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**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING: PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES TO SERVE CATHAYS AND PARTS OF GABALFA, HEATH, LLANDAFF NORTH AND PLASNEWYDD**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of proposals, attached at **Appendix A**, prior to its consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on the 17 December 2020. The purpose of the attached report is to enable the Cabinet to consider a recommendation to hold a public consultation on proposals for primary school provision to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.

**Background**

2. The Welsh Government published its Cymraeg 2050 strategy in 2017 which sets out a vision of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050.
3. 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.
4. 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.

5. The strategy also sets out transformational changes which include:
  - Expand Welsh-medium early years provision to facilitate a seamless transition into Welsh-medium education.
  - Increase the proportion of each school year group receiving Welsh-medium education from 22 per cent nationally in 2015/16 to 25-29 per cent by 2031, and then to 40 per cent by 2050.
6. The Bilingual Cardiff Strategy identifies priority areas to allow families, children and young people to use Welsh. It aims to increase the number of Welsh speakers and learners within Cardiff as well as increasing the use of the Welsh language in the city.
7. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is an integral part of the Council's 5-year Bilingual Cardiff strategy and supports the Welsh Government's vision of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.
8. The current WESP is for the period 2017-2020 and is based around the seven key outcomes of the previous strategic plan from 2014.
9. In recognition of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, revised WESP regulations will come into force in December 2020. The main changes include moving the draft WESP submission date to no later than 31 January 2022 with the new plan operational no later than September 2022.
10. The current WESP will remain in force until that date.
11. The Council recognises that the education system is a key element in ensuring that children are able to develop their Welsh skills, and for creating new speakers.
12. For Cardiff to achieve the Welsh Government's vision, we would need to increase the number of Welsh speakers by 15.9% from 36,375 (2011 Census) to 42,584 (2021 census); 58% of this has been achieved through increasing the numbers accessing Welsh-medium education.

13. The Council was successful in securing funds from the Welsh Government Increasing Welsh-medium Provision Capital Grant scheme. The purpose is to support capital investments that facilitate growth in Welsh medium education and use of the Welsh language.

14. The successful bid included a proposal to reorganise primary provision in the central area of Cardiff and expand the number of Welsh-medium primary places.

### **Key Proposals of the Cabinet Report**

15. The Cabinet Report proposes the following:

- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from c0.9 Forms of Entry (FE) (192 places) to 1.5 FE (315 places) from September 2022 and locate the additional school places at Allensbank Primary School in the first instance;
- Consolidate Allensbank Primary School at 1FE (210 places), retaining nursery and Additional Learning Needs early intervention provision, from September 2022.
- Consideration will also be given to a temporary increase to the Admission Number of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, from 30 places to 45 places at entry to Reception Year for the 2021/2022 intake if it is not possible to accommodate children in the area within local Welsh-medium primary schools.

### **Issues highlighted in the report to Cabinet**

16. The following issues are highlighted in the Cabinet report, as at **Appendix**

**A:**

- Sufficiency of Welsh-medium primary school places city-wide  
(*paragraphs 17-29 in Appendix A*)

- Primary schools serving the area (*paragraphs 30-37 in Appendix A; includes reference to maps in Appendices 1 & 2*)
- Establishing local demand for school places (*paragraphs 38-41 in Appendix A*)
- Current take up of places
  - *Welsh-medium (paragraphs 42-46)*
  - *English-medium (paragraphs 47-48)*
- Summary forecasts of demand for places at entry to Reception (*paragraphs 49-51 in Appendix A, plus reference to Appendix 3*)
- School Information
  - *Ysgol Mynydd Bychan (paragraphs 52-56)*
  - *Albany Primary School site (paragraphs 57-61)*
  - *Allensbank Primary School site (paragraphs 62-68)*
  - *Gladstone Primary School/ St Monica's CiW Primary School site (paragraphs 69-75)*
- Balancing Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school provision (*paragraphs 76-87 in Appendix A*)
- Expansion Options (*paragraphs 88-92 in Appendix A*)
- Short Term issues (*paragraphs 93-107 in Appendix A*)
- Long term solution (*paragraphs 108-111 in Appendix A*)
- Additional Learning Needs (*paragraphs 112-114 in Appendix A*)
- Nursery Provision (*paragraphs 115-116 in Appendix A*)
- Admission Arrangements (*paragraphs 117-119 in Appendix A*)
- Implications for secondary school provision (*paragraphs 120-122 in Appendix A*)
- Local Member consultation (*paragraph 123 in Appendix A*)
- Reason for Recommendations (*paragraph 124 in Appendix A*)
- Impact of the proposal on the Welsh Language (*paragraphs 125-134 in Appendix A*)
- Learner Travel Arrangements (*paragraphs 135-137 in Appendix A*)

17. The draft cabinet report also provides details on the following areas:

- Financial Implications (*paragraphs 138-140 in Appendix A*)
- Legal Implications (including Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate) (*paragraphs 141-152 in Appendix A*)
- HR Implications (*Paragraphs 153-157 in Appendix A*)
- Property Implications (*Paragraphs 158-159 in Appendix A*)
- Traffic and Transport Implications (*Paragraphs 160-168 in Appendix A*)
- Equality Impact Assessment (*Paragraphs 169-170 in Appendix A and also Appendix 4*)

18. The report is supported by a number of appendices covering:

- Appendix 1 – Welsh-medium catchment area map
- Appendix 2 – English-medium catchment area map
- Appendix 3 – School Number on Roll data
- Appendix 4 – Statutory Screening Tool

### **Recommendations set out in the Cabinet Proposals**

19. The Cabinet is recommended to authorise officers:

- to consult on proposals to increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from c0.9FE (192 places) to 1.5FE (up to 315 pupils) from September 2022.
- to undertake a stakeholder engagement exercise to shape proposals that would be taken forward to provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school places to serve the area.
- Note that consultation on the Admission Arrangements for the 2022/23 academic year will include a proposal to reduce the admission number of Allensbank Primary School from 45 to 30 places.
- Note that officers will bring a report on the outcome of the consultation and engagement exercise to a future meeting to seek authorisation as to whether to proceed to publish proposals in accordance with section 48 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

## **Scope of Scrutiny**

20. The scope of this scrutiny is for Members to consider and provide comments on the draft report to Cabinet, prior to its consideration of the report on the 17 December 2020.

## **Way Forward**

21. Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education Employment, Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education and Lifelong learning), Richard Portas (Programme Director for the School Organisation Programme) and Michele Duddridge-Friedl (Operational Manager – Planning and Provision) will present the report to the Committee, and be available to answer any questions Members may have.

22. This report will also enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

## **Legal Implications**

23. 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**

24. 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.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Review and assess the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix A**, together with any information provided at the meeting;
- b) Provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Director of Education and Lifelong Learning prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

**Davina Fiore**

**Director of Governance and Legal Services**

**11 December 2020**