

**CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Notice is given in accordance with sections 41 and 43 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code that Caerphilly County Borough Council having consulted such persons as required, propose to discontinue Abertysswg Primary School, Walter Street, Abertysswg, Rhymney NP22 5AQ and Pontlottyn Primary School, Fochriw Road, Pontlottyn, Bargoed CF81 9QH. These schools are currently maintained by Caerphilly County Borough Council who propose to establish a new replacement English-medium Primary school to be maintained by Caerphilly County Borough Council on the Rhymney Comprehensive School site, Mill Field, Abertysswg, Rhymney NP22 5XF for boys and girls aged 3-11 years (the site location as included in the consultation document).

Caerphilly County Borough Council undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposers responses and the views of Estyn is available on the Caerphilly website [www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)

It is proposed to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

The proposed new school will be a community school.

Caerphilly County Borough Council will be the admission authority.

The admission number for 4-11 years at the new school in the first school year in which the proposals have been implemented is 38.

The new school's pupil capacity will be 270, plus 30 nursery places.

Pupils will be provided with free transport in accordance with the Authority's transport policy. Details of the present policy are provided below.

There is a statutory duty placed upon the Local Authority to provide pupils with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond "walking distance" to that school. Caerphilly County Borough Council, however, provides transport to those pupils who attend their "relevant" school and reside beyond "walking distance" to that school. The "relevant" school is the catchment school or the nearest school.

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure defines "walking distance" as 2 miles for pupils receiving Primary education. Although subject to future review, at present Caerphilly County Borough Council currently defines this distance as 1<sup>1/2</sup> miles for pupils receiving Primary education – the distance being measured by the nearest available walking route. The residence is the address of the parent(s) or legal guardian of the pupil.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015, any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to Gail Williams, Monitoring Officer, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Ty Penallta, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed CF83 7PG.

**Signed: .....**  
**for Caerphilly County Borough Council**

**Dated this the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015.**

## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **Planned Implementation**

It is planned to open the new Primary school on the Rhymney Comprehensive School site for January 2017. The existing Abertysswg and Pontlottyn Primary Schools would close at the end of the autumn term 2016.

### **Why do we need the New School ?**

The pupil numbers at both Abertysswg and Pontlottyn Primary Schools are both presently and forecast to be in the range of 100-120 pupils over the next 5 years (excluding nursery). This results in surplus places in the range of 40-80 per annum.

There is a clear requirement from the Welsh Government that local authorities must take action to remove surplus places. If no action was taken and the current status quo of the two schools allowed to continue then in the next few years both the financial and educational viability of the two schools would be compromised.

The two schools have a combined backlog maintenance requirement of just under £1.4million. This level of investment requirement further undermines the longer term viability of the current arrangements.

The sustainability, suitability and DDA rating of the 2 existing Primary schools is generally poor. The fit for purpose (size compliance) associated with both schools is also unsatisfactory.

The proposed new school will address the issue of surplus (i.e. unused) places and the backlog maintenance and general suitability requirements by moving towards 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools.

Furthermore, once implemented, the new Primary school will have a positive impact by significantly improving the teaching and learning environment of pupils, thereby increasing the education opportunities for learners in an area that has amongst the highest social deprivation across the County Borough. The benefits to be realised will be improvements in standards and outcomes and in the condition and suitability of school buildings.