



CABINET - 26TH JANUARY 2022

**SUBJECT: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES BAND B
PROGRAMME - CONSULTATION REPORT: LLANCAEACH
JUNIOR SCHOOL/LLANFABON INFANTS SCHOOL**

**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 Colleges Band B proposal in respect of the amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School to create a new Primary School provision.
- 1.2 Members are asked to consider the information contained in the Consultation Report and approve the recommendations to proceed to Statutory Notice.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The 21st Century Schools Band B proposals for Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School went to formal consultation between the 20th October 2021 and the 1st December 2021
- 2.2 To discharge the Council's duty under the School Organisation Code 2018, there is now a requirement for Cabinet members to give due regard to the content of the Consultation Report and determine whether or not it is appropriate to move to the next stage in the process.
- 2.3 A Consultation Report has been compiled and attached as an annex to this report. The Consultation Report summarises each of the issues raised by consultees. Any emerging themes that have been raised through gathering the views of consultees during the consultation process have been responded to by means of clarification with supporting reasons.
- 2.4 Members approval is being sought in relation to progression to Statutory Notice.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Cabinet Members are asked to: -

- a) Note the contents in this report
- b) Consider the information contained in the Consultation Report
- c) Approve the recommendation to proceed to Statutory Notice in relation to the proposal to create a new Primary School provision through the amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School on the existing Llanfabon Infants School site

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To ensure Members are updated on the progress of Phase 2 of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Capital Band B programme

4.2 To gain Members approval on the recommendations to proceed to the publication of Statutory Notice in respect of the proposal

4.3 To assist the Council in discharging its duties in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Band B

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.

5.2 Band B Phase 2

5.2.1 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 a Centre for Vulnerable Learners (Pupil Referral Unit), the amalgamation of Llancaeath 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.

5.3 Phase 2 - Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School

5.3.1 The proposal relates to the amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School via the expansion and refurbishment of the existing

Llanfabon Infants site to accommodate the new 3-11 Primary School provision with places for 275 pupils plus nursery.

- 5.3.2 Further to Cabinet approval gained on the 13th October 2021, formal consultation for the proposal was carried out between 20th October 2021 and 1st December 2021.
- 5.3.3 A prescribed list of recipients as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018 were written to and a consultation document was published in both hardcopy and electronically via the Authority's website based. Reasonable access to information was promoted from an Equalities perspective and other formats were available on request, including a child friendly version and video.
- 5.3.4 The consultation period ran for 42 days (with at least 20 of these being school days) to provide adequate time for response and conscientious consideration has been given to any responses received.
- 5.3.5 Members of the Education Scrutiny Committee who met on the 2nd November 2021 in their capacity as a consultee under the School Organisation Code 2018, endorsed the proposal, voting 12 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions.
- 5.3.6 There were 11 responses received in respect of the proposal to create a new Primary School provision through the amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School. In addition, a number of pupils at both schools engaged in the consultation process through 'learner voice' sessions which have been reported on separately. These are broken down into more detail in the Consultation Report.
- 5.3.7 A Consultation Report has been compiled and has been attached as an annex to this report. The Consultation Report summarises each of the issues raised by consultees. Any emerging themes that have been raised through gathering the views of consultees during the consultation process have been responded to by means of clarification with supporting reasons. In addition, Estyn has provided a formal response in consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal which is included in the Consultation Report.
- 5.3.8 The Consultation Report will be published electronically on the 21st Century Schools pages on the Council's website. Consultees who have indicated in their consultation response that they wish to be notified will be advised by letter or email of the availability of the Consultation Report along with the key stakeholders identified in the School Organisation Code 2018.

5.4 **Conclusion**

Pursuant to the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018, formal consultation has now concluded in relation to this proposal and this report has been compiled along with the Consultation Report to provide members with the necessary information to make an informed decision as to whether to progress the proposal to the next statutory stage which would entail permission to publish of a Statutory Notice. The School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, provides that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so at this stage.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report as it merely updates on the progress of individual projects.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An initial Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) for this proposal was undertaken alongside the original Consultation Document forming part of the outline consultation pack which is published on the Council's website.
- 7.2 The Integrated Impact Assessment has been reviewed to include any additional elements highlighted through the statutory consultation process. The purpose of this further assessment is to take account of any further information that has come forward through the consultation or otherwise.

Original

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/IIA/Ilancaeath-junior-Ilanfabon-infants-schools-sep202>

Updated

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/IIA/CCBC-Integrated-Impact-Assessment-Ilancaeath-and-L>

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
Plasfelin 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 previously earmarked for 21st Century Schools and through the recently approved 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.

10.2 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Education Scrutiny Committee 10th January 2022 Comments Agenda Item 8 – 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme - Consultation Report: Llancaeach Junior School/Llanfabon Infants School

This report was presented to the Education Scrutiny Committee on Monday 10th January 2022.

One Member commented that 11 respondents to the consultation was a bit disappointing and also noted that Appendix 1 (p.39) had reference to an outdated Equality Plan. Caerphilly County Borough Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 rather than the latest version. The Member then asked for a response to ESTYN reports mentioned on pages 48 and 49 of Appendix 1. They concerned quality of leadership and structure of the governing body. The 21st Century Schools Manager advised Members that the governing body would be established if the proposal progressed. Officers would work with the existing governing bodies to ensure a smooth transition and, if necessary form an early collaboration. The Chief Education Officer advised that there were no follow-up notices from ESTYN for either school and therefore no issues in terms of leadership had been identified. Members heard how the reasons for amalgamation were driven by geography rather than any issues of leadership. The Member asked for a response to the finding that the proposal does not consider the impact of the proposals on children with Special Educational Needs. The Lead for Inclusion and ALN advised that the impact of transition was critical in this regard and that this would be work undertaken by the Council when a decision was reached on amalgamation. The 21st Century Schools Manager also highlighted that pupils from Llancaeach Junior School with Special Educational Needs would already be familiar with Llanfabon School because they had attended this site since nursery. Therefore, the element of change would be minor and help the transition.

One Member asked if the Council's Building Consultancy Team would be involved with these proposals. The 21st Century Schools Manager provided assurances that

the team would be involved and highlighted the experience that they would bring to the projects being discussed.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms Voting this was unanimously agreed, in noting there were 12 votes for, no votes against and no abstentions.

11. STATUTORY POWER

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

Author: Andrea West, 21st Century Schools Manager

Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Councillor Ross Whiting, Cabinet Member, Education and Achievement
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
Sue Richards, Head of Transformation
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion & ALN
Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities, Welsh Language & Consultation)
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

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 Consultation Report - Llancaeath Junior School / Llanfabon Infants School