



## **EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – INFORMATION ITEM**

**SUBJECT: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME -  
BAND B UPDATE**

**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 Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme (formerly 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges), which runs between 2019 and 2026.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 The report provides an update to Members on the current position of the Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

2.2 The schemes identified for Phases 1 & 2 of the Band B programme are:

- A new replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High School site
- An extension of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre
- 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

2.3 Officers will ensure that Members are updated on a regular basis in relation to all aspects of the proposals e.g., financial, business case, ministerial approval, consultation process etc.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 Members are asked to note the information contained in the report.

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

4.1 To ensure Members are updated on the progress of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme.

### **5. THE REPORT**

5.1 The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme is a major, long term and strategic capital investment programme supporting large scale capital building projects across Wales with the aim of educational transformation through enhancing school buildings and developing them as hubs for learning to meet 21<sup>st</sup> 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 Welsh Government and Local Authorities.

5.3 The key aims of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B investment programme, outlined by Welsh Government, is:

- *Investment Objective One* - to provide efficient and effective educational infrastructure that will meet current and future demand for places

To include:

- The right number of places for the delivery of Welsh and English medium education
- Addressing sufficiency issues where relevant
- Reducing in Backlog maintenance costs for schools
- Working towards Net Zero Public Sector Buildings in line with Welsh Government Carbon Reduction Commitments

- *Investment Objective Two* – to optimise the use of infrastructure and resources, to deliver public services for our communities.

This will include:

- Flexibility of our assets so that space and facilities available for our stakeholders are maximised.

#### **5.4 Band B Phases 1 & 2**

5.4.1 The projects identified as part of Phases 1 & 2 of the Band B programme include:

- a new build replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High School site to accommodate 420 pupils plus nursery
- an extension on Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre
- 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
- a new build replacement Plas-y-felin Primary school in the grounds of the existing school site to accommodate 420 pupils plus nursery

#### **5.4.2 Phase 1 Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon**

A new build replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High School site to accommodate 420 pupils plus nursery, childcare and SRB. The new facilities will also be available for use by the wider community.

The Contractor commenced on site on the 3rd October 2022 and the build phase has begun with an anticipated completion date of September 2023, subject to weather conditions. All steel work has been finished and the roof sheets are due to be installed. Meetings have been held with Officers and representatives from the School and Contractor to update on progress and arrange sessions with school pupils as part of the social value element of the proposal.

#### **5.4.3 Phase 1 Extension of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre**

A new two storey extension onto the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre to accommodate 80 additional pupils with extra facilities for use by the school and wider community.

Officers are currently undertaking a scoping exercise for a delivery partner to ensure the completion date of September 2024 is met.

Completion dates are subject to planning approval, business case submission and outside influences.

#### **5.4.4 Phase 2 - Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School**

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, with an anticipated completion date of July 2025.

Completion dates are subject to planning approval, business case submission and outside influences.

#### **5.4.5 Phase 2 - Plasyfelin Primary School**

A new and enlarged replacement school for Plasyfelin Primary School to be situated within the current grounds of the existing school site to include increased accommodation for up to 420 pupils plus nursery provision and additional multi-use sporting and facilities available for use by the school and the wider community, with an anticipated completion date of July 2025.

Completion dates are subject to planning approval, business case submission and outside influences.

#### **5.4.6 Phase 2 - Centre for Vulnerable Learners**

To adapt and refurbish the old grammar school building on the former Pontllanfraith High School site and develop bespoke sporting provision and facilities for pupils which will also be available for the wider community outside of school hours.

The Planning process has commenced and is due to finish at the end of February 2023. Subject to Planning approval with work will start on site August 2023 with an anticipated completion date of August 2024.

Completion dates are subject to planning approval, business case submission and outside influences.

- 5.5 The Sustainable Communities for Learning Team are currently preparing options for the next phase of proposals, and a further report will be provided to Members in due course.

#### **5.6 Conclusion**

Members are asked to note the information provided for each proposal.

### **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 Not required as this report is for information purposes only.

### **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Currently market forces are indicating a significant inflationary increase within the construction sector. This is being kept under close review but the current projected costs for the Sustainable Communities for Learning 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 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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Background Papers:

None