

**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS: THE PROVISION OF  
ADDITIONAL ENGLISH-MEDIUM PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES AT  
RADYR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING**

**AGENDA ITEM: 8**

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**PORTFOLIO: EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR SARAH MERRY)**

**Reason for this Report**

1. This report is to inform the Cabinet of the responses received following consultation regarding the provision of additional English-medium primary school places at Radyr Primary School.

**Background**

2. There has been an increased demand for English-medium primary school places in the Radyr and Morganstown areas in the past five years.
3. As a temporary measure to meet demand, additional places over and above the Published Admission Number of 45 were provided using a combination of existing and temporary accommodation at Radyr Primary School. These additional places allowed the admission of up to 60 children into the Reception year group in September 2012, September 2013, September 2014, September 2015 and September 2016.
4. At its meeting on 15th September 2016 the Cabinet authorised officers to hold a public consultation on proposals to increase the number of English-medium primary school places by increasing the capacity of Radyr Primary School to allow the school to admit up to 60 pupils on a permanent basis from September 2017.

**Issues**

5. The consultation ran from 10 October to 21 November 2016.
6. Parents and others in the local community, together with staff and Governors of the affected schools were invited to respond to the consultation.

7. The consultation process involved:
- Distribution of a Consultation Document outlining background, rationale and implications. This document has been distributed to parents, local childcare providers, Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of nearby schools, all Members of local wards and other stakeholders (a copy of the consultation document can be seen at Appendix 1);
  - Meetings with Staff and Governors at Radyr Primary School and a public meeting at which the proposal was explained and questions answered;
  - One drop in session where officers were available to answer questions;
  - Workshop session with pupils at Radyr Primary School to provide an opportunity for pupils to ask questions, learn more about the proposal and give their views. Details of the workshop session is attached at Appendix 2.
  - A consultation response slip for return by post or e-mail, attached to the consultation document;
  - An online response form at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/21st](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/21st) Century Schools
8. The views expressed at Council organised meetings and on paper or electronically through the appropriate channels, have been recorded.

### **Responses received during the consultation period**

*(Responses received are summarised below in italicised text)*

9. In total 32 responses were received. The majority view expressed during the consultation at meetings and in written correspondence was one of support for the proposed provision of additional English-medium primary school places at Radyr Primary School.
10. Of the 32 responses received 27 were in support of the proposal and 4 against.
11. The response from Estyn was neutral.

### **Estyn Response**

12. A response from Estyn included the following points (for the full response, please see Appendix 3)
13. *The proposer has suitably outlined the benefits of the proposal in addressing the issue of the increased demand for English medium school places in the Radyr and Morganstown area.*
14. *It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.*
15. The Council acknowledges the views expressed.

### **Other Formal Responses**

16. Summaries of the formal written responses from the Governing Body and Headteacher of Radyr Primary School, Mark Drakeford AM & Kevin Brennan MP and the Radyr and Morganstown Community Council included the following points (for the full responses please see Appendix 4):

## **Radyr Primary School**

17. *The Governors of Radyr Primary School fully support the expansion of the school. We firmly believe that the increase in pupil numbers will improve financial and resource planning which will improve the educational experience of both current and future pupils.*
18. *In recent years the uncertainty of pupil numbers has caused challenges for the school and the Governing Body in the areas of budget planning and staff resourcing. For many years Radyr Primary School has had mixed year group classes. The educational opportunities given to these children have never been compromised but mixed age classes are rarely popular with parents or pupils. A permanent two form intake will mean that there are no mixed year group classes which will assist in school management planning.*
19. *The Governing Body have formally noted their desire for the school to be one of a two form entry for many years. We believe that the school has the physical space and resources in place to fully support a school of 60 pupils per year group. In addition, looking at the demographic data it is clear that if the school does not become one which can take 60 pupils each year, many children who live in catchment will have to travel to alternative schools.*
20. The Council acknowledges the views expressed.

## **The Headteacher of Radyr Primary School**

21. *The Headteacher of Radyr Primary School fully supports the expansion of the school.*
22. *The expansion will mean that there are no mixed year group classes which will assist in school management planning and have a positive impact on standards allowing teachers to plan more effectively and differentiate for one year group (not as previously across two).*
23. *The School has over the years adapted the physical space and resources to fully support a school of 60 pupils and the only necessary accommodation would be an extra classroom. As Radyr Primary is fortunate to have a very large field area and open space a further classroom would not impact on the available playground space for the children.*
24. *Radyr Primary school offers a wide range of after school clubs and increasing the numbers of children on roll and increasing the number of staff would only widen the opportunities available.*
25. *The school is fortunate to link closely with the community which offers a range of wrap around care. Many pupils attend the local latchkey provision before and after school along with a number of childminders who collect groups of children from school*
26. The Council acknowledges the views expressed.

## **Mark Drakeford AM & Kevin Brennan MP - Cardiff West**

27. Summary of joint response from Mark Drakeford AM and Kevin Brennan MP included the following (for the full response please see Appendix 4).
28. *Over recent years, we have found it necessary to represent individual constituents living in the Radyr community who find that the local education authority has been unable to allocate a place at a local school for their child's education. There have been examples where this has extended to children who already have a sibling at a Radyr school.*
29. *We have long argued for a permanent solution which recognises the impact on demand for school places of house expansion in the area. We are therefore fully supportive of these proposals by the local authority, and would be grateful if these representations could be taken into account when coming to a final decision.*
30. The Council acknowledges the views expressed.

## **Radyr and Morganstown Community Council**

31. The following response was received on behalf of the Radyr and Morganstown Community Council:
32. *The birth-rate in the catchment area makes it essential that the annual intake is increased to 60 at Radyr Primary School.*
33. The Council acknowledges the views expressed.

## **Other responses received**

### **Capacity of school, standards and care**

34. *Radyr Primary School is already exceeding capacity in terms of classroom sizes, communal and playground facilities.*
35. *Radyr Primary School is already full to bursting point, both in terms of classrooms but more importantly it has very limited facilities and space indoors and out.*
36. *There is insufficient space in the grounds of Radyr Primary School to provide extra classrooms without impacting on the playground at the top of the field.*
37. *Concerns that Radyr should be performing better according to Estyn and league tables and should concentrate on the quality of its education and what it is providing in terms of extra-curricular activities.*
38. *The before and after school care at Radyr Primary School is full to capacity and needs to be considered before adding more children.*

## **Appraisal of view expressed**

39. As set out in the response from the Governing Body and the Headteacher at paras 17 – 19 and paras 21 – 24, the school has the physical space and resources in place to fully support a school of 60 pupils in each year group.
40. The School has already made changes to the space and accommodation in order to ensure it has suitable physical space along with appropriate levels of resources to provide for 60 children per year group.
41. The school has a large field and open space and do not feel that an additional classroom would impact on the available playground space for the children.
42. In the event of the proposal being progressed to implementation, officers will work with the school to ensure there is sufficient, suitable accommodation available to support the school in the effective delivery of national curriculum requirements.
43. As set out in their response (see appendix 3), Estyn are of the view that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.
44. Additionally, it is the view of the Governing Body and the Headteacher that the admission of 60 children per year group will provide greater certainty around the number of pupils, assist in school management planning and improve financial resource planning which will improve the educational experience of both current and future pupils.
45. In the most recent Welsh Government categorisation of schools the school was categorised as Yellow (an effective school which is already doing well and knows the areas it needs to improve) and it is not expected that the proposal would impact on this.
46. Radyr Primary School is well placed to meet demand for English-medium places from the local area and the Council will work with the school to ensure standards are maintained.
47. The School offers a wide range of after school clubs, and increasing the number of children on roll and increasing the number of staff would widen the opportunities available.
48. As set out in the response from the Headteacher at para 25, there are a number of providers offering a range of wrap round care in the local community. The provision of additional places would be an issue for providers to consider.

## **Traffic and travel**

49. *A Travel Plan will have very little effect on the already inconsiderate parking around the school.*

50. *I'm concerned about the speed of traffic on Bryn Derwen/ Driscoll Road. This is used as a rat run by residents and commuters to avoid traffic on Heol Isaf as well as parents coming and going to Bryn Deri and Radyr primary schools. The speeds are excessive and there are many parents with children who walk this route.*
51. *A traffic speed monitor (such as those installed on Heol Isaf) and some road signs to remind drivers might be of some use.*

#### **Appraisal of view expressed**

52. A Traffic and Transport Assessment to assess the potential impact of the proposal has been undertaken (see Appendix 5). The assessment sets out a number of recommendations that would need to be considered in the event of the proposal being progressed to implementation.
53. Cardiff's Supplementary Planning Guidance (Access, Circulation and Parking Standards 2010) sets out that all new or expanded schools are required to develop a Travel Plan for submission with a planning application. A School Travel Plan is specifically designed to address the transport needs of pupils and staff and will vary according to the nature of the education being provided, any community facilities on site and the catchment area of a school.
54. A Travel Plan is a policy and action plan to:
- manage transport efficiently
  - improve access by all means of travel for employees, visitors, parents and students
  - encourage sustainable transport – walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing
  - reduce car use.

#### **Parking Spaces around the school site**

55. *Please consider providing drop off parking spaces for parents to avoid the current traffic chaos and parents parking on grass verges.*

#### **Appraisal of view expressed**

56. Cardiff's transport network is under pressure and experiences congestion from commuters driving into the city and people making short local trips by car. Traffic associated with the school run adds to congestion. The City of Cardiff Council's policy is to encourage and promote the increased use of sustainable travel models and to promote independent travel to school wherever possible.
57. Encouraging active travel to school is a very important means of increasing levels of physical activity in children and tackling the growing problem of childhood obesity. Reducing congestion at the school gate is key to ensuring the safety of pupils and to mitigating impacts on the local neighbourhood.

58. Provision of parent parking places is generally not supported by the City of Cardiff Council. This is because such provision would promote travel to school by car, generate local traffic, contribute to congestion and reduce pupil safety. Parking facilities provided at schools are generally only for staff and to meet operational needs.
59. Failure to implement the proposal would result in a shortfall in English-medium primary places to serve the local area which would require children in the existing primary school catchment area of Radyr Primary School who are refused admission to attend schools further away. This would result in increased home to school travelling distance for some pupils with more families likely to opt for journey by car creating additional traffic on roads and causing congestion.

### **Catchment areas**

60. *The Council are not rigidly enforcing catchment areas which is exacerbating the problem on pupil spaces at Radyr Primary School*

### **Appraisal of view expressed**

61. Catchment areas are operated as one of the oversubscription criteria within the Council's school admissions policy. This policy meets the requirements of the Welsh Government's Admissions Code.
62. Parents are entitled to state a preference for any school, and in the event of a school being oversubscribed, and application is assessed against the oversubscription criteria. Whilst children who are resident in the catchment area of a school have priority over those who are not, children outside the catchment area cannot be denied a place if there are sufficient places available.

### **Alternative options**

63. *Bryn Deri School is allowed to remain largely unchanged in these proposals whilst Radyr Primary School has to have its already limited facilities and surroundings squeezed even further*
64. *Bryn Deri has space for expansion and is less in need of improvement and support according to Estyn.*

### **Appraisal of view expressed**

65. As set out in the Consultation Document (see tables 4 & 5, pages 8-9 of Consultation Document at Appendix 1) the demand for English-medium community primary school places has been greater in the Radyr Primary School catchment area than the Bryn Deri Primary catchment area in recent years, and this is projected to continue.
66. Following the provision of additional accommodation at Radyr Primary School to allow for the establishment of a nursery in 2013, the school would require

one further classroom to enable it to operate at two forms of entry (60 pupils per year group).

67. Expanding Bryn Deri Primary School to allow an admission number of 45 places, would require four further classrooms to be provided. The expansion of Radyr Primary School is therefore considered to be a more cost effective solution, when compared to the expansion of Bryn Deri Primary School.

### **Planning contributions**

68. *New schools should be built within the new North West Cardiff developments as part of planning, which could accommodate children from Rhydlafar who are currently attending Radyr.*
69. *Where are the section 106 planning contributions towards education for all of the family housing estates you have approved in the Radyr and Morganstown areas?*
70. *What education contributions have been sought through these developments and how have they been spent in Radyr and Morganstown on existing schools?*

### **Appraisal of view expressed**

71. The expansion of Radyr Primary School is proposed in order to meet the demand for places from existing housing within the Radyr Primary School catchment area. This expansion is not being brought forward in order to provide the additional school places that would be required as a result of new housing developments in North West Cardiff.
72. Any additional housing, if agreed for development, would be expected to include provision for education. A s.106 agreement for sites north and south of Llantrisant Road, approved for housing development, includes such provision.
73. Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), commonly known as S106 agreements, are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development.
74. The s106 agreement of November 2002 in respect of the large housing development on the Radyr sidings site included a number of provisions, including a 'community contribution' of £350,000 towards Radyr Comprehensive School and £400,000 towards a new library.
75. As there was sufficient capacity in local schools at the time, contributions towards the expansion of primary education were not required from the developer(s).



### **Meeting with pupils**

76. The pupils thought it would be good to have enough places for children, no split classes and more money for the school.
77. They were concerned about the school being too crowded, traffic, pressure on playground equipment and concerns about health and safety.

### **Appraisal of views expressed**

78. The points raised by pupils have been addressed at paragraphs 39, 40 and 41.

### **Summary**

79. There is clear support for the expansion of Radyr Primary School to allow the school to admit up to 60 pupils from September 2017.
80. The Governing Body and Headteacher have expressed their desire for the school to become two form entry for many years and believe that the school has the physical space and resources in place to fully support the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
81. The current uncertainty of pupil numbers at Radyr Primary School has caused challenges for the School in the areas of budget planning and staff resourcing. A permanent two form intake will mean that there are no mixed year group classes which will assist in school management planning.
82. Whilst concerns have been expressed about the expansion of Radyr Primary School, the school is well placed to meet demand for English-medium community places from the local area and the Council will work with the school to ensure that standards are maintained.
83. The proposal could result in potential increased traffic congestion around the school site at drop off/pick up times. A Traffic and Transport Assessment to assess the potential impact of the proposal has been undertaken (see Appendix 5). The assessment sets out a number of recommendations that would need to be considered in the event of the proposal being progressed to implementation.
84. Additionally, the Council would work with the Governing Body of Radyr Primary School to develop a Travel Plan to minimise any potential disruption.
85. Changes to any existing accommodation and any new accommodation can cause some disruption, however experience shows that this can be kept to a minimum and children's education does not suffer.

### **Local Member Consultation**

86. The Local Member was consulted as part of the consultation and is fully supportive of the proposed expansion.

## **Reason for Recommendations**

87. To address the shortfall of English-medium primary school places in the Radyr and Morganstown areas by increasing the capacity of Radyr Primary School to allow the school to admit 60 pupils from September 2017.

## **Financial Implications**

88. This report seeks authority to delegate authority to the Director of Education and Director of Governance and Legal Services to publish a statutory notice to increase the capacity of Radyr Primary School to allow the school to admit up to 60 pupils from September 2017. There are no direct financial implications of the decision to publish the statutory notice.
89. Prior to implementation a further Cabinet report on the proposals will be required, which may recommend implementation of the proposal. This report would need to present the detailed financial implications of the recommendations set out in that report including any funding requirements of implementation.
90. Currently, no bid for Council Capital Programme funding has been made, however it is anticipated that any funding required to satisfy Traffic and Transportation improvements would be sought from this source. Expectations arising during the consultation and statutory notice exercise will need to be managed appropriately until full confirmation of any funding required has been received.

## **Legal Implications (including Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate)**

91. Under the Education Act 1996 the Council has a responsibility for education and must provide sufficient school places for pupils of compulsory school age.
92. The proposals qualify as regulated alternations which must comply with the requirements of Part 3 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, which include provisions for consultation and publication of statutory notices. Those are supplemented by the School Organisation Code by the Welsh Government.
93. The recommendation in this Report to publish a statutory notice follows a period of consultation which ran from 10 October to 21 November 2016. This Report (together with the appendices attached to it) represents the consultation report which the Code requires to be published. The Cabinet must have due regard to the responses received during the consultation before it makes a decision upon whether to publish a statutory notice.
94. The Code requires that the statutory notice must be published within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period unless an extension of time has been granted by the Welsh Ministers.
95. Following publication of the statutory notice there would be a period for objections of at least 28 days following which a further Report would need to

be made to the Cabinet summarising the statutory objections and giving responses to those objections. It would then be for the Cabinet to review those objections and determine whether to implement the proposals.

96. The Council has to satisfy its public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are: age, gender reassignment, sex, race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality, disability, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, religion or belief – including lack of belief.
97. The decision on whether to proceed to publish a statutory notice has to be made in the context of the Council's public sector equality duties.
98. The report identifies that an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and has concluded that the proposal will not adversely affect a particular group in society. The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to ensure that the Council has understood the potential impacts of the proposal in terms of equality so that it can ensure that it is making proportionate and rational decisions having due regard to its public sector equality duty. The decision maker must have due regard to the Equality Impact Assessment in making its decision.
99. In accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards included within the Council's Compliance Notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner, the Council must also consider (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

### **HR Implications**

100. HR People Services will work with the Governing Body of Radyr Primary in readiness for its permanent expansion. In line with the SOP HR Framework the Headteacher and the Governing Body will be encouraged to undertake a review of their staffing structure to ensure that they are sufficient for expansion as the numbers on roll increase. This will have to be balanced against the forecasted school budget. However, it is likely that the permanent expansion of the school will result in the creation of additional permanent vacancies.
101. HR People Services will also provide recruitment support in line with the Council's Redeployment and Redundancy Policy which the Governing Body has adopted. This means that any new vacancies arising as a consequence of an increase in the numbers on role, will provide opportunities for staff on the school redeployment register.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

102. An Equality Impact Assessment on this proposal has been carried out. The assessment concluded that this proposal would not adversely affect a particular group in society. If the proposal were to proceed, further equality impact assessments would be undertaken including an assessment on any additional accommodation. (Details of the Equality Impact Assessment can be seen at Appendix 6)

### **Sustainability Assessment**

103. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the proposal has been carried out in accordance with European Legislation. The assessment confirms that the proposal is compatible with the environmental objective identified by Cardiff's 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Strategic Framework for a School Building Improvement Programme. If the proposal were to proceed, an environmental assessment would be carried out as part of the planning application process. (Details of the Sustainability Assessment can be seen at Appendix 6)

### **Transport Matters**

104. A Traffic and Transport Assessment to assess the potential impact of the proposal has been undertaken (See Appendix 5). The assessment sets out a number of recommendations that would need to be considered in the event of the proposal being progressed to implementation.

### **Community Impact**

105. The following are taken into account when considering a proposal: Public Open Space, parkland, noise and traffic congestion. Officers will work with school and any community groups to ensure that any proposal (s) brought forward would avoid negative impacts wherever possible.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is recommended to delegate authority to the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning and the Director of Governance and Legal Services to publish a statutory notice to:

- i. Increase the capacity of Radyr Primary School to allow the school to admit up to 60 pupils from September 2017.
- ii. Note that prior to implementation of the proposal a further report will be provided to the Cabinet providing details of any objections received, the proposed responses to those objections and recommendations for implementation or otherwise of the proposal.

**NICK BATCHELAR**

**Director**

**13 January 2017**

*The following appendices are attached:*

- Appendix 1 – Consultation Document
- Appendix 2 – Details of Pupil consultations
- Appendix 3 – Estyn response
- Appendix 4 – Formal responses
- Appendix 5 - Traffic and Transport Assessment
- Appendix 6 – Statutory Screening Tool