

Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 - 2033

EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR SARAH MERRY)

AGENDA ITEM:

Reason(s) for this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - Outline the progress of Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.
 - Seek Cabinet approval of the new 'Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 - 2033'.
 - Seek Cabinet approval of 'Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024-2033' to allow a business case for the rolling programme to be formally submitted to Welsh Government for approval by the Minister.
 - Note that individual proposals under 'Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024 - 2033' will be subject to further individual business cases.
 - Note that the Cathays High School project will no longer be delivered through the Mutual Investment Model but will instead form a capital project in the rolling programme.

Background

The Cardiff Context - 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' and the importance of investing in Education

2. The Council's 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' policy statement makes clear the administration's commitment to Cardiff being a great place to grow up, with continuing to improve the city's educational system central to the delivery of this commitment.
3. The Council recognises that Cardiff has made significant progress in terms of the number of schools that offer high quality educational experiences to their pupils as evidenced by improving educational outcomes and Estyn reports.
4. Investment in, and improving Cardiff's education estate, to ensure that there are more appropriate, high quality school places for young people,

will be vital to continuing this improvement journey and to meeting the needs of Cardiff's growing and changing population.

5. Through Cardiff's existing education investment, in partnership with Welsh Government's Communities for Learning Programme, the Council has invested over £460m into the school estate, including:
 - School investment that has ensured sufficiency of secondary places through the peak intakes.
 - The replacement of condition D buildings (or replacements commissioned/ in delivery).
 - An increased number of both Welsh-medium and English-medium specialist ALN places have been delivered through expansion of several special schools and establishing a greater number of specialist resource bases.
 - New primary provisions developed to serve new residential areas delivered through the Local Development Plan (LDP).
 - The development of a new dual language model, now operating on one of the first LDP sites.
6. This development has been made possible through securing, combining and prioritising funding from a variety of sources, including: Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Programme and other Welsh Government Capital Grants; funding from the Council's capital programme; Salix funding for carbon reduction schemes; and Local Development Plan contributions to develop school places to serve new residential communities.

Continued investment in Cardiff's schools

7. The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, formerly the 21st Century Schools Programme, is a collaboration between the Welsh Government and Local Authorities. This major, long-term and strategic capital investment programme aims to create a generation of excellent zero carbon learning facilities at the heart of their communities.
8. In Cardiff, the Band B investment phase of this programme is ongoing with a range of projects progressing with a total committed spend to date at circa £257m (excluding Net Zero Carbon). This follows on from an investment of £164m in Cardiff's schools in the Band A phase. The Annual Report on investment in the Education estate (attached at Appendix 1) sets out this progress in detail.
9. Each of the three schools classified as "D" for condition (where all or part of the buildings are identified as 'end of life') at the beginning of the Band B programme, namely Cantonian High School, Fitzalan High School and Willows High School are being replaced as part of the Band B Programme. The approved new-build projects in the Band B programme, and in construction on LDP strategic sites, will remove eight "C" or "D" condition buildings and will deliver eleven new "A" condition buildings.

10. In addition to this, in recent years, the Council has also increased investment in its education estate through its Asset Renewal Programme, to £13.1m in 2020/21, £18.6m in 2021/22 and £29.0m 2022/23. As a result, clear progress has been made to address historical maintenance and condition issues of the estate, and in 2023/24:

- the proportion of Condition A schools increased from 6% to 9%
- the proportion of Condition B schools increased from 30% to 39%
- the proportion of Condition C schools decreased from 61% to 50%.
- the proportion of Condition D schools is unchanged at 2%.

11. The below table shows the Property Condition classification of all Cardiff schools as at September 2023.

Property Condition	2020	%	2021	%	2023	%
A	3	2%	8	6%	11	9%
B	37	29%	38	30%	50	39%
C	84	66%	78	61%	65	50%
D	3	2%	3	2%	3	2%
Total	127		127		129	

Issues

12. Over recent years the following challenges have emerged in relation to the city's school estate and school building investment programme. These are set out in further detail below and in Appendix 2, and include:

- Demographic changes, including falling birth rates in the short to medium term and changes in city-wide and local migration patterns.
- Additional Learning Needs demand that has outstripped supply of places over many years and is projected to continue to increase.
- Remaining issues with the condition of the education estate owing to decades of historic under investment.

Mainstream pupil population changes

13. As outlined in Appendices 1 and 2, a range of factors influence the sufficiency of school places in Cardiff, including resident birth rates, the construction of new communities under the Cardiff Local Development Plan programme and net migration patterns in and out of the local authority boundary.

14. Intakes to Reception classes city-wide peaked at c4,370 pupils in 2015/16 and 2016/17, corresponding with peak birth rates recorded in 2010/11 and

2011/12. Comparing intakes to the number of places available of c4,700, Cardiff retained approximately 8% surplus places.

15. As a consequence of a sustained fall in the birth rate from 2017/18 onwards, and changes to patterns of families moving in or out of the city, overall intakes to primary education in September 2023 to September 2026 are projected to remain at significantly lower levels of c3600 pupils, an overall fall of c18%.
16. Comparing projected intakes to the number of places available of circa 4,700, Cardiff's surplus places would increase to c23% city-wide by 2029/30. This represents the equivalent of 18 surplus two-form entry primary schools.
17. Parental preference patterns mean that the impact on some schools will be negligible, whilst for other schools the impact on pupil numbers will be far greater than the city-wide average of a 23% fall. As schools' budgets are predicated on pupil numbers, this would therefore have a significant impact on some schools. Whilst data analysis indicates an increase in the size of cohorts from the year of birth to the year of school entry over recent years, indicative of net inward migration to the city, this has had little impact overall on the city-wide surplus.
18. Cohorts entering primary education are and will continue to be at low levels in coming years. However, the largest cohorts have entered secondary education and intakes will remain at high levels until 2027/28. The Council has utilised temporary measures at secondary schools city-wide, to provide a low but sustainable level of circa 5% surplus places at entry during these peak intake years. And so, whilst the city-wide surplus in the secondary age phase is very low at present, this surplus is projected to exceed 10% in Year 7 in 2028/29, and to exceed 10% across the secondary age phase by 2031/32.
19. The overall impact of falling intakes on Cardiff's schools and the resulting high number of surplus places, initially in primary education, is significant and needs to be addressed to maintain the financial sustainability of the city's school system and to continue to improve the quality of education in Cardiff. Although some spare places are necessary to enable schools and communities to cope with fluctuations in numbers of pupils, retaining excessive numbers of unused places for an extended period is an extremely inefficient use of finite resources. Managing excess surplus places does not automatically mean closing schools but can include collaboration or federation with other schools to improve the viability, making better use of the existing buildings as a community resource, or rationalising school space by co-locating services within a school to offset costs.

20. It should be noted that this impact will not be felt evenly across the city, and so whilst fewer school places are needed in some communities, sustainable increases to capacities in other areas of the city may still be appropriate where a robust business case for proposed changes can be made.

Provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs

21. There has been a year-on-year increase in the number and percentage of Cardiff's learners accessing specialist provision in the past six years. The number of learners in Cardiff with complex Additional Learning Needs requiring specialist provision was already steadily increasing before 2020. Post-pandemic rates have risen faster rather than abated with c4% of learners now requiring specialist placements to meet their needs, compared to 2.9% in 2017/18.
22. Cardiff's provision for children with Additional Learning Needs includes specialist places in special schools, a pupil referral unit and a range of specialist resource bases and wellbeing classes that operate as part of mainstream schools across the city.
23. To meet the rising demand and to ensure the learners' need are met the Council has implemented a city-wide expansion of this provision and is progressing further proposals to increase the number and geographical spread of places. Additional places have also been secured by expanding the Pupil Referral Unit and community teaching. However, Cardiff continues to rely on costly placements in Out of County provision, in the independent sector or in other Local Authorities. In 2024, the Council funds placements for over 250 learners in Out of County provision, at a current cost of c£10.8m per year, impacting on funding available to Cardiff's schools.
24. Data trends taking account of each learner's needs and placements in 2024 indicate a continuation of recent growth and support a strategic expansion of this provision to provide equity to learners in each age phase, each area of the city, and in each language medium.
25. Meeting the projected increased need for places would be c£12-20k more costly per placement, per year, in Out of County provision compared to within-County placements. Proposals to expand within-county placements, to reduce or cease the reliance on the independent sector, must therefore be considered to maximise the educational impact and to ease pressures on school budgets.

Effectiveness, efficiency and condition of the Education Estate

26. Cardiff's education estate includes 99 mainstream primary schools, 18 mainstream secondary schools, 7 special schools and a Pupil Referral Unit. A small number of schools operate within and benefit from formalised

partnership agreements, but the vast majority of schools do not. Whilst schools' budgets are predicated on pupil numbers, each school receives funding to support its core operational requirements. Compared to larger schools, smaller schools therefore spend a lower proportion of their budget allocation on teaching and learning and a higher proportion on fixed costs.

27. The Council has made significant improvements to the longer-term planning of asset renewals and has increased spend on its estate in recent years. Spending against the asset renewal programme budget has historically been in the region of £4m to £7m, but increased to £13.1m in 2020/21, £18.6m in 2021/22 and £29.0m 2022/23. Recent spend has only been against statutory priorities and the highest priority condition and suitability works. However, the Council has been unable to progress lower priority works including general maintenance, lifecycle and other non-urgent matters.
28. Consistent with the rationale and the triggers for considering changes outlined in the Council's adopted Collaboration and Federation Strategy, the Council must therefore develop school organisation proposals that achieve a more sustainable and equitable pattern of provision, with fewer stand-alone organisations and a reduced number of surplus places. Such changes support a more effective and efficient operation of Cardiff's education estate and would in turn support learners to continue to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Education Investment Strategy and the Sustainable Communities Programme 2024-33

29. To address the issues and challenges above the Council has developed the following strategy and programme:
 - Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 – 2033, which sets out a framework for future decision making on investment in the school programme (attached as Appendix 3); and
 - Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024-2033, which outlines the potential future priority proposals (attached as Appendix 4).

Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 – 2033

30. To deliver on the Council's 'Stronger Fairer Greener' commitments and meet our Cardiff 2030 aspirations, it is important for the Council to set out a framework to support decision making, which is outlined in the Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 – 2033.
31. The strategy has been developed to set out the key investment priorities for the Council to address over the next ten years. It provides a framework that will enable the Council to build upon the recent achievements and infrastructure improvements across Cardiff's schools to inform consideration of the changing demands for the future.
32. The strategy sets out the long-term strategic direction to support the effective and efficient organisation of the Education system in Cardiff and is clearly aligned to both the national mission and our stated local priorities specific to the improvement of and investment in Education in Cardiff.
33. To secure continued improvement and sustainability in the education sector in Cardiff, the Council recognises that every school must form part of an effective and cohesive system. Schools need to be able to function with appropriate levels of funding and maximise and embrace positive partnerships to enhance opportunities for learners. Schools must support the development of the education workforce and secure efficiencies where possible through securing best value, minimising duplication and reducing energy consumption.
34. This strategy works in tandem with the 'Cardiff Education: Collaboration and Federation Strategy' which sets out how Cardiff will maximise the power of working collaboratively with partners and through collaborations and federations across our school network to support delivery the aspirations set out in Cardiff 2030, outlining the importance of effective organisation of and investment in Cardiff's education system.

Stakeholder engagement

35. The strategy has been developed through a process of engagement with stakeholders, including young people, school leaders and with the wider education sector. The development of the strategy began with the Cardiff Influencers, a group of young people attending Cardiff Schools brought together to learn about school planning principles and investment processes in Cardiff to ensure understanding of the key issues to inform consideration of how it could look in the future.
36. The Cardiff Influencers considered the provision across the city, alongside the current issues presenting and the impact of strategies at local and national level relevant to the provision of education and set out the areas of greatest concern to them that they felt the Council should prioritise as part of reorganisation and investment in Education for the future.

37. The Cardiff Influencers presented their work to the adult Stakeholder Reference Group for members to consider and build upon. This work, combined with the data, information and wider strategic context all underpin the draft strategy. The Cardiff Influencers also presented their findings to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for them to both understand the approach they had taken and to ensure that the key concerns and aspirations were made known to the cross-party membership on this group.
38. The Stakeholder Reference Group met to consider the current education system at a local level, alongside national priorities and expectations. This group consisted of a range of experienced professionals spanning education provision in Cardiff and included:
- Headteachers (all phases and types represented including Chairs of Headteacher Conferences).
 - Governing Body representatives.
 - Central South Consortium representatives.
 - CiW Diocese and Catholic Archdiocese representatives.
 - Trade Union representative(s).
 - Post 16 providers representatives (Cardiff and Vale College, St David's College).
 - Higher Education Providers representatives (Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University).
39. The Stakeholder Reference Group also featured Council Officers from various different teams and departments including:
- Education (School Organisation Planning, Inclusion, Welsh in Education, Finance and Services to Schools, Cardiff Commitment, Cardiff Curriculum Planning).
 - Traffic and Transport.
 - Communities including Childcare Strategy, Early Help, Flying Start and CFS.
40. The Council is committed to continuing to work with stakeholders across the system through the application of this strategy to provide an education system that is designed to ensure that no child gets left behind.

Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024-2033

41. Any investment in future will need to meet the strategic aims as set out in Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 - 2033 and against the following investment principles to ensure that it represents best use of the Council's finite financial resources and balance the competing needs across the city:

- Alignment with local and national policy agendas to improve education outcomes.
 - Targeted investment through maintenance or new build to improve the condition of the estate.
 - Ensuring sustainable levels of surplus in the estate.
 - Delivering an appropriate balance of ALN provision.
 - Meeting legislative requirements.
 - Maximising scope of invest to save to reduce reliance on borrowing.
 - Strong option appraisal process to underpin robust decision making.
42. Change to the organisation of schools and/or education facilities that would necessitate capital investment is dependent on the Council operating an effective funding strategy which clearly sets out the funding sources whether external or Council (to provide clarity specific to capital, revenue and any agreed borrowing). This would include the timing of cashflows and officer accountability on ensuring funding sources materialise. The funding strategy should also note risks should funding sources do not materialise and any mitigating actions required.
43. Finite financial resources necessitated a need to prioritise emerging proposals and projects for inclusion in the rolling programme. All indicative projects selected have met the following conditions:
- (i) Mandated resolution of 'Condition D' buildings.
 - (ii) High risk of not meeting statutory requirements.
 - (iii) 'Invest to save' projects identified to positively impact revenue spending over the short to medium term.
 - (iv) Projects where s106 agreements are in place and contributions provide the match funding required, aligned to a more efficient organisation of existing provision.
 - (v) Projects where s106 agreements are in place and contributions provide part of the match funding required, and where failure to progress results in local insufficiency of places and and/or increased home to school transport costs.
 - (vi) 'Invest to save' projects identified to positively impact revenue spending over the medium to long term.
 - (vii) Projects which evidence wider alignment with national and local policies and priorities.
44. Proposals that do not meet these seven conditions have not been considered for inclusion in the rolling programme. All indicative projects would be subject to a robust business case process and must be affordable within the resources available to the Council.

45. The rolling programme will account for changing conditions throughout the nine years and may change the identified projects. Some of the risks considered to date include:
- Changing demands that alter the programme's priorities, such as changing birth rates, pupil needs or school condition issues.
 - Pupil forecasts are based on known available datasets. The Council may need to review or develop datasets for certain strategic aims.
 - Affordability of projects.
 - Resourcing of the programme and budget pressures, such as unplanned costs, changes in scope or inflation.
 - Development constraints that have not yet been identified, such as unforeseen site issues or revised planning requirements.
 - Delays to timelines, incurring additional transitional costs or alternative proposals.
 - National policy changes.
46. All schemes need to go through robust internal and Welsh Government business case processes before funding being 'approved'. The programme schemes are indicative at this stage, and viability of school proposals will require further assessment at business case stage to meet the investment principles with clear evidence they are affordable at the point of proceeding and will contribute toward a more efficient system that is sustainable into the future. Proposals may not be achievable if Welsh Government capital funding is not secured at the business case stage.
47. Whilst Welsh Government has agreed to consider Cardiff's Strategic Outline Programme and would give 'in-principle' decisions on Cardiff's strategic priorities, the progression of any preferred project would be subject to a business case process, considering the alignment with strategic objectives, financial appraisal, risks, and benefits to the Council and stakeholders. Following Council consideration, the Welsh Government would in turn consider each project business case and assess each against its objectives prior to agreeing the funding of an individual project.

Rolling programme considerations

48. The rolling programme is being funded through traditional capital and it should be noted that the Cathays High School project is also proposed to be funded through this route rather than the previously considered Mutual Investment Model (MIM).
49. MIM is a national scheme that has been developed to borrow funds via the private sector to design and build a school and maintain the building fabric over a 25-year period. Welsh Government has procured a Private Sector Delivery Partner (PSDP) to work with it on the delivery of education and community facilities. The successful bidder was Meridiam Investments II

SAS. The PDSP and a subsidiary of the Development Bank of Wales have entered into a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called WEPCo, which will deliver the services to participants.

50. At its meeting on 16 July 2020, Cabinet agreed to enter into the Strategic Partnering Agreement (SPA) with WEPCo. Cardiff Council, along with other local authorities and further education institutions, are a participant to the SPA. The SPA sets out how the parties act together over the long term in a collaborative partnering, non-adversarial and open manner to support the effective planning, procurement and delivery of education and community facilities in Wales and the delivery of infrastructure services. This includes partnering services for the project such as legal, design and technical advice.
51. At the time of the Cathays High School proposals being brought forward to consultation in 2021, the proposed scheme formed part of the 21st Century School Programme to be funded through MIM. In the proposed scheme the new school was to be constructed via a Special Purpose Vehicle with the Council making a net contribution of 19% (with WG providing 81% of the revenue funding required) towards the annual unitary charge for a period of 25 years.
52. However, Welsh Government has recently informed the Council that the Cathays High School project no longer falls within the £500m funding allocation for this programme and will no longer be delivered through the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) route. The programme has seen similar challenges to the rest of the construction industry with rising inflation that has contributed to rising costs and tough market conditions. In turn, this has resulted in the reduction of Education schemes that can be delivered through this route.
53. The Council is engaged with the Government Property Unit regarding the future of Companies House, in parallel with correspondence with the Charity Commission regarding the Maindy cycle track site, for the delivery of the new build Cathays High School.
54. To support the delivery of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme, the Council has also completed the strategic acquisition of the Ty Glas site in Llanishen in 2021 to allow options secondary school and/ or special school provision to be progressed.

Local Member consultation (where appropriate)

55. This is a city-wide strategic framework that potentially affects many wards. Local members would be briefed and formally consulted when related proposals are brought forward.

Reason(s) for Recommendations

56. To approve Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 - 2033.
57. To approve the schemes that have been prioritised for investment under Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024-2033.

Impact of the proposals on the Welsh Language

58. The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Strategy sets out the vision of a million Welsh speakers across Wales by 2050.
59. The Welsh Government published its Cymraeg 2050 strategy in 2017 which sets out a vision of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050. By 2050, the aim is for 40 per cent of children (in each year group) to be in Welsh-medium education. Of those in English-medium education, the assumption is that half of those leaving school will report that they are able to speak Welsh. The strategy assumes that, nationally, 70 per cent of 15-year-olds will be able to speak Welsh by 2050, made up of 40 per cent in Welsh-medium schools and 30 per cent in English-medium schools.
60. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 make provision for a local authority to prepare a ten-year plan. Cardiff's Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) was published on the Council's website on 1 September 2022 following approval by the Welsh Minister in July 2022.
61. The strategic framework and rolling programme supports all outcomes of the Cardiff WESP, but it most notably contributes to the increase of Welsh-medium and dual language school places across the city.

Wellbeing of Future Generations

62. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the Act") places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales – a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and is globally responsible.
63. In discharging its duties under the Act, the Council has set and published well-being objectives designed to maximise its contribution to achieving the national well-being goals. The well-being objectives are set out in Cardiff's Corporate Plan 2021-2024.
64. This strategic framework and rolling investment programme are closely aligned with the goals of the Act as it looks to establish strong footings for the future of sustainable Education and in doing so will support the Education outcomes outlined in Cardiff 2030.

Financial Implications

65. The recommendations to this report do not themselves commit the Council to any capital expenditure commitments and, therefore, there are no financial implications directly arising from this report. However the report provides a framework for decision making across the education system and seek cabinet approval of the impending rolling programme bid to Welsh Government, which could lead to significant capital and revenue financial implications.
66. All rolling programme investments are subject to cost and funding strategies within overall affordability of the budgetary framework, with robust financial due diligence taken at each decision point, which is stated as a principle in Appendix 3. The significance of these commitments necessitates the need for consideration as part of the wider Council budget process and, therefore, the preferred funding solution will form part of the annual budget report, with funding approval and revenue impact identified for individual schemes in the budget report.
67. The investment principles set out in Appendix 3, states the directorate will seek to maximise invest to save schemes to reduce reliance on borrowing. Within the principles is stating a funding strategy that will earmark funding sources for individual schemes, to minimising borrowing requirement, which will be required to ensure the scope of the strategy is fulfilled. Not releasing sufficient funding from the overall programme will put individual schemes at risk, and consideration will be required to release funding through the sale or disposal of underutilised assets at market value, or schemes provide cashable savings from revenue budget lines such as School Transport and Out of County placements to ensure maximum educational impact from a finite resource. As delivery of schemes will be reliant on cashable savings or funding from disposal of assets, it would only be prudent to seek a higher intervention rate from Welsh Government to ensure full delivery of educational priorities.
68. The report states that Local authorities are experiencing financial challenges and that prioritisation of schemes for Cardiff in the rolling programme have been identified and based on a fully evidenced range of information including financial sustainability, whilst also ensuring sustainable level of surplus in the estate. Appendix 2 indicates increasing Primary School and Secondary school capacity and surpluses in both sectors, with Primary surplus peaking at 22% in 2029-30 and secondary surplus peaking at 10.5% in 2033-34. Not stated in the report is what is a sustainable level of surplus, whilst also evidencing how managing significant surpluses is financial sustainable. As school pupil population is the primary factor in distributing delegated school budget, increasing capacity, whilst population decreases, will result in financial pressure on schools and will result in further financial challenges to school against the current backdrop of increasing reliance on school balances.

Legal Implications (including Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate)

69. Under the Education Act 1996, the Council has a general statutory obligation to promote high standards of education and to consider parental preference. The Council also has an obligation under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the School Funding Regulations 2010 to provide capital funding for maintained schools.
70. The Local Government Measure 2009 sets out the Council's obligations to ensure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.
71. In considering this matter, the Council must have regard to its public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). This means the Council must give 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. The 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 religion or belief.
72. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards and consider the impact of its decision upon the Welsh Language.
73. When taking strategic decisions, the Council also has a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage ('the Socio-Economic Duty' imposed under section 1 of the Equality Act 2010). In considering this, the Council must take into account the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers (WG42004 A More Equal Wales The Socio-economic Duty Equality Act 2010 (gov.wales) and must be able to demonstrate how it has discharged its duty.
74. An Equalities Impact Assessment aims to identify the equalities implications of the proposed decision, including inequalities arising from socio-economic disadvantage, and due regard should be given to the outcomes of the Equalities Impact Assessment

HR Implications

75. Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 - 2033 has been developed to build upon the recent achievements across Cardiff's schools, to consider the changing demands for the future and to outline the vision to deliver the themes and goals of Cardiff 2030.
76. Joint working between the Council, schools, governing bodies, the Central South Consortium, and potentially other partners, will be required in order to deliver this strategy. Full consultation with stakeholders will be required which includes school leaders and staff, governing bodies and will also require trade union engagement.

77. HR People Services will provide advice, support and guidance to the governing bodies for the workforce planning and any consequential recruitment processes.

Property Implications

78. Whilst there are no specific property implications in this report, Strategic Estates will continue to work closely with Education and will be available to provide property related advice and support as necessary. Where there are any relevant property management matters, property transactions or valuations being undertaken by the Council to deliver any proposals, they should be done so in accordance with the Council's Asset Management process and in consultation with Strategic Estates and relevant service areas.

Traffic and Transport Implications

79. Numbers of ALN pupils who continue to use Learner Transport for their journey to school will be likely to increase in line with the increasing demand and provision of places for pupils at specialist resource bases and ALN schools.
80. The increased provision of places at special schools and SRBs across the city means out-of-county transport spending is not expected to increase, and the transport cost per individual learner is likely to decrease. However due to the increasing numbers of eligible learners there is still expected to be a risk of high transport costs.
81. Increased numbers of pupils using Learner Transport can in some cases lead to efficiency savings where routes can be combined from one area of the city to a local ALN educational facility. However, where provision of ALN places is allocated to specialised bases, the appropriate placement would not necessarily be the closest ALN base to a pupil's home. This would therefore not necessarily result in more efficient overall school transport logistics nor in shorter average journey times for individual pupils. It is not possible to predict the overall net result until individual details are established.
82. In the longer term, Transport officers would seek to review ALN provision and placements with Education Services with a view to locate provision in the areas where the pupils are living which would reduce transport requirements.
83. Each school location with new or increased demand for Learner Transport vehicles will require suitable new, improved and / or expanded facilities for drop-off and pick-up within the site. The areas required would need to accommodate appropriate numbers of vehicles which may approximate to one taxi for a typical average of 3 pupils. In some cases, minibuses may be suitable, but this is also dependent on individual pupil needs, home locations and co-ordination of routes.

84. The Council's Road Safety officers will continue working with schools to provide increased Independent Travel Training to reduce the costs of the ALN school transport provision.
85. The Transport White Paper includes the commitment to "Develop Active Travel Plans and accessible walking and cycling routes for all schools by working with children, teachers, parents and governors to promote walking, scooting and cycling to and from schools".
86. The new school developments being brought forward as part of Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme provide the opportunity to deliver on this commitment by ensuring that active travel infrastructure is properly planned and provided as an essential and integral element of the scheme design. Early involvement with the transport team ensures that appropriate facilities to support sustainable travel are considered at the outset and incorporated into school masterplans.
87. Transport Assessments (TA) are undertaken to assess the traffic impacts and identify off-site infrastructure required to accommodate new school developments and facilitate sustainable access to the development in a way which accords with national planning policies in Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, 2021) and the Council's Local Development Plan.
88. TAs are also subject to the Parking Standards (contained within the Council's 2018 "Managing Transport Impacts Supplementary Planning Guidance"). This sets out the required provision for minimum levels of cycle storage equivalent to one cycle space per 5 secondary school pupils. The maximum car parking allocations represent a reduction in typical school parking provision. This contributes to and supports the Carbon Reduction commitment by reducing carbon usage on the journey to school.

Impact Assessments

89. An initial Single Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached as Appendix 5. This includes an Equality Impact Assessment, Child's Rights Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment. The views of stakeholders would be sought as part of any consultations and the assessment would be reviewed as part of the post consultation analysis.
90. The Council would also seek the views of the school communities and the wider community to inform a Community Impact Assessment, ahead of and during the consultation period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Note the content of the Annual Report setting out progress and successes over the past 12 months of Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.
- (ii) Adopt 'Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 – 2033'.
- (iii) Approve the schemes that have been prioritised for investment under 'Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024-2033' to allow a programme business case to be formally submitted to Welsh Government for approval by the Minister.
- (iv) Note that individual proposals under 'Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024-2033' will be subject to appropriate business cases and are at this stage indicative.
- (v) Note that the Cathays High School project will no longer be delivered through the Mutual Investment Model but will instead form a capital project in the rolling programme.
- (vi) Delegate responsibility to the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning for the development and implementation of operational plans to deliver the success measures set out in the strategy.

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Melanie Godfrey
	Date submitted to Cabinet office

Background papers:

[Stronger, Fairer, Greener - Cardiff Council 2022 \)](#)

[Cardiff 2030 Strategy](#)

[Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme | GOV.WALES](#)

The following appendices are attached:

Appendix 1: Annual Report on investment in the Education estate

Appendix 2: Summary population and places data sets January 2024

Appendix 3: Education Investment Strategy Caerdydd 2024 – 2033.

Appendix 4: Cardiff's Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme 2024-2033

Appendix 5: Single Impact Assessment