



County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2000

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2000

CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting WEDNESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2021, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

Correspondence following the meeting (Pages 3 - 14)

This page is intentionally left blank

Date: 14 October 2021

My Ref: SS/CYP/SOPProposals/Cathays/ALN/WESP



County Hall
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2087

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088

Councillor Sarah Merry
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sarah,

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13th OCTOBER 2021 –
SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING PROPOSALS – CATHAYS HIGH
SCHOOL, ALN AND WESP**

Please accept my thanks on behalf of the Committee for attending the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee to facilitate the consideration of Cabinet proposals relating to the future of Cathays High School, ALN/Greenhill and WESP. Please also pass on our thanks to Mel Godfrey, Richard Portas and Michele Duddridge-Friedl. The comments, observations and recommendations below were captured during the Committee's discussion at the Way Forward.

The Expansion and Redevelopment of Cathays High School

During discussions on this Item, Members asked a number of questions relating to the nature of the consultation process; the capacity of the site; strategic decisions taken to date for the Cathays proposal; financial implications and risk of the proposal; and linked to this, the proposals for the new velodrome.

Members were concerned that the Cabinet report stated that the Cathays site MAY be of sufficient size and would therefore seek further assurances and clarification on the capacity.

Members raised the issue of projections into the future and sustainability. They raised the issue of sustainability of the 8 forms of entry at Cathays, given the other projects that are adjacent to it. Some discussion took place about where the pupils of Cathays come from and the need to look at catchment areas again. Members

were told that relatively few pupils come from schools in the north of the city and that the bulk come from Fitzalan and Willows. Members also asked about the potential impact of those coming from the Northeast of the city given the number of developments in that area and the proposal of a strategic site there, which may result in pupils not choosing to go to Cathays. Further views are sought on this.

Members also seek further clarification on the financial implications relating to the re-siting of the velodrome. In particular, there is a statement in the Cabinet papers that states that the Cabinet may not decide to proceed with it. Should this happen, there will be a significant implication in terms of the Cathays development. Therefore, Members request that they be informed of when is this going to be clear and what implications this may have in relation to the proposal in the medium term?

Members concluded that whilst this Committee all understand the process the Council adopts in relation to SOP proposals, it appeared that the general public doesn't see it quite in that way and this is reflected in the large number of objections received. Members agreed that this may be partly due to how the process is followed.

Members have previously requested that details of the proposals and process for each scheme is available early within the process so that we are able to have the confidence to carry out an informed scrutiny of the proposals. In addition, if this level of information was available and communicated to the public (and therefore clarity of where this consultation sat in the overall process), it may have alleviated some of the issues and objections raised. Members acknowledge that not all factors can be predetermined and that things may well change but ensuring that everyone invited to engage with the proposals are well briefed and informed is critical in ensuring the success of the projects moving forward.

To this end, the Committee **recommends** that the SOP process be revisited and reviewed to ensure that the timeline for developing SOP proposals is set out clearly and communicated to all. This should include communication on what each milestone (particularly consultation) is there to achieve, where it sits within the process, and the purpose of it. The review should also include detailed proposals and plans at an earlier stage, but also include caveats that this may change going forward, pending further developments relating to the proposal going forward, including responses from consultation and engagement shaping those changes.

Finally, Members identified that some of the objections raised included asking whether the School Organisation Code had been fully complied with. We would therefore seek further clarification on this and assurances that the consultation fully met the requirements.

Greenhill and ALN Paper

Members asked a question regarding whether the projections set out in the Cabinet paper covered the projected deficit and were told that further provision would need to be made. Therefore, the Committee has requested that they be appraised on the Council's plans for that further provision at the appropriate time. If any indicative timescales could be suggested, that would be helpful.

Members also seek further clarity on what the projected savings would be regarding out of county placements and provision. Members acknowledge that this has yet to be done, but request that, once available, be brought to Committee. Again, an indicative timescale would be useful.

Due to time constraints and number of items on the Agenda, Members did not have the opportunity to ask questions relating to the Greenhill proposals, but in the Way Forward agreed that the following be asked, and a response be provided accordingly. The question is that the proposal states that the new Greenhill school would be split over 2 sites. Members would request further information on how provision will be managed across the sites; the implications of the Dutch gardens site being outside of the Cardiff boundary; what are the implications in relation to access and transport; and cost implications.

WESP

Following the detailed consideration of this issue at the September CYPSC meeting, Members asked a number of questions regarding workforce planning; targets; and support for parents/carers.

Members concluded that they would wish to be kept up to date as the plan progresses. An indicative timeline for this would be appreciated and added to the work programme accordingly.

To recap, the Committee **is requesting:**

In relation to **Cathays High School:**

- Further assurances and clarification on the capacity of the Cathays high school proposal.
- Further views on projections and sustainability, particularly in relation to the sustainability of the 8 forms of entry at Cathays, given the other projects that are adjacent to it; and the potential impact of those coming from the Northeast

of the city given the number of developments in that area and the proposal of a strategic site there, which may result in pupils not choosing to go to Cathays.

- Further clarification on the financial implications relating to the re-siting of the velodrome, to include when decisions are likely to be made in relation to the velodrome proceeding and the implications this may have in relation to the proposal in the medium term?
- Whether the School Organisation Code has been fully complied with.

In relation to **Greenhill and ALN Paper**:

- Once a further review of provision has been undertaken, that this be brought to this scrutiny committee for appraisal - indicative timescales required.
- Further clarity on what the projected savings would be with regard to out of county placements and provision - indicative timescales required
- Respond to the question regarding the Greenhill school proposal set out in this letter.

In relation to the **WESP**:

- Assurances that Members will be kept up to date as the plan progresses - indicative timescales required.

Recommendations to be monitored following this scrutiny

To summarise, the Scrutiny Committee made **one** formal recommendation which is set out below. As part of the response to this letter we would be grateful if you could, for the recommendation, state whether the recommendation is accepted, partially accepted or not accepted and summarise the Cabinet's response. If the recommendation is accepted or partially accepted, I would also be grateful if you could identify the responsible officer and provide an action date. This will ensure that progress can be monitored as part of the approach agreed by Cabinet in December 2020.

Recommendation	Accepted, Partially Accepted or Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date
<p>1. That the SOP process be revisited and reviewed to ensure that the timeline for developing SOP proposals is set out clearly and communicated to all. This should include communication on what each milestone (particularly consultation) is there to achieve, where it sits within the process, and the purpose of it. The review should also include detailed proposals and plans at an earlier stage, but also include caveats that this may change going forward, pending further developments relating to the proposal coming forward, including responses from consultation and engagement shaping those changes.</p>				

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, please pass my sincere thanks to all who attended Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee. I look forward to a response.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR LEE BRIDGEMAN
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: CYPSC Members

Melanie Godfrey, Director of Education & Lifelong Learning

Richard Portas, Programme Director for the School Organisation Programme

Michele Duddridge-Friedl, Operational Manager, Planning & Provision

Brett Andrewartha, School Organisation Programme Planning Manager

Gary Jones, Head of Democratic Services

Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Officer Manager

Melanie Jackson, PA to the Deputy Leader

Helen Eager, PA to the Director of Education & Lifelong Learning

Paula Williams, PA to the Programme Director for the School Organisation Programme

Tim Gordon and Jeremy Rhys – Media and Comms

**SWYDDFA'R DIRPRWY ARWEINYDD
DEPUTY LEADER'S OFFICE**

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM46591

Dyddiad / Date: 9 November 2021



Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088
www.caerdydd.gov.uk
County Hall
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2087
www.cardiff.gov.uk

Via email: Alison.Jones@cardiff.gov.uk

Annwyl/Dear Cllr Bridgeman,

Thank you for your letter of 14 October 2021 in respect of the Cathays High School proposals, proposals to expand ALN provision and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

In this response I have looked to address your key considerations.

The Expansion and Redevelopment of Cathays High School

• Further assurances and clarification on the capacity of the Cathays High School proposal

The planned capacity of the school is 1,450 places, organised as 8 forms of entry in years 7-11 with a sixth form of 250 places, and a 50 place Specialist Resource Base. Following consultation at the formative stage of proposals, and taking account of views expressed during consultation, the Council identified the red line boundary which was presented for consideration by Cabinet and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee at their meetings in June 2021.

This boundary has been identified to provide c46,000m² for the school, complying with the requirements of the relevant Building Bulletin guidance, and would also allow the Council to establish an area of c13000m² unrestricted open space outside of the boundary of the school site that would be available for community use. This strikes an appropriate balance that ensures the school meets the needs of its learners, and that the community has access to a large open green space.

• Projections and the sustainability of the Cathays High School proposals

The report considered by the Cabinet on 14 October 2021 deals with these concerns in paragraphs 18 to 30 and 56 to 65.

A temporary increase to the admission number at Cathays High School, to eight forms of entry in Year 7 (240 places), was implemented for the 2020/21 intake, and all places were allocated. Over 85% of children enrolled in the school live within 3 miles of the school. Measures which retain the intake at Cathays High School at 240 places will be needed in coming years to ensure there are sufficient places available at Cathays High School to deal with this local demand for places.

GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



However, as detailed in the Cabinet Report which brought the proposals forward in December 2020, Cardiff's intakes to primary schools and secondary schools fluctuate greatly. Over the population cycle, this fluctuation amounts to – 30 forms of entry – the equivalent of three to four secondary schools. The highest intakes to schools in Cardiff, from existing communities, will be in the next 3 years but intakes will remain at high levels until at least 2028.

The Council would not expect children from the new housing developments in North East Cardiff to access places at Cathays High School. However, it is likely that many children who live in these housing developments between Lisvane, Pontprennau and Old St Mellons would directly affect the take up of places at schools that already serve those areas, including Llanishen High School, Corpus Christi Catholic High School and St Teilo's Church in Wales High School. Each of these schools has been oversubscribed in recent years. Whilst Llanishen High School has admitted all children within its catchment area, it has also been able to accommodate a number of children from the south of the city.

It is therefore anticipated that fewer children from the south and central areas of the city would gain admission to Llanishen High School, Corpus Christi Catholic High School and St Teilo's Church in Wales High School. The planning of places throughout the city must take account of this, providing local solutions to increased local demand.

Intakes to secondary schools city-wide will reduce at the end of the decade as a consequence of the low birth rate in recent years. However, as birth rates are cyclic they are expected to increase beyond this period. In a city where the intakes to schools fluctuate by approximately 25%, it is not possible to retain a consistent level of surplus overall. Councils are also unable to hold school places vacant in each part of the city for later applicants. The Council must plan for those children promoting from primary education, and also for those who move to Cardiff during their secondary education who cannot enrol in a fully subscribed school as a consequence of the legal constraints placed on the Council by the Admissions Code.

Each of these factors contribute to a challenging context in which some schools must carry a proportion of surplus places to ensure that we can meet our responsibilities to families who move into the city.

The geographical position of Cathays High School in a central and accessible part of the city means it is best placed to support Cardiff in responding to population and demographic changes, both in existing communities and on the strategic sites in North East Cardiff. The Cabinet has also agreed to design the new Willows High School in a way that would allow for later expansion and would support it to respond to any future demographic changes.

- **Decisions in respect of the new velodrome and financial implications**

In July 2021, Cabinet agreed to progress a Full Business Case for the delivery of the new Velodrome with the target of works commencing on-site early in 2022 and for the

new facility to be fully operational by spring 2023. The determination of the school supports the proposal for the new Velodrome.

The financial implications relating to the velodrome will be considered by the Cabinet later this year, ahead of the Cathays High School proposals progressing through the design and tender stages. This is an appropriate and timely sequence that allows for the Council to continue with planning for the school but ensures that the Council does not commit significant financial resources to the planning of the new buildings and facilities at risk.

- **Compliance with the School Organisation Code**

At each stage of the process, the Council has complied fully with the School Organisation Code.

The Council consulted on the proposed changes to Cathays High School between 29 January 2021 and 19 March 2021.

Following feedback during the consultation period further work was undertaken to produce an indicative red line boundary map for the proposed school site taking account of the views expressed in consultation.

A report on the consultation was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 17 June 2021, which informed Cabinet of the 494 responses received during the consultation, the issues raised, the Council's response to these and recommendations on the way forward. The report also identified and addressed concerns raised during the consultation, in particular uncertainty around the location/ layout of the new build school and the potential impact on open access space. This enabled the Cabinet to give due consideration to each of the issues raised, to inform its decision making process.

Following consideration of the consultation report, the Council's Cabinet resolved to proceed with the proposals and authorised the publication of a statutory notice, which also met the requirements of the Code. Stakeholders who were initially consulted, and those who responded to the consultation, were notified of this.

ALN proposals

- **Further proposals**

The Council is continually reviewing the evolving needs of learners within education, and those of pre-school age, in order to plan its specialist provision.

I would anticipate the proposals outlined in the Cabinet Report to proceed to consultation in the Autumn and for Officers to report to Cabinet on the outcome of the consultations in March 2022. The feedback from these consultations will inform future

proposals being developed and I expect that these further proposals to be brought forward for consideration by the Committee in Autumn 2022.

- **Projected savings**

I will ensure that the committee is briefed on the comparative costs of types of placements, and the anticipated revenue savings relative to the proposals being taken forward against the increasing number of specialist placements required, in March 2022 following the completion of the consultation and appraisal of responses.

- **Greenhill School**

Your queries in respect of the proposed Greenhill sites will also be addressed within consultation materials, and will be considered in greater detail in the engagement with staff and the Governing Body of the school during the consultation. Officers will work closely with the school to consider how the split site arrangements would work best for learners and staff, in further developing the vision for the expanded school. The Dutch Garden Centre site lies within the Cardiff boundary, and the relative advantages and disadvantages of its location, compared to alternative sites, will be set out in consultation materials.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

The Council is formally consulting on the 2022-2032 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan from 15 October 2021 to 13 December 2021, and I anticipate that the Officers will appraise the responses to consultation in a report to the Council's Cabinet in January 2022.

Following consideration by the Cabinet, the Council must present its Plan to Welsh Ministers for Approval by 31 January 2022.

Following consideration by Welsh Government, and approval by Welsh Ministers, the Council would expect to publish its Plan in Summer 2021 and for it to come into force from 1 September 2022.

- **Revisiting the nature of the consultation process to ensure that the public have a better understanding**

I welcome your feedback on the school organisation process and partially accept the recommendation of the Committee that the timeline for developing SOP proposals should be set out clearly and communicated to all. It is of paramount importance that those who have interest in the proposals understand each stage and each milestone, and that they understand the duties of the Cabinet when considering proposals.

At present, the Council ensures that a detailed explanation of the stages and approximate timings of Cabinet consideration, consultation and determination are set out within its consultation materials. I will ensure that the appropriateness of this

information is updated and is kept under review and shared with a wider range of stakeholders, including the Committee.


In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, the consultation is undertaken at the formative stage of developing proposals. Whilst the Council will provide as much detail as possible to allow the proposal to be understood, the extent of this detail must be appropriate to the formative stage of the process and in accordance with the requirements of the Code and the principles of consultation as established in case law.

The Council must take great care in the extent and cost of investigative surveys and design undertaken at risk at this stage. It is also important that the formative proposal does not undermine the statutory planning process. For example, at the formative stage plans will be high level that have not been tested with statutory bodies/ stakeholders and more detailed design and technical plans should be considered by the statutory Planning Committee at the appropriate time.

As further detail is available it is appropriate to update the Committee as projects progress and an update on the Fairwater Campus will be presented following the tender process. The Council provides further opportunities for a wide range of stakeholders to engage beyond the determination stage, to shape the proposed solutions, and I will ensure that the stages of developments and opportunities to engage are promoted for future proposals.

I trust that this information is helpful and provides a substantive response to the point raised by the Committee.

Yn gywir,
Yours sincerely,



Councillor / Cynghorydd Sarah Merry
Deputy Leader / Dirprwy Arweinydd
Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills
Aelod Cabinet Dros Addysg, Cyflogaeth a Sgiliau

This page is intentionally left blank