



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 2ND JULY 2019

SUBJECT: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION BAND B PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the 21st Century Schools and Education Band B programme which runs between 2019 and 2026.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The 21st Century Schools and Education Band B proposals were agreed by Cabinet on 25th April 2018.

2.2 Council agreed on 21st February 2019 to allocate £5.475 million to the 21st Century Schools and Education programme match funding.

2.3 The priority schemes identified for Phase 1 of the programme are an expansion of provision at Trinity Fields School and relocation and expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High site.

2.4 The intervention rates for the programme have changed, as outlined in the body of the report. This has resulted in a reduction in the Council's contribution to the overall programme from £39.15 to £26.8 million.

2.5 Initial specification of the expansion proposed for Trinity Fields has led to a recommendation to increase the allocation for this project from £5 million to £10 million. This money would be transferred from the refurbishment programme and is in line with WG's expectation for projects to be innovative and to be seen as a "once in a lifetime opportunity". In order to achieve this and "future proof" the school the increase in investment to £10 million is essential.

2.6 Both projects outlined in 2.3 above are in early developmental stage and officers will ensure that Members are updated on a regular basis in relation to all aspects of the proposal e.g. financial, business case, consultation process etc.

2.7 The Council's current projected match funding contribution to deliver both schemes is currently estimated at £5.1 million. If the increase for Trinity Fields is agreed this would reduce the Council's overall contribution from £26.8 million to £26.3 million.

2.8 A Board has been established to undertake a review of Sixth Form/Single Sex/Surplus places provision.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Scrutiny Members are asked to note the information contained in the report and to give views on the recommendation to increase the contribution for Trinity Fields School from £5 million to £10 million before consideration by Cabinet.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Scrutiny Members are updated on the 21st Century Schools and Education programme.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The 21st Century Schools and Education Programme is regarded as a major, long term and strategic capital investment programme supporting large scale capital building projects across Wales with the aim of enhancing school buildings to meet 21st Century Educational and Community needs.
- 5.2 The Programme focuses resources on the right school, in the right place, from early years through to post-16, with funding jointly provided by WG and Local Authorities.
- 5.3 The key aims of the 21st Century Schools and Education Band B investment programme, outlined by WG, is to:
- Reduce the number of poor condition schools.
 - Ensure that we have the right size schools in the right location, providing enough places to deliver Welsh and English medium education.
 - Ensure the effective and efficient use of the educational estate for use by both Schools and the wider Community.
- 5.4 The recommendations of the Cross Party Working Group, with regard to the proposals included within the programme, was agreed by Cabinet on 25th April 2018 subject to funding being confirmed for individual projects, business cases being approved by WG and the outcome of individual consultations.
- 5.5 Cabinet considered on the 30th January 2019 the Use of Reserves report presented by the Head of Finance and S151 Officer. Following consideration of that report Cabinet proposed that unallocated reserves of £16 million could be released and used for capital expenditure. Of the £16 million it was proposed by Cabinet that £5 million be allocated towards the Band B 21st Century Schools and Education programme.
- 5.6 The proposal was considered and agreed by Council on 21st February 2019 to allocate £5 million to the 21st Century Schools and Education programme match funding.
- 5.7 Council also agreed the proposal to allocate £475,000 savings in advance to the programme.
- 5.8 Therefore the total sum of £5,475,000 has been allocated to the 21st Century Schools and Education Band B programme.
- 5.9 In December 2018 the Cabinet Secretary for Education announced that the Welsh Government's (WG) grant intervention rate for Band B capital schemes would increase to 65% with delivery partners meeting the remaining 35% of the costs. In addition, the intervention rate for capital funded special schools and pupil referral units will be 75%, with delivery partners meeting the remaining 25% of the costs.

The intervention rate for voluntary aided schemes remains at 85%.

- 5.10 The total Capital envelope (excluding Municipal Investment Model - MIM) agreed in principle by WG is £78.3 million. The changes to the intervention rates in 5.9 (based on the original proposals submitted to WG) have reduced the Council's contribution from £39.15 million to £26.8 million.
- 5.11 In order to ensure timely and effective delivery of the programme it has been essential to identify the schemes to be delivered from the 1st allocation of £5.475 million to be those with the highest priority of Educational need, i.e. insufficient places if expansion is not achieved.
- 5.12 The first two schemes identified as priority for Phase 1 of the programme are the expansion of Trinity Fields Special School and the relocation and expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon.
- 5.13 Trinity Fields Special School is the only special school in the Authority which provides Education and Specialist Facilities for our pupils. It caters for pupils from the ages of 3–19 years. At present the school has 158 pupils on roll. This is increasing to 173 from September 2019, with more admissions anticipated. It is the Council's aim, wherever possible, to try and educate all pupils within the Borough. This prevents the need for out of county provision which is not only costly but can also have a significant impact on individual families.
- 5.14 The current site was purpose built in 1998 and offers our pupils many unique and innovative features in order to develop their skills. It caters for pupils with a wide range of Special Education Needs and requirements. Ranging from Physical and Medical Difficulties, Profound Multiple Learning Difficulties and Severe Learning Difficulties.
- 5.15 The Authority has already invested £1.3 million, during the past 6 years, into capital projects at the schools, which has included large maintenance schemes and change of use of areas in order to increase capacity. In addition the Council is currently undertaking improvement works at the School using an underspend in the 21st Century Schools and Education programme Band A. This programme was reported in detail to Cabinet on 10th April 2019.
- 5.16 The Council recognises that Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre has a pivotal role in the current and future development of ALN provision across the Authority. This role has been set against a backdrop of on-going local and national developments in terms of extending and enhancing the current role and functions of special schools across Wales and beyond so that they offer a broader range of support and services on behalf of the LA to other schools, specialist bases as well as to staff within the Council's Education Service. This is reflected in the Donaldson Report *Successful Futures* (February 2015) which observes that '**Much of what is proposed in terms of continuity and progress is already a feature of teaching and learning in schools serving children and young people with special educational needs**' (p.107).
- 5.17 As evidenced above the Council has already significantly invested in the School both from an expansion and improvement perspective. However, it is apparent that the demand for the school from the projected pupil numbers, the more complex and changing needs of the pupils together with the requirements of the ALN Reform Bill has led to the **urgency** to expand the provision further at this School.
- 5.18 The original Strategic Outline Plan (SOP) for the 21st Century Schools and Education Band B investment was submitted to WG in July 2017. This plan included an estimated allocation of £5 million for Trinity Fields. However since this submission the Council has carried out a more detailed analysis, in partnership with the School, which has resulted in a likely budget requirement of £10 million for the project. The drawing up of the specification is at a very early stage and a board has been established including colleagues from Social Services, Education and Aneurin Bevan Health Board to ensure that all parties are able to embrace this opportunity to develop the School to cater for our most vulnerable families and the wider Community.

- 5.19 Following agreement of the specification of works a detailed business case will then need to be submitted to WG for approval. WG have indicated that the expectation is for projects to be innovative and to be seen as a “once in a lifetime opportunity”. In order to achieve this and “future proof” the school the increase in investment to £10 million is essential.
- 5.20 In order to achieve the increase of £5 million it is proposed that this sum is transferred from the £33 million refurbishment programme within the SOP. The schools are yet to be identified from this investment sum but would likely to have included Trinity Fields. As indicated in 5.9 above the intervention rate for Special Schools has reduced from 50% to 25% Council contribution. Hence this increase to £10 million still retains the Councils contribution at £2.5 million for Trinity Fields and reduces the overall contribution to £26.3 million from £26.8 million.
- 5.21 The demand for Welsh Medium Education has been on the increase since the formation of CCBC and particularly so in recent years. The percentage of pupils in Welsh Medium Schools is as follows: Primary Sector: 1997 (8.9%), 2007 (12.1%), 2010 (14.4%), 2016 (16.8%). Secondary Sector: 1997 (6.9%), 2007 (9.0%), 2010 (10.6%), 2016 (12.3%).
- 5.22 The Band B programme is a key aspect of the corporate Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in ensuring there are sufficient Welsh Medium school places to support the challenging target of 1 million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. The WESP regulations are currently out for consultation, if approved will require us to meet challenging targets for school places over the next 5 to 10 years.
- 5.23 It will continue to support a thriving Welsh Language provision within Caerphilly by ensuring the development of sufficient Welsh medium places in areas where they are coming under pressure, as identified in the Authorities 2017 - 2020 WESP, Caerphilly East and Bedwas/Tredomen/Machen.
- 5.24 Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon currently covers the catchment area of Caerphilly East area of the Borough. The School is at capacity with no opportunity to expand on the current site. This area has the Councils lowest progression rates from Welsh Medium childcare into Welsh medium schools.
- 5.25 In order to ensure the Council meets the challenging targets for increased Welsh Medium provision it is essential to create additional Welsh Medium places in this area of the Borough as a matter of urgency.
- 5.26 The proposal, agreed by members, and included within the SOP is to build a new school and childcare provision (funded from the Childcare expansion grant) on the Cwmcarn High site increasing capacity to 420 pupils at a projected cost of £7.4 million. The Council’s contribution to this sum is £2.6 million.
- 5.27 The 21st Century Schools and Education Band B funding for individual projects is now calculated by WG using the recommended size of a school, contained within the BB98/99 Building Bulletin, and an agreed rate per square metre/pupil at the 2019 predicted costs. The calculation does not give consideration to any “abnormal” costs, i.e. contamination, gradient and flood risk. Any additional costs would need to be evidenced and considered separately at the WG Business Case stage.
- 5.28 Demolition work is currently underway at the former Cwmcarn High site and progression of the proposal would still be dependent on business case approval by WG and a full consultation exercise.
- 5.29 Work is currently being undertaken to ensure all relevant information and detailed specification of works will be available to support the submission of business cases to Welsh Government for the above projects.

- 5.30 If WG approve the business cases for the project a full consultation exercise will then be undertaken in line with the School Organisation Code 2018.
- 5.31 A Board has been established to undertake a review of Sixth Form/Single Sex/Surplus places provision consisting of Scrutiny Members, Unions, Governor Representatives, Colleges, Headteachers, EAS, Education officers and Cabinet member. The first two meetings are scheduled for 10th June 2019 and 15th July 2019.
- 5.32 All of the projects outlined above are in early developmental stage and officers will ensure that Members are updated on a regular basis in relation to all aspects of the proposal e.g. financial, business case, consultation process etc.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 The figures calculated for each individual project are based on 2019 predicted costs, which are stipulated in the BB98/99 Building Bulletin regulations. This will be consistently applied by WG across Wales. They do allow for inflation or any factors that may arise through Brexit.
- 6.2 The calculations do not give any consideration to any “abnormal” costs that may arise e.g. contamination etc.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- 7.1 Caerphilly’s Attainment Strategy: To raise standards and ensure our learners are healthy, confident, proud and ambitious and can access high quality educational opportunities, settings and experience.
- 7.2 Caerphilly’s Wellbeing Objectives 2018 to 2023. This proposal will assist the Authority in meeting these objectives in particular the following:

Well-being Objective 1 – Improve Education opportunities for all
Well-being Objective 2 – Enabling Employment

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 8.1 The Well-Being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. It requires public bodies to think more about the long-term, working with people and communities, looking to prevent problems and take a more joined up approach. This will create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals:

- A prosperous Wales.
- A resilient Wales.
- A healthier Wales.
- A more equal Wales.
- A Wales of cohesive communities.
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.
- A globally responsible Wales.

- 8.2 The Act sets out the sustainable development principle against which all public bodies in Wales should assess their decision-making. The aim of the legislation is to ensure the well-being of future generations through maximising the contribution public bodies make towards the well-being goals. In using the sustainable development principle it is incumbent that the authority considers the whole of the population it serves and considers the effect of its actions on future generations. The principle, also known as the five ways of working is assessed below:

- **Long Term** - Forecasting of pupil numbers has been utilised to identify the demand for school places to ensure sufficient Educational places in our schools. This information has been used to prioritise schools within the SOP.
- **Prevention** - Improving the quality of the Education estate generally will support pupils in their long term education and skills outcome in that they are more likely to succeed if their Educational experience is positive.
- **Integration** - The 21st Century Schools Programme is subject to BREEAM and Community Benefits of individual proposals are assessed and monitored for their impact on the Welsh economy. The proposals are also part of a strategy to promote Welsh Language and Culture.
- **Collaboration** – The 21st Century Schools Programme is collaboration between the Council and Welsh Government to improve the quality of the Education estate.
- **Involvement** – Through the consultation process the Council will ensure that there is full engagement with all relevant stakeholders, e.g. parents, pupils and the local community. Collaborative partnership working between 21st Century Schools and the Early Years Division who work with the voluntary sector.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 All relevant Equality Impact Assessments for individual projects will be undertaken prior to moving to consultation stage and will be made available to any persons who wish to receive copies. These proposals link with the WESP and the five year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022 and will therefore have a positive impact on Welsh Medium Education. The proposal in relation to Trinity Fields School will also have a positive impact on the children and young people with additional learning needs who are and will be attending the School.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Council agreed on 21st February 2019 to allocate £5.475 million to the 21st Century Schools and Education programme match funding.
- 10.2 The intervention rates changes, which are outlined in the main body of the report, has reduced the Council's contribution from £39.15 million to £26.8 million.
- 10.3 Phase 1 of the programme, Trinity Fields expansion and the relocation and expansion of YGG Cwm Gwyddon totals £5.1 million. This would result in an unallocated amount of £375K of the amount shown in 10.1 above.
- 10.4 If the Trinity Fields proposal is agreed, this will further reduce the contribution to £26.3 million.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 This will be dependent on specific proposals and will be considered as part of the consultation process.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 School Organisation Code 2018 (Welsh Government).
School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

Author: Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Interim Chief Executive
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director Communities
Councillor Philippa Marsden, Cabinet Member, Education and Achievement
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Carol Andrews, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Steve Harris, Interim Head of Business Improvement and Acting Section 151 Officer
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer
Ros Roberts, Performance Manager
Jane Southcombe, Education Finance Manager
Mark Williams, Interim Head of Property Services
Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager
Ian Elliott, Headteacher, Trinity Fields School & Resource Centre
Anita Tucknutt, Headteacher, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report – 21st Century Schools and Education Band B proposals – 25/04/19
Council Report – Budget Proposals for 2019/20 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 to
2023/2024 – 21/02/19