
SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING – REPORT OF THE SOP TASK & FINISH GROUP

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with the output of discussions between the School Organisation Planning (SOP) Task & Finish Group and SOP Team at its meeting on the 27 June 2023 in relation to the following proposal:
 - School Organisation Proposals: Provision for Children and Young People with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

These proposals will be considered by Cabinet on the 13 July 2023.

2. Members of this Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the comments and observations made by the Task & Finish Group (set out in paragraphs 8 - 11 of this report), and these be submitted as a letter to the Cabinet Member ahead of the Cabinet meeting on the 13 July 2023.

Background to the Proposals

3. Cardiff has a range of in-county provision delivering specialist places in special schools, specialist resource bases and wellbeing classes that operate as part of mainstream schools, a Pupil Referral Unit, and Community Teaching provision.

4. Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Programme (Band B), formerly the 21st Century Schools Programme, includes key Additional Learning Needs projects across Cardiff. These projects, combined with other Council and/or Welsh Government funded projects will enable a phased increase in Cardiff's designated specialist placements.
5. The key recommendation of the report is requesting that the Cabinet authorise officers consult on the proposals to increase the number of places for learners with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs and the number of places for learners with Complex Learning Needs.

SOP Task & Finish Group Meeting – 27 June 2023

6. The SOP Task & Finish Group met on the 27 June 2023 to consider the proposals in detail.
7. At the Task Group meeting, Members were joined by the following witnesses:
 - Richard Portas, Director of School Organisation Planning
 - Brett Andrewartha, School Organisation Planning Manager

School Organisation Planning Task & Finish Group Observations

8. The Task & Finish Group made the following observations at the meeting on the 27 June 2023. Members are requested to note the following. There will be an opportunity for Members of the Task & Finish Group to briefly give an overview/update of the meeting, if required. The following will be drafted into a letter to the Cabinet Member following this meeting. Comments and observations are as follows:

9. Members of the Task Group considered the content of the Cabinet report and its appendices with officers. They discussed issues relating to:

- Overall proposals contained in the report and any changes since the previous report on this issue¹
- Ensuring future proofing of any individual proposals (when they arise) including projections for demand and capacity
- Financial-related issues and challenges – cost projections; robust monitoring processes; revenue and capital funding; income sources
- Specialist Resource Bases (SRBs)
- Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)
- Land matters
- Staffing
- Timelines and scrutiny's input into the process as further details emerge.

10. T&F Members were satisfied with the content of the Cabinet report and its appendices and therefore recommend that CYPSC commend the report to Cabinet for consideration.

11. The Task & Finish Group also wanted to assure this Committee that agreement has already been reached that, as finer details of ALN proposals emerge, they will be submitted (via a number of reports following consultations on smaller, individual proposals) to a formal meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee. This will ensure that Members have the opportunity to consider proposals in detail and in a manageable way. This will be added to the Committee's work programme, as appropriate.

¹ [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 5th July, 2022, 4.30 pm : Cardiff Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Scope of Scrutiny

12. The scope of the scrutiny was for Members of the Task & Finish Group to consider and provide comments on the draft report to Cabinet, prior to its consideration of the report on the 13 July 2023.

Way Forward

13. Members of this Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the comments and observations made by the Task & Finish Group, and these be submitted as a letter to the Cabinet Member ahead of the Cabinet meeting on the 13 July 2023.

Legal Implications

14. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

15. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. Note the comments and observations made by the Task & Finish Group, and these be submitted as a letter to the Cabinet Member ahead of the Cabinet meeting on the 13 July 2023.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services

28 June 2023