



## **EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 7TH MARCH 2019**

**SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR REVIEW OF POST 16 / SINGLE SEX AND SURPLUS PLACES**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION & CORPORATE SERVICES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Committee on the draft Terms of Reference for the review of post 16 provision, single sex education and surplus places across Caerphilly prior to its submission to Cabinet.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Council is seeking to deliver a sustainable strategy for post-16 education in Caerphilly that is underpinned by robust models and delivers the right education in the right place and with the best outcomes for learners.
- 2.2 The continuation of single sex education at Lewis Girls School and Lewis School Pengam, as well as the challenge of reducing surplus places across Caerphilly's secondary school estate are separate but interlinked issues that also need to be addressed by this review.
- 2.3 The Council has engaged a specialist resource from Bridgend County Borough Council to deliver the review and wishes to establish a Review Board to oversee developments.
- 2.4 A draft Terms of reference for the Board and the Review are attached for Members consideration.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Members of the Scrutiny committee are asked to consider and comment on the content of the draft Terms of Reference for the Review of post 16 provision, single sex education and surplus places across Caerphilly prior to its submission to Cabinet for endorsement.
- 3.2 That the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee nominate two of its members to sit on the Review Board, one from the majority group and one from the opposition groups.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To ensure that the Terms of Reference reflect the views of the Scrutiny Committee prior to the document being presented to Cabinet.

## **5. THE REPORT**

5.1 Separately to this report, this Scrutiny Committee have considered an attainment strategy for Caerphilly, entitled 'Shared Ambitions', that sets the Strategic Vision for Education in Caerphilly as follows:

"To raise standards and ensure our learners are healthy, confident, proud and ambitious and can benefit from high quality educational opportunities, settings and experiences."

5.2 While 'Shared Ambitions' focuses on raising standards, the vision for Education in Caerphilly contained within references the need to provide 'high quality educational opportunities, settings and experiences'. Finding a solution that addresses the current challenges of providing sixth form education; explores the need to retain or move away from single sex provision, and addresses the issues associated with surplus places are viewed as a key aspect of realising this bold vision.

5.3 Attached at Appendix 1 are the draft Terms of Reference for the review. The Terms of Reference set the overall objectives for the review as follows:

- To improve the effectiveness and outcomes of provision for all learners
- To improve efficiencies in the provision
- To provide new and enhanced opportunities to all learners
- To improve the learner experience
- To ensure the models are sustainable and deliver on 'Value for money'

5.4 The Terms of reference also sets out a proposed membership of the Review Board along with reporting arrangements as well as some context, outputs and further considerations.

### **Conclusion**

5.5 The review of post 16, single sex and surplus places in Caerphilly is of strategic significance. The outcome must contribute toward the strategic vision for education across the Borough and enable the Council to develop a sustainable offer to learners across the secondary phase that meets 21<sup>st</sup> century needs.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 It is assumed that the review will take in to account the full range of stakeholder views as well as all necessary data and intelligence required to fully inform the final option, or options recommended for decision.

## **7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 The strategy and associated plan support the delivery and progression of the Corporate Plan, specifically the Councils adopted Wellbeing Objective 1 – to improve education opportunities for all.

7.2 Within this objective, the strategy aims to specifically progress the following outcomes:

1. Raise standards of attainment.
2. Reduce the impact of poverty on attainment for both vocational and non-vocational qualifications to provide equality of opportunity.
3. Improve the learning environment.

## 8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 The strategy is aligned to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:

- A prosperous Wales – ‘Shared Ambitions’ will help develop a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
- A more equal Wales – The focus within the strategy on driving up standards for vulnerable groups will help create a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

8.2 The strategy contributes to the five ways of working as follows:

**Long Term** – The review should provide a recommendation that enables sustainable delivery models to be put in place that will support the creation of a highly skilled and ambitious workforce of the future for Caerphilly.

**Prevention** – Maximising the opportunities for learners to reach their full potential through the most appropriate route should increase the likelihood of those learners going on to secure long term employment and becoming self-reliant.

**Integration** – Regardless of the outcome, the review will enhance the working relationships and integration of the Local Education Authority, Schools and local Colleges to the benefit of Caerphilly’s learners.

**Collaboration** – Some of the options already identified will explore the potential opportunities for collaboration, others may arise as part of the review.

**Involvement** – The review process will be inclusive with the Board comprising representation of a wide range of stakeholders and broader consultation with students, parents, governors, Head Teachers and other interested parties forming a core component of the review work.

## 9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not needed because the issues covered are for information purposes only, therefore the Council’s full EIA process does not need to be applied at this stage.

## 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None specifically at this stage as the report is seeking to agree a terms of reference for the review.

10.2 The costs of the Bridgend Council employee who will be undertaking the review on the Council’s behalf have been set aside from 2018/19 in year underspends and Cabinet have agreed their use for this work.

## 11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 A Bridgend Council employee will be delivering the review on behalf of Caerphilly and will be engaged on the equivalent of two days a week, although this can be ‘flexed’ at key times.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

12.1 The following have been consulted on the proposed strategy through various stages of its development:

- Cllr Philippa Marsden, Cabinet Member for Education and Achievement
- Cabinet Members (through PDM)
- Christina Harry, Interim Chief Executive
- Corporate Management Team (CMT)
- Education Advisory Board.

## **13. STATUTORY POWER**

13.1 The Local Government Acts 1998 and 2003.

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Consultees: Cllr Philippa Marsden, Cabinet Member Education and Achievement  
Christina Harry, Interim Chief Executive  
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer  
Debbie Harteveld, Managing Director EAS  
Cllr Colin Mann, Leader of the Plaid Group

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Strategic Review : Sixth-form provision, single sex education and surplus places in secondary schools Terms of Reference

# Strategic Review: Sixth-form provision, single sex education and surplus places in secondary schools Terms of Reference

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## MEMBERSHIP

Chair	Cabinet Member for Education Director of Education & Corporate Services Chief Education Officer Head of Education, Planning & Strategy 21 <sup>st</sup> Century School Lead LA Senior Managers <table style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: top; margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>Finance</td></tr> <tr><td>HR</td></tr> <tr><td>School Improvement</td></tr> <tr><td>Inclusion</td></tr> <tr><td>Property Services</td></tr> </table>	Finance	HR	School Improvement	Inclusion	Property Services
Finance						
HR						
School Improvement						
Inclusion						
Property Services						
	John Fabes, Review Lead Chair of Primary Heads Forum Chair of Secondary Headteachers Association Representative Headteachers (TBC) College Principals Scrutiny Member Representation (Labour Group) Scrutiny Member Representation (Opposition) Governors Association Representative Careers Wales EAS Representative (TBC) National Education Union (NEU)					

## REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

This is the strategic board for the review of sixth-form provision, single sex education and surplus places in secondary schools across Caerphilly County Borough Council. It will report to the Corporate Management Team, involve the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee and will refer to Cabinet for decision making and, where necessary, Council.

## OVERALL OBJECTIVES

To deliver a sustainable strategy for post-16 education in Caerphilly that is underpinned by robust models and delivers the right education in the right place and with the best outcomes for learners.

The consider and make recommendations in respect of the continuation of single sex education at Lewis Girls School and Lewis School Pengam and to positively address any surplus places issues that exist across Caerphilly's school estate.

Specific objectives are:

- To improve the effectiveness and outcomes of provision for all learners
- To improve efficiencies in the provision
- To provide new and enhanced opportunities to all learners
- To improve the learner experience
- To ensure the models are sustainable and deliver on 'Value for money'

## CONTEXT

To agree the parameters of the work to be undertaken, to scope out the work and to make a series of recommendations to Corporate Management Team and Cabinet which can be consulted upon.

Options for the consideration may include:

- Maintaining the status quo
- Ensuring all post 16 learners attend College sites
- A sixth-form centre which might be managed by the LA or by one of the colleges
- The option of regional sixth-form centres in existing secondary schools
- Other options that may emerge from the review or during any consultation process
- Continuation or cessation of single sex education within Caerphilly
- Addressing issues associated with surplus secondary school places

While there are three components to this review, they are entirely interlinked. As a result, the review will need to identify options to progress all three aspects and provide a balanced set of recommendations.

## TIMESCALE

To be confirmed by Board once the scope and sequencing of the review has been established.

## OUTPUTS

The Strategic Review Board will:

Develop a sustainable strategy on behalf of the Local Authority for post-16 education which is signed off by all stakeholders and which will inform future planning. Specifically it will:

- Establish and drive forward a strategic approach to post-16 education provision in the borough
- Propose a sustainable delivery model of post-16 provision which is of high quality and is financially viable
- Identify a coherent range of post-16 learning pathways to meet the needs of all learners, equip students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and lead to increased opportunities for student recruitment
- Suggest ways to enhance progression routes and ensure an appropriate breadth of choice for the level 3 course offer
- Propose ways in which to develop the aspirations of learners, improve attainment, ensure progression and raise the levels of employability skills in learners with particular reference to vulnerable groups
- Make proposals in relation to improving retention rates
- Evaluate the impact of post-16 plans for education

Consider and make recommendations in respect of the continuation of single sex education at Lewis Girls School and Lewis School Pengam and to positively address any surplus places issues that exist across Caerphilly's school estate. Specifically, it will:

- Identify opportunities for any advantageous service re-configuration including assessing the implications for single sex education and managing the range of surplus places in secondary schools

The Board will also:

- Assess the implications of any proposals and advise the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet of those potential implications.
- Have an agreed 'whole system' approach.
- Ensure timely completion of every project milestones.

- Maintain open lines of communication to stakeholders especially Head teachers as the work progresses.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- Caerphilly has 12 secondary schools, 8 of which are designated 11-18 and 4 designated 11-16
- 10 of Caerphilly's secondary schools are co-educational and 2 are single sex (Lewis School Pengam and Lewis Girls); in the latter sixth-form provision is co-educational
- Schools have been working collaboratively on sixth-form provision for a number of years in order to provide a wider curriculum offer
- Schools and the local authority recognise that the current model of delivery for post-16 provision needs to change to one that is more efficient, provides a higher quality of outcomes and is sustainable
- The review will need to include an assessment of the benefits/advantages of co-education alongside an Equality Impact Assessment of such provision; there will also need to be impact assessments addressing the Wellbeing of Future Generations
- The review will also need to consider the impact of surplus places across Caerphilly County Borough
- Other aspects to consider or take account of include:
  - Learner experiences
  - The views of all relevant stakeholders
  - The quality of provision, performance outcomes including value-added measures
  - Variances in provision across the Borough in 11-18 and 11-16 settings
  - The suitability and rigour of entry requirements
  - Achievement rates
  - The destinations of learners
  - Retention/drop-out rates
  - Size of sixth forms – viability, optimisation
  - Value for Money
  - The impact on future provision of potential funding reductions by Welsh Government