



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND NOVEMBER 2021

**SUBJECT: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES BAND B
PROGRAMME - CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF PROPOSALS
FOR LLANCAEACH JUNIOR SCHOOL/LLANFABON INFANTS
SCHOOL, PLASYFELIN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND A CENTRE
FOR VULNERABLE LEARNERS**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to officially consult with Members in respect of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme proposals for Llancaeath Junior School / Llanfabon Infants School, Plasyfelin Primary School and a Centre for Vulnerable Learners (Pupil Referral Unit).

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The purpose of the report is to consult with members and obtain views on each individual proposal outlined below:

- The amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School to create a new Primary School provision
- A new replacement Plasyfelin Primary School on the existing site
- The establishment of a Centre for Vulnerable Pupils (Pupil Referral Unit) on the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive site

2.2 The Statutory consultation process for the Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School proposal is proceeding in line with the requirements of Welsh Government Statutory Code document no 011/2018 - School Organisation Code 2nd Edition 2018.

2.3 The proposals for Plasyfelin Primary School and the Centre for Vulnerable Learners (Pupil Referral Unit) are exempt from the statutory requirements to consult under the

School Organisation Code 2018. However, for the purposes of progressing each proposal and to enable transparent, balanced and open decision making, utilisation of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Framework's "Spectrum of Engagement" approach, is being utilised to enable an appropriate level of engagement in informing and consulting stakeholders, mirroring the equivalent processes outlined in Section 3 of the School Organisation Code 2018 only.

- 2.4 The consultation period for all 3 proposals commenced on the 20th October 2021 and concludes at midnight on the 1st December 2021.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are asked to:

- a) Note the information contained in the report and the attached consultation packs.
- b) Provide views in their capacity as 'consultees' as part of the consultation processes being followed for all 3 proposals.
- c) Vote on each proposal separately, which will be noted as part of the minutes of this meeting and included in the relevant reports for each proposal which will be presented to Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Members are consulted with regards to the outlined proposals
- 4.2 To assist the Council in discharging its duty in consulting stakeholders in line with the Statutory requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 in relation to the Llancaeach Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School proposal.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Consultation in respect of the Band B Phase 2 proposals.

5.1.1 The key aims of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B investment programme, outlined by Welsh Government, 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.

5.1.2 The schemes identified as part of Phase 2 of the Band B programme include the adaption and refurbishment of the old grammar school building on the former Pontllanfraith High School site to accommodate 80 - 120 pupils in a Centre for Vulnerable Learners (Pupil Referral Unit), the amalgamation of Llancaeach Junior and Llanfabon Infants school via the expansion of the existing Llanfabon Infants site to accommodate 275 pupils plus nursery, and a new build replacement Plas-y-felin

Primary school in the grounds of the existing school site to accommodate 420 pupils plus nursery.

- 5.1.3 As part of the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 and Section 42/44 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, proposals must be published when we make a 'regulated alteration' to a maintained school and consultation must be undertaken with Members and wider Stakeholders as outlined in the attached documentation.
- 5.1.4 Each scheme will be considered separately and has its own associated documentation.
- 5.1.5 The consultation period for all 3 proposals commenced on the 20th October 2021 and will close midnight on the 1st December 2021.
- 5.1.6 Following consultation, all the comments received during the consultation period will be compiled into a Consultation Report as prescribed by Welsh Government in respect of the Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School proposal. Separate Community Engagement Reports will be produced for the proposals in respect of Plasfelin Primary and the Centre for Vulnerable Learners.
- 5.1.7 All 3 reports will be taken to Cabinet who will then decide as to whether to proceed, make changes or not to proceed with each individual proposal.
- 5.1.8 Should Cabinet decide to proceed, the proposals for Plasfelin Primary School and the Centre for Vulnerable Learners would progress to Planning Application Process.
- 5.1.9 Should Cabinet decide to proceed, in the case of the proposal for Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School, a Statutory Notice will be published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 provides that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections must be made in writing and sent to the Council within the notice period. Formal Responses can only be registered following the publication of a statutory notice.
- 5.1.10 Full details of the Consultation Processes for each individual proposal can be found in the main Consultation Document for each respective proposal as part of the attached consultation packs.

5.2 **Conclusion**

- 5.2.1 Members are asked to note the information contained in this report and the supporting consultation pack documentation with a view to providing views on each proposal in their capacity as a 'consultee'.
- 5.2.2 Members views will be included in the Consultation and Community Engagement Reports for each proposal which will be taken to Cabinet who will then decide on how each proposal will progress as outlined in 5.1.7, 5.1.8 and 5.1.9.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report. The process outlined by Welsh Government is being adhered to ensure transparency, balanced and open decision making.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 A full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been completed in relation to each proposal to ensure compliance with the socio-economic duty, Sections 1 to 3 of Equality Act 2010 that came into force on the 1st April 2021.

[Link to Integrated Impact Assessment \(Centre for Vulnerable Learners\)](#)

[Link to Integrated Impact Assessment \(Llancaeath Junior School/Llanfabon Infants School\)](#)

[Link to Integrated Impact Assessment \(Plasyfelin Primary School\)](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Phase 2 of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B programme, currently totals £18,500,000. The Authority's contribution within this sum is £5,925,000 as detailed below.

Project Name:	LA Contribution	WG contribution	Total Funding
Centre for Vulnerable Learners	£1,375,000 (25%)	£4,125,000	£5,500,000
Llancaeath/Llanfabon	£1,400,000 (35%)	£2,600,000	£4,000,000
Plasyfelin Primary	£3,150,000 (35%)	£5,850,000	£9,000,000

- 8.2 The Authority's contribution will be met from the remaining funding of £1.209m already earmarked for 21st Century Schools and through the proposed earmarking of a further sum of £4.716m from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve.
- 8.3 The Welsh Government Grant allocation for individual projects within the 21st Century Schools Band B programme is calculated consistently across Wales using the Building Bulletin regulations BB98 - Secondary, BB99 – Primary and BB104 – Special/Pupil Referral Units. There are a number different elements which have been included in the calculations provided for each of the Phase 2 proposals, which include:
- Proposed standard price per square metre
 - Furniture fitting and equipment per pupil
 - ICT per pupil
- 8.4 Largely due to a combination of the impact of Covid-19 and Brexit there are currently significant inflationary increases within the construction sector. This is being kept under close review but the current projected costs for the 21st Century Schools Programme will be subject to change. Members will be updated further as matters progress.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. CONSULTATIONS

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

11. STATUTORY POWER

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

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Consultees:

Dave Street, Acting Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
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Councillor Ross Whiting, Cabinet Member for Learning and Leisure
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Carol Andrews, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
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Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer
Mark Williams, Interim Head of Property Services
Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Consultation Document - Llancaeath Junior School / Llanfabon Infants School
Appendix 2 - Consultation Document - Plasyfelin Primary School
Appendix 3 - Consultation Document - Centre for Vulnerable Learners (Pupil Referral Unit)