This is subject to change until the outturn figures are confirmed for each scheme.
- 2.3 The report proposes that the projected underspend is allocated to a refurbishment project at Trinity Fields Special School.
- 2.4 Subject to Member approval for use of this underspend a detailed business case, incorporating full costings, will be compiled and submitted to Welsh Government for consideration.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Band A 21st Century School and Education Programme contributes to the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. In particular, as follows:
- **A prosperous Wales** – By providing fit for purpose schools in order to support the development of a skilled and well educated population, which provides employment opportunities which will equip our learners in securing appropriate employment. Through better education and providing skills for life we can help to break the cycle of disadvantage and inequality over the longer term.

- **A resilient Wales** – By developing an eco friendly school environment to provide a better sustainable environment for our current and future generations.
- **A healthier Wales** – By providing community schools that can be used to provide health, physical and community services, as well as promoting healthy lifestyle choices amongst pupils, parents and child care providers. Education is our greatest long term lever for improving the life chances of our learners. Ensuring young people particularly vulnerable learners have the environments that can improve and support their well being.
- **A more equal Wales** – By ensuring our learners fulfil their potential irrespective of backgrounds, circumstances and individual needs. Underpinning all of our work is a belief that someone's ability to benefit from education should not be determined by where they live or their individual requirements. We will continue our drive to reduce inequalities and remove barriers to Education.
- **A Wales of cohesive communities** – By improving the quality of life for our most vulnerable learners with attractive, viable, safe and well connected communities
- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language** – By ensuring there are 21st Century sports and specialist facilities within our schools for both Community and school use.
- **A globally responsible Wales** – By contributing to the continued improvement of the Economic, Social, Environment and Cultural Well-Being of the Borough.

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

3.3 The report links directly to the Authority's Corporate Plan and specifically Well-being Objectives 2018-2023, Improving Education Opportunities for All.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Band A 21st Century Schools and Education Programme (2014-2019) approved an allocation of £56.5 million for improvement/new build schemes at the schools identified in 4.3 below.

4.2 As Members are aware the funding is on a 50/50 basis with Welsh Government and CCBC has already set aside its share of the £56.5 million sum.

4.3 The current projected outturn for each of the schemes within the Band A 21st Century Schools and Education programme is shown below:-

- Y Gwyndy - £19,235,189
- Islwyn High School - £22,580,329
- Blackwood Comprehensive School refurbishment plus 3G pitch - £2,810,000
- Idris Davies 3-18 £7,854,362
- Newbridge School extension and Cwmcarn High demolition - £3,080,000

4.4 Based on the outturn figures in 4.3 above the projected underspend on the programme is currently estimated at £940,120.

- 4.5 Whilst the projected underspend is an estimate only, Members are asked to note that in respect of Blackwood Comprehensive School refurbishment plus 3g pitch, the projected costs are currently more fluid than the other projects listed in paragraph 4.3 above as the tender process has not yet been concluded.
- 4.6 As the programme is nearing completion Welsh Government has requested all Authorities to identify alternative usage of any projected underspend.
- 4.7 During the annual exercise undertaken each year to identify priority areas for School Capital investment it became apparent that Trinity Fields School required significant investment to meet the changing needs of the current and future school population. In the main this has arisen by the increasing complex needs of the pupils being admitted to the school.
- 4.8 A number of meetings have already taken place involving officers across the Authority and School based staff which has initially identified the following areas of priority for spend at the School:
- The installation of new “through room” hoist systems within classrooms that go directly into bathroom areas from classes.
 - The adaption of toilet facilities to become more accessible to need.
 - Upgrading of withdrawal rooms to create safe and welcoming environment to include the provision of natural lighting.
 - Improvement and relocation of pupil kitchen area.
 - The creation of a home living environment to increase the Independent Living Skills of pupils.
 - Creation of a new ball pit area.
 - Hydrotherapy pool improvements and adaptations which will increase the lifespan and accessibility of the provision for all pupils and the wider Community.
 - Increasing storage facilities to allow for the more complex needs of pupils i.e. increase in wheelchairs, medical equipment.
 - Improvement to the outdoor learning area.
 - Upgrade IT facilities.
 - Improve ventilation within the school.
 - The creation of independent living areas within classrooms.
- 4.9 The Authority in partnership with the School through Capital investment has already extended the provision available by providing two additional classrooms. This has allowed the LA to accommodate the increasing number of pupils requiring specialist educational provision.
- 4.10 The improvements to Trinity Fields, outlined above, will align with the further expansion of the School proposed within the 21st Century Band B programme and will also assist the Authority in meeting the requirements of the new ALN Reform Bill.
- 4.11 Subject to Member approval for use of this underspend a detailed business case, incorporating full costings, will be compiled and submitted to Welsh Government for consideration.
- 4.12 The works identified in 4.7 above will be prioritised according to affordability. The budget that is available for the project will be restricted to a maximum of the confirmed underspend on the Band A programme.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

5.1 This proposal contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that:

- **Long Term** - Assist the LA in meeting the requirement of the Additional Learning Needs Reform Bill.
- **Prevention** - Improving the quality of the Education estate generally will support our most vulnerable pupils in their long term education by ensuring their Educational experience is positive.
- **Integration** - The 21st Century Schools Programme is subject to Community Benefits; individual proposals are assessed and monitored for their impact on the Welsh economy.
- **Collaboration** – The 21st Century Schools Programme is collaboration between the Council and Welsh Government to improve the quality of the Education estate.
- **Involvement** – Ensuring that there is full engagement with all relevant stakeholders, e.g. school, LA, Various Health Care professionals and the School Governors.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Equality Impact Assessments were produced as part of the statutory process for the Band A schemes.

6.2 The LA has an obligation under section 88 and Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 to prepare an accessibility strategy. This is a strategy for increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculum; improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school and improving the delivery to disabled pupils which is readily accessible.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Band A 21st Century Schools and Education Programme (2014-2019) approved an allocation of £56.5 million for improvement/new build schemes at the schools identified in 4.3 above.

7.2 As Members are aware the funding is on a 50/50 basis with Welsh Government and CCBC has already set aside its share of the £56.5 million sum.

7.3 The current projected underspend on the Band A programme is currently estimated at £940,120, this may be subject to change as outlined in the report.

7.4 Subject to Member approval for use of this projected underspend a detailed business case, incorporating full costings, will be compiled and submitted to Welsh Government for consideration.

7.5 The works identified in 4.7 above will be prioritised according to affordability. The budget available for the project will be restricted to a maximum of the confirmed underspend on the Band A programme.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 As detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the projected underspend on the Band A 21st Century Schools Programme (currently estimated at £940,120) to be used for improvement works at Trinity Fields Special School.
- 10.2 Subject to Member approval for use of this underspend a detailed business case, incorporating full costings, will be compiled and submitted to Welsh Government for consideration.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 To ensure the Band A 21st Century School and Education funding is maximised and targeted at the highest priority of need.

12. STATUTORY POWER

- 12.1 School Organisation Code 2013 (Welsh Government)
School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

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