



## **CABINET - 19TH APRIL 2023**

**SUBJECT: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING BAND B  
PROPOSAL - UPDATE TRINITY FIELDS SCHOOL**

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

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

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet Members in relation to the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme in respect of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre.
- 1.2 The Project is seeking to build a new two storey extension within the curtilage of the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre to accommodate an additional 80 places plus additional facilities. The current building will also receive a proportion of remodelling, refurbishment, and condition improvements to offer a whole school solution.
- 1.3 Cabinet Members are asked to approve that an additional £1,380,783 is set aside from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve in respect of the increased financial contribution required to complete the proposal for Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme.
- 1.4 Cabinet Members are asked to approve an upfront allocation of £1,434,186 from the Council's total contribution as outlined in 5.2.9 below for pre-construction, design and other professional services including surveys, explorations, early orders and enabling works prior to Welsh Government Full Business Case approval.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Cabinet approved on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022 a revised proposal for 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 which is now progressing at pace.
- 2.2 Officers have undertaken a scoping exercise for a delivery partner and have progressed, using the SCAPE Framework, the appointment of Wilmot Dixon as our Delivery Partner.

- 2.3 A Pre Construction Services Agreement (PSCA) will need to be signed by both the Authority and the Delivery Partner prior to Ministerial approval of the Full Business Case by Welsh Government. To ensure delivery of the project in time for the planned occupation date an upfront allocation of £1,434,186 from the Council's total contribution as outlined in 5.2.9 below is required for pre-construction, design and other professional services including surveys, explorations, early orders and enabling works.
- 2.4 Welsh Government and Members have previously agreed in principle to earmark a total of £12,588,573 for the Trinity Fields School expansion, with a Welsh Government contribution of £9,441,429 (75%) and the Authority's contribution within this sum of £3,147,143 (25%).
- 2.5 The £12,588,573, was based on cost standards calculated in line with the Welsh Government Building Bulletin 104 which provides the building area formulae recommended for special schools and as such was not market tested.
- 2.6 The impact of inflation and other market forces on the construction sector, together with some additional enhancement works to the existing school building, have increased the total cost of the project to £18,111,704.
- 2.7 The project has been developed to ensure a cohesive whole school solution to include a new build extension element costing £13,811,704 and condition improvements to the existing school building costing £4,300,000.
- 2.8 As a result, there needs to be an increase of £5,523,131 of funding for the project overall. This will mean a revised Welsh Government contribution of £13,583,778 (75%) and a revised contribution from Caerphilly of £4,527,926 (25%).
- 2.9 Members are asked to approve an additional £1,380,783 be set aside from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve, on top of the £3,147,143 previously agreed.
- 2.10 Full Business Case approval is anticipated for August 2023, however Welsh Government approval of the Strategic Outline Case and the Outline Business Case demonstrates that Welsh Government are supportive of the project, subject to consideration of the final agreed cost.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Cabinet Members are asked to agree:
- a) A further £1,380,783 be set aside from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve to fund the cost of the expansion of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre
  - b) An upfront allocation of £1,434,186 from the Council's total contribution as outlined in 5.2.9 below for pre-construction, design, and other professional services including surveys, explorations, early orders and enabling works prior to Welsh Government Full Business Case approval.

## 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Cabinet Members are updated on the progress of the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme in respect of the expansion proposal for Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre.
- 4.2 To ensure that funding is available to meet the additional costs of expanding the school.
- 4.3 To ensure that upfront funding is released from the Council's total financial contribution to allow for pre-construction, design, and other professional services prior to a final Welsh Government decision on the Full Business Case. This will ensure that, subject to Welsh Government approval, the project will be deliverable within the current planned timescales.

## 5. THE REPORT

### 5.1 Band B

- 5.1.1 The key aims of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B investment programme, outlined by Welsh Government, are:

- *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.

### 5.2 Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre

- 5.2.1 Cabinet approved on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022 a revised proposal for 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 which is now progressing at pace.
- 5.2.2 Officers have undertaken a scoping exercise for a delivery partner.

- 5.2.3 In order to meet the challenging timescales and complexities of the project the Council are proposing to utilise the SCAPE Construction Framework.
- 5.2.4 SCAPE is a direct award framework designed to accelerate essential projects and deliver them to the highest possible standard.
- 5.2.5 The Council has the ability to direct award under the SCAPE framework and will utilise Willmott Dixon as our Delivery Partner due to the value of the school being within the £7.5m - £75m category.
- 5.2.6 In accordance with the terms of the framework, this decision is based on previous and current experience of successful delivery of projects of a similar scale, complexity and sector specialism with Willmott Dixon, for example: Islwyn High School circa. £24 million; Idris Davies 3-18 School circa. £8.5 million; and more recently the Council's Housing Programmes via Welsh Government's Innovative Housing Programme funding.
- 5.2.7 Welsh Government and Members have previously agreed in principle to earmark a total of £12,588,573 for the Trinity Fields School expansion, with a Welsh Government contribution of £9,441,429 (75%) and the Authority's contribution within this sum of £3,147,143 (25%).
- 5.2.8 However, as reflected within a feasibility study undertaken by Willmott Dixon, market forces have resulted in significant inflationary increase within the construction sector since initial project inception.
- 5.2.9 The total cost of the project is now £18,111,704, this is as result of the new extension and significant additional investment into the refurbishment and remodelling of the existing school site, such as a new roof and internal upgrades. Therefore, there is an overall project increase of £5,523,131, with a revised Welsh Government contribution of £13,583,778 (75%) and revised Authority contribution of £4,527,926 (25%).
- 5.2.10 Members are asked to approve an additional £1,380,783 be set aside from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve in order to meet the additional financial contribution.
- 5.2.11 A Full Business Case has been submitted to Welsh Government and is currently being scrutinised by its Business Case Scrutiny Group and Programme Investment Panel. The increased costing identified in 5.2.9 has been indicated in the Full Business Case as part of this process.
- 5.2.12 A Pre Construction Services Agreement (PSCA) will need to be signed by both the Authority and Willmott Dixon prior to Ministerial approval of the Full Business Case by Welsh Government. To ensure delivery of the project in time for the planned occupation date an upfront allocation of £1,434,186 from the Council's total contribution as outlined in 5.2.9 above is required for pre-construction, design and other professional services including surveys, explorations, early orders and enabling works.
- 5.2.13 Full Business Case approval is anticipated for August 2023, however Welsh Government approval of the Strategic Outline Case and the Outline Business Case demonstrates that Welsh Government are supportive of the project, subject to consideration of the final agreed cost.

### 5.3 **Conclusion**

The proposal for Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre has progressed through the Statutory process as outlined by the School Organisation Code 2018 and has progressed through the planning application and procurement process.

The overall costs have increased as a result of Global supply chain issues, inflation and market forces.

To meet these additional costs and ensure this exciting project can be delivered, Cabinet are asked to approve an additional £1,380,783 from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve and agree an upfront allocation of £1,434,186 from the Council's total contribution as outlined in 5.2.9 above for pre-construction, design and other professional services including surveys, explorations, early orders and enabling works prior to Ministerial approval of the Full Business Case by Welsh Government anticipated in August 2023.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 It is assumed that the increase in project cost for the Authority will be no more than £1,380,783 in order to complete the project.
- 6.2 It is assumed that the completion date of September 2024 for the extension is achievable. However, refurbishment of the existing building will likely be after September 2024 and will be managed in conjunction with all parties.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment for this proposal was undertaken and updated as part of the School Organisation Code 2108 and consultation process and is published on the Council's website.

**Link to full Integrated Impact Assessment**

**Link to Integrated Impact Assessment - Trinity Fields**

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Welsh Government and Members have previously agreed in principle to earmark a total of £12,588,573 for the Trinity Fields School expansion, with a Welsh Government contribution of £9,441,429 (75%) and the Authority's contribution within this sum of £3,147,143 (25%).
- 8.2 However, currently market forces have resulted in significant inflationary increase within the construction sector along. This has been kept under close review and has been reflected within the updated project costs and feasibility study undertaken by Willmott Dixon.
- 8.3 The revised total cost of the project is now £18,111,704. An increase of £5,523,131 for the project overall and a revised Welsh Government contribution of £13,583,778 (75%) and revised Authority contribution of £4,527,926 (25%).

- 8.4 It is proposed that an additional £1,380,783 be set aside from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve in order to meet the additional financial contribution.
- 8.5 Any unspent allocation will be returned to the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve.
- 8.6 It is also proposed that upfront funding of £1,434,186 is released from the Council's total financial contribution to allow for pre-construction, design, and other professional services prior to a final Welsh Government decision on the Full Business Case.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications to the recommendations of the report at this time.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected within the report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

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

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