

Present: Nick Batchelar (Director), Jackie Turner (Assistant Director), Janine Nightingale (SOP), Michele Duddridge Hossain (SOP), Rosalie Phillips (SOP) Beverley Bailey (SOP). There were c60 parents/children, members of the public.

Please note: The following is not a transcript but a contemporaneous note of the meeting.

No	Heading	Action
	<p>Nick Batchelar (NB) opened the meeting, welcomed those present and introduced officers.</p> <p>The meeting was part of the public consultation on a proposal to close Glan yr Afon Primary School which was approved for consultation by Cabinet (elected members) in July. No decision had been made and key questions and views would be recorded and reported to the Council Cabinet who will make a decision on whether to progress the proposal.</p> <p>There was a presentation from Michele Duddridge Hossain setting out details of the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • What is being proposed • Where do children live and where do they go to school • St Cadoc’s Catholic Primary School • Future housing • Condition and suitability • Quality and Standards • Finance • Why Glan yr Afon Primary School • Benefits, disadvantages and risks • Admissions/catchment areas • Key Dates/What happens next <p>The following points/queries were made/raised.</p> <p>Former parent – why not reduce the capacity of the school and retain it for future generations. NB – there would still be surplus places to manage and Cabinet will want to consider the implications of this.</p> <p>Parent – the money that has been spent on consultation could have been invested in the school instead.</p> <p>Parent – why were parents told to take their children out of the school; the staff at the school are like parents to the children</p>	

	<p>and cannot understand why the Council want to close a great school. NB advised that he was aware that a complaint had been submitted and the matter was being looked into.</p> <p>Parent – closing the school would be wrong; the school provides excellent development for pupils who have great relationships with staff.</p> <p>Pupil – why close a school which has been open for a long time. Currently in Y5 and concerned about losing friends and having to move twice in a short period of time – first for Y6 and then for Y7.</p> <p>Parent – why wasn't the school invested in? Will not be sending child to St Cadoc's NB advised that for parents who do not want places at St Cadoc's, there would be place at other community schools.</p>	
	<p>Parent – how many children have moved since January? How many spaces are there available?</p> <p>Resident – have other schools been considered for closure? There are already problems with parking; increasing class sizes will not help and there is no guarantee that St Cadoc's will offer places to local children; children could end up going out of the area. NB advised that transport issues are important and would need to be considered as part of the report to Cabinet.</p> <p>Grandparent – concerned for grandchild who suffers with asthma. Who will be responsible for H&S; staff at the school know how to manage children and how to treat asthma. Parent – will have to get children up an hour earlier; don't drive and may have children going to different schools; the Council should be finding places for children in other schools. Concerned about the distance to other schools, disruption to education, attendance and logistics. The previous Headteacher is responsible for the difficulties and should be sued. NB acknowledged the potential disruption arising out of the proposed change</p> <p>Staff – is this the right time for this to happen? Prior to the suspension of the substantive Headteacher, the school had been in a good place with good prospects for improvement and a balanced budget. The school hasn't made as much progress and has a deficit of £130k however this has been against the backdrop of there being no full time Headteacher.</p>	

NB advised that the deficit budget position was not related to covering for the absent Headteacher post and the issues considered by the Council Cabinet in July were not related to the Headteacher. MDH advised that there would be a meeting with pupils to record their views which would form part of the report to Cabinet.

Cllr Bridgeman – primary schools can suffer because of the associated secondary school provision and this has influenced choices. Eastern High numbers have increased and people may opt back into the English-medium community places.

NB - this is a matter which would need to be considered.

Parent – a traffic officer told the school crossing lady that traffic will be worse once the school closes

NB - this was a genuine consultation and no decision has been made; a previous school closure proposal elsewhere in the city was not progressed. A decision would be made by the Cabinet

Former parent / grandparent – why can't the closure be phased? Allow those children already at the school to remain. Brilliant teachers and support staff who make an effort to engage with everyone.

NB - that there were advantage and disadvantages to this and would need to consider.

Parent – I have been on the GB and qualified in the school, it has been a big part of my life. Why can't the pupils complete their education before it closes.

NB acknowledged the suggestion of a phased closure

Staff – the school had been inspected and can only continue to improve; have waited two and a half years for a decision and now being denied opportunity to consolidate and improve.

NB advised that the consultation document refers to CSC and Estyn judgements.

Pupil – children could lose their friends and focus before going to high school.

Parent – the school supports children with difficulties and has been with these children since Reception. Will not be able to get children to different schools. Invest in Glan yr Afon not St Cadoc's.

Parent – concerned that children will be separated and in different schools because there is no rule for siblings Are

<p>MDH explained catchment, routes etc</p> <p>Previous parent – why is Glan yr Afon not being given a chance? In 2011 you proposed to close Pen y Bryn, then put money in and it is now full to capacity. You did the same to Cefn Onn Primary School. Why haven't we had the same chance. Now there are not enough school places; no allowance has been made for new housing</p> <p>Parent – why were parents told the school was closing and no more children were being admitted. MDH – parents have to be made aware of the proposal and have spoken to officers to ensure the information provided to parents is correct.</p> <p>Parent – parents have been told the school is closing.</p> <p>Staff – concerned for the emotional wellbeing of children and the impact on lateness and attendance if the school closes.</p> <p>Staff – Pupils are vulnerable and this is being used as a judgement on teachers when they have high level needs</p> <p>Staff – the school has the highest percentage of FSM children and the Council is saying that it is ok to move these children around like chess pieces.</p> <p>Pupil – why is the Council giving money to Pen y Bryn and not to Glan yr Afon?</p> <p>Parent – why can't S106 monies be invested in Glan-yr-Afon? JN advised that the Council receives S106 monies for new housing developments and can report this suggestion back to Cabinet.</p> <p>Cllr Joyce – both children and grandchildren have attended the school, received a good education and have thrived. The school is in a deprived area and there are issues around parents not wanting to send children to St Cadoc's, 50% FSM and concerns around parents being able to afford transport for children to alternative schools. Potential issue around people having to vacate family homes and larger families moving into the area as a result of changes to the benefits system.</p> <p>Parent – how can the Council say there are issues with achievement when pupils are improving and making progress.</p> <p>Resident – the school seems to care for children with difficulties with the school have the highest percentage of</p>	
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	<p>Staff – have been told by the local councillors and the governing body that they did not know about the proposal until the day before it was made public.</p> <p>JN – the issue around the number of pupils at the school falling has been known for some time. Officers have looked at schools in the area and advised Cabinet Members of the issues at which point they asked for a public consultation to be undertaken. No decision has been made at this point.</p> <p>Grandparent – Not letting teachers build back up their reputation</p> <p>Parent – only allowing a year for the closure; give the school an opportunity or at least phase the closure.</p> <p>Parent – opportunity to have £1m to make the local area better but Llanrumney was not mentioned. Will pupils have priority for admission to other schools. The Council does not understand what it is putting everyone through.</p> <p>Staff – children went to the school; standard of education of the highest quality.</p> <p>Parent – when child had difficulties, other schools did not want to know. The staff at the school do an amazing job with challenging children. There is no Flying Start provision in St Mellons. NB – the point about early years provision is noted.</p> <p>Parent – 45 minute travel time to other schools; how are children going to get to school. Parents will be fined for not getting children to school on time. NB – Cabinet would want clear evidence of places being available in the area.</p> <p>Parent – child currently in Y5; doesn't like change and will have to move twice within a short period of time; what support will be available for these children.</p> <p>Grandparent – have phoned around all of the school making enquiries about spaces in different age groups and was told that there are big waiting lists; do not believe that places will be available. NB – the Cabinet will want to see of evidence of places being available in the area.</p>	
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<p>Staff – where will these places be? In St Cadoc’s?</p> <p>Parent – we live at the bottom of Llanrumney not the top.</p> <p>Parent – what is going to happen with traffic if St Cadoc’s is expanded.</p> <p>Parent – why is the bottom end of Llanrumney being targeted; have already lost lots of services.</p> <p>Parent – my child can walk home from school, who is going to guarantee their safety if they have to go to St Mellons.</p> <p>Parent – the proposal is based on the number of pupils over the last two years when there has been a number of issues at the school; what about the pupils numbers over the last 30 years not when there has been bad publicity. JT advised that all of the views/issues raised had been recorded and would be included in the report to be considered by the Council Cabinet.</p> <p>The issues raised at the meeting were summarised and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transport and traffic • the geography of the area • logistics – children attending different schools • pride in Glan yr Afon and community links to the school • legacy of the school • learning needs are being met very well at the school • concerns around having to move • phased closure • wellbeing/care/friendships • housing developments – use monies to invest in the community • high number of FSM children • spaces/numbers in other schools • admissions – how to ensure children are admitted to school of choice • traffic • opportunity for school to thrive following recent issues • community facilities being taken from the school • a Church school is not everyone’s choice <p>Parent – what about home tutoring. JT – this is always an option for parents and the LA has to support parents to exercise this right.</p> <p>Parent – a number of community facilities have been taken from the area.</p>	
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	<p>Cllr Bridgeman – if the school closes, would like to see priority for children at other schools.</p> <p>Pupil – what about the kids</p> <p>Parent – why are rights being taken away</p> <p>Parent - what about teachers being able to go into other jobs</p>	
	<p>NB – officers will prepare a report including all comments raised at the meeting. The report will be published before the Cabinet meeting which is likely to be in December. Cabinet Members can also be contacted directly.</p> <p>NB thanked all those present and asked that they submit responses in writing.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 7pm</p>	