



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20TH JUNE 2023

**SUBJECT: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING BAND B
PROGRAMME – PHASE 3 PROPOSAL**

**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 next phase of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme and seek Members approval to proceed to Outline Business Case stage with Welsh Government (WG) in respect of the project outlined in the report.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides Members with an update on the next phase of the Band B (£78 million) Sustainable Communities for Learning Capital Programme.

- 2.2 The project identified is:

- **Relocation of Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary School**

The proposal seeks to create a sustainable school building with shared facilities, to accommodate Ysgol Y Lawnt, Upper Rhymney Primary School and Community use. The two schools will continue to provide both Welsh and English Medium Primary education and remain as separate entities, situated within the new dual purpose building.

- 2.3 The project outlined in 2.2 above is 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, in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018 and the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are asked to:

a) Asked to note the contents in this report.

b) Give approval to proceed with the proposed project outlined in 2.2 to submit an outline business case to Welsh Government.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To ensure Members are updated on the next phase of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme and seek Members approval to proceed to Outline Business Case stage with Welsh Government (WG) in respect of the project for the relocation of Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary School to a new build dual purpose site.

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

- 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

5.5 The scheme identified for the next phase of the Band B programme, is the relocation of Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary School to a new build dual purpose site.

5.6 The new school build will be designed to maximise local infrastructure, sustainability and energy efficiencies and meeting the Welsh Government Net Zero Carbon School requirements.

5.7 **Conclusion**

Members are asked to endorse the recommendations to proceed to outline business case submission to Welsh Government in relation to the next phase of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme as outlined in 2.2.

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 at this stage in the process. A full Integrated Impact Assessment will be completed at the relevant stage in the process.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The estimated proposed project cost for the relocation of Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary, which forms the next phase of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme, totals £17,605,140.

8.2 Costings are based on Building Bulletin 98 and the Welsh Government 2024 Cost allowance. Subject to approval to proceed, further verification will be undertaken by the Council's Quantity Surveyor prior to submission to Welsh Government.

8.3 The Authority's contribution of £6,052,119 to be set aside from the Authority's Place Shaping reserve.

Project Name:	LA Contribution	WG contribution	Total Funding
New School Build	£5,777,916 (35%)	£10,730,414 (65%)	£16,508,330

SRB (16 places)	£274,203 (25%)	£822,607 (75%)	£1,096,810
TOTAL PROJECT	£6,052,119	£11,553,021	£17,605,140

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 and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

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Background Papers:

None