

APPENDIX 4

Records of Public Meetings:

- Allensbank Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan – Welsh Language (3rd March 2021)
- Allensbank Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan – English Language (8th March 2021)



Present: Richard Portas (SOP), Michele Duddridge Friedl (SOP), Brett Andrewartha (SOP), Ifan Brychan (Bilingual Cardiff), James Eul (Bilingual Cardiff), Rosalie Phillips (SOP), Rachel Burgess-Willis (SOP), Shirley Karseras (SOP)

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

Welcome and Introductions

Richard Portas (RP) opened the meeting, welcomed members of the public and outlined details of the proposals. He advised that there would be a presentation in Welsh followed by a question and answer session. Whilst it was possible for questions to be submitted in Welsh, answers would be provided in English.

Following some initial IT issues, a voiced over presentation in Welsh was shared with those in attendance.

The presentation covered:

- What is being proposed?
- Background
- English-medium places
- Welsh-medium places
- Recent and future take up of places
- Pupils enrolled – English-medium schools
- Recent and future demand for English-medium places
- Pupils enrolled – Welsh-medium schools
- Recent and future demand for Welsh-medium places
- Pupils enrolled updated – 2020/21
- How might take up of Welsh-medium places change?
- Proposed changes from 2022
- Long term considerations
- Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site
- Albany Primary School site
- Allensbank Primary School site
- Gladstone Primary School/St Monica's CiW Primary School site
- Quality and Standards
- Impact of the proposals
- HR implications
- Other considerations
- What happens next?

Following this, a series of questions in both Welsh (translated by James Eul (JE)) and English were put to RP, Michele Duddridge Friedl (MDF) and Brett Andrewartha (BA).

Questions and Answers

The question submitted by those who attended the meetings are set out in *italics* below with the officer response given directly below.

Please note that the questions have been copied as written / translated directly from Teams Live Event meeting log.

Question 1

The proposals to open a YMB class on the Allensbank site are being described as "temporary", but there is no plan in the current plan for the long term ... so 1. What would be the time (in years) this 'temporary' provision; and 2. What would the long-term plan be?

The Council has gone out previously with other proposals which have not progressed. It was felt that a better solution could be found by taking it one step at a time and engaging more fully with the schools, parents and community to look at all options. The proposal is a way of increasing Welsh-medium provision ahead of a long term solution being identified.

Question 2

Splitting a close, prosperous school is a very serious step, and one must be sure that it is the best course of action for current and future children. Can you describe how you got to this scheme (from splitting YMB and part-setting it up in Allensbank) ... 1. please describe the other different options you have considered, 2. please describe how you came to this conclusion - what were the factors you took into account eg. costs, sustainability, child welfare and workforce.

As part of the Cathays proposal, the Council looked to see if a site could be identified for a new build primary school but unfortunately this is not possible. There has also been a drop in the birth rate and we do not feel that this would be the right thing to do. The aim of the engagement is to come up with a longer term solution.

In relation to costs, the funding will come from the Welsh Government grant available to support the growth of Welsh-medium education in the area. The sustainability of Welsh-medium education has to be considered when bring forward any changes with account taken of other schools. The aim is to grow provision rather than have a situation where schools share pupils differently. A number of desktop solutions which took account of H&S and safeguarding have been presented to the Governing Bodies and working through the details with schools. Allensbank Primary School was selected on the basis of available capacity and proximity which would better support a split site arrangement.

The Council's preferred option is to expand Green category schools, however this does not mean that there are no other options. A new 1FE Welsh-medium school temporarily located on the Allensbank site could have been an option, federated to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan or Allensbank Primary School. This is a consultation and we are looking to increase Welsh-medium provision by 15 places in the first instance.

In relation to the cost and sustainability issues that we have considered; we know that a 1FE school is difficult to sustain financially and don't present the best value across the city.

The longer term outlook shows that populations are reducing. This reduction combined with policy change at a national level (Cymraeg 2050) means that the Council has to consider the pattern of primary school provision. We want to hear from the local community and use that knowledge to develop a long term proposal.

Question 3

Can you explain the level of capital grant available to the Council and how this money is to be spent? If the current scheme is not approved, does the grant have to be returned to the Welsh Government?

£1.8m has been secured through the Welsh Government grant scheme for this proposal. The Council acknowledges that additional funds will be needed and will resource this.

There will also be a need for some refurbishment works at Allensbank. If this scheme is not approved then discussions would be undertaken with the Welsh government and it may be possible that the money could be used to provide Welsh-medium education elsewhere in the City.

Question 4

What procedures will be in place to ensure the immersion of pupils on the Allensbank site in the Welsh language, culture and traditions? Identity is the essence of the language, how do you want to maintain this on an English-speaking site? How do you want to ensure that pupils on the Allensbank site are not at any disadvantage compared to pupils on the Heath site?

The Council has tabled some options with the Governing Bodies and this will depend on where we go with the proposal. All of the options allow for specific safeguarding measures for both schools and access to the sites. On site arrangements would look at options around school start times, outside play space; segregation could be created with cones etc.

Before we decide what will happen, measures will need to be worked through with both schools so that neither set of pupils is disadvantaged. On some other shared sites around Cardiff, there is a high level of segregation and on others this is not the case.

It is important that the formal high quality learning and experience of delivering Welsh-medium education is preserved; there is no desire to reduce this. It is acknowledged that the use of the Welsh language through play and in the wider environment rather than just through a formal classroom setting is desired by parents opting for Welsh-medium education, however this might not be as easily facilitated in an urban setting compared to other areas.

Children would be fully immersed in the formal setting just as they would be on the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site.

Welsh culture and traditions are not limited to Welsh speaking schools. This is developed through all schools and the desire to see this grow is supported by Cymraeg 2050. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan already works in partnership with English-medium schools in the area and this could be an opportunity to build on this and develop further.

Some schools already share a site with an English-medium and Welsh-medium cohort and actively look for opportunities to work together. Welsh-medium ethos can be preserved by children being able to play with other children speaking Welsh and also being able to play with the English-medium cohort too as part of their community.

Question 5

Wouldn't the easiest option just be for Mynydd Bychan and Allensbank to swap premises? The aim looks to be to increase Mynydd Bychan to the current capacity of Allensbank, and decrease the capacity of Allensbank to roughly the capacity of Mynydd Bychan?

This is an option and if it is what you think then feed it back, but there are other options that people may feel are better. You know your community and know what may work better than we do and so it is important that the long term solution is informed by all views.

Question 6

How does the Council justify the lack of a full options appraisal in the consultation in light of its duties to ensure value for money? For example, the direct exchange between the 2 schools, YMB and Allensbank is not considered?

The proposal is still at an early stage. We have to produce three Cabinet papers as part of a consultation – firstly we seek permission to consult, then report back the findings of the consultation and then to issue statutory notices.

The cabinet report submitted shows that we have considered a wide range of information and it is not just a value for money comparison; we have to consider the sustainability issues also including the position of other local schools.

Question 7

Why is the long term plan for expanding Welsh-medium provision so vague?

The Council will finalise a plan within the next year, or so for a 10 year strategic plan for Welsh education which will look at how we plan to achieve the targets set by Cymraeg 2050. There will be consultation on this in due course but this proposal is about a specific area and a specific need. We could have come up with something more complicated but felt that engagement with the community was a better way forward.

Question 8

How do you want to ensure a Welsh ethos within an English medium school?

As stated previously, Welsh ethos is about more than the Welsh language. English-medium schools are also very successful at celebrating what it means to be born in or live in Wales. We are looking at it in the broader sense that Welsh ethos is not only

possible in Welsh-medium schools in line with national policy which looks to improve understanding and knowledge of what it means to be Welsh.

Question 9

Part 1: How do you ensure that these are Mynydd Bychan pupils and that they are not swallowed up by Allensbank so that their identity is lost? Part 2: Where is the functionality of having a MB deputy / boss on site?

Part 1: we've already picked up some of these points. We would look to work with both schools on this and at the opportunities across a wider cohort of children. The site at Allensbank has sufficient room so that potentially more than one class could be taught there; this would be agreed in detailed discussions with the governing bodies.

Part 2: this decision would be down to the management team at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and the governing bodies of both schools.

Question 10

Don't all the arguments the council has put forward point towards the exchange of the two buildings (YMB and Allensbank)? Wouldn't there be more local support for the proposal if this long-term option was part of the proposal?

There are very good reasons why we are coming forward with the proposal as it is. If however people feel that the exchange of sites would be a good solution then this should be fed through as part of the engagement and consultation process.

Question 11

May I confirm that you propose to expand existing year groups by 15 pupils in 2022?

Yes but not for all year groups.

Yes initially for September 2022, there will be an increase of 15 places. This will then grow in the long term for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to become a 2 FE school, or for Welsh-medium provision to reach 2 FE.

There will also be a need for 2 FE English-medium community provision across the catchment area. You may want to suggest ways in which way you think this could be delivered given the accommodation available. There are pros and cons in terms of 1 FE and 2 FE schools. To clarify, there would be 45 places for Reception in September 2022 but the other year groups would remain at 30.

Question 12

What source of funding has the Council earmarked for project costs over and above the grant? You have mentioned this but has that funding been earmarked for YMB or would the school need to bid for that?

There will be no bid process for the funding. As we don't yet know what the long term solution is, we don't know what the budget requirements would be. There is a long term asset programme and this could be factored in in due course.

Question 13

How will you decide what children will potentially go to Welsh medium class in Allensbank vs Mynydd Bychan?

It could be older year groups, younger year groups or anything in between, there are multiple options. Will be guided by the Headteacher and governing body and will make sure that there is no detriment to learners and that it works in the best possible way, not just in the first year, but after that also.

Question 14

This is not a question: my name is owain lewis, i am a member of the cardiff language society cardiff, if any parents want to get in touch about their fears about this scheme, you can contact me via owain4@hotmail.com - we plan to hold a zoom session next week to discuss the consultation and possible response.

This is an offer from someone outside the Council for anyone who wants to have a conversation about this.

Question 15

More generally in terms of increasing the number of pupils learning welsh have you considered: 1) Changing the application process to include a preference (and therefore priority) for those wishing to have welsh medium education? 2) Clarifying that if you wish to have welsh medium education that you should not automatically include the schools in your catchment as your preferred choices especially in areas such as this where you know that places are limited? 3) Changing the funding allocation system so that all welsh learning is funded directly and equitably from WAG to encourage all schools to enhance welsh learning?

Part 1: this already exists for admission arrangements at Reception as you have three preferences, all of which are assessed equally and considered in line with the Council's Admission Policy and oversubscription criteria. These preferences can be any combination of Welsh-medium or English-medium schools. You will get the highest preference where possible.

Part 2: you have a minimum of three preferences but you can also inform the Authority if you have further preferences. You could include Ysgol Mynydd Bychan as it is your catchment school but you may also want to name other neighbouring Welsh-medium schools. Further help can be given by contacting the Admissions team as it is not always straightforward.

Part 3: we receive all of the funding for education from Welsh Government and it is distributed equitably across the whole of Cardiff. The Authority has a statutory duty to provide education. It is offered in both Welsh-medium and English-medium; there is however no requirement to give a first preference if the over subscription criteria applies. Furthermore, if the only school available in the preferred language of the applicant is further than two miles away from their address, then the Council funds the travel for the pupil to and from school.

No, there won't be a change to the way in which the funding allocation works. The strategy in Cardiff is to treat all learners equitably. There has been significant investment in Cardiff so that more children can access Welsh-medium education and

that travel times to do so are minimised. The Council would not prioritise funding based on the desire for Welsh-medium education. Every child has a pupil funding allocation and any additionality would only be for additional support that they may need for a specific additional learning need.

Question 16

Linguistically, how are you going to ensure that the pupils who are on site at Allensbank are not under any disadvantage compared to the pupils who will be surrounded by the language at Mynydd Bychan? If they are playing, socialising etc with Allensbank pupils, this engagement will be through the medium of English, have you considered the effect this will have on the pupils' fluency in Welsh and therefore their future academic progress?

This was covered previously.

Question 17

Last week, at a public meeting about Cathays school, you (from Michelle) said that a temporary site for the secondary school while rebuilding on the current site is not an option because it would have "detrimental impact on the pupils ". I see the scheme of splitting the YMB across two sites temporarily for an open period is also likely to have a detrimental effect. Can you comment on this RIGHT?

RP – Unfortunately it is not viable to relocate a secondary school to a different location for the Cathays scheme. The existing site is extremely constrained and not suitable for 21st Century learning.

There are previous examples for this type of arrangement at primary school when expanding the Welsh-medium provision and I don't think this is comparable [to the Cathays scheme].

The options around relocating a secondary school are not viable. The existing Cathays High School site is constrained and not suitable for 21st Century learning.

Relocation of Cathays High School to a site commensurate with it in this area is not possible. This is quite a different proposition than having some children attend a location within close walking distance of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. We have to consider the use of public money against what we need to achieve whilst not compromising educational provision. People may feel that this proposal could compromise this provision. It is important that the consultation listens to the viewpoints of the stakeholders and addresses them. It may be that children have to access Welsh-medium in their neighbouring catchment whilst further long term proposals are worked through. The Council is seeking a solution that works for Welsh-medium and the wider community.

Question 18

How will this work in practice? Will the children in Allensbank attend the service at MB school etc? Have PE lessons with friends? How can they feel like they are part of a small mountain family? It is necessary for these children to feel part of Welsh education - attitudes and motivation are so important to creating lifelong learners who go on to use Welsh in their daily lives and there is a risk that a class will separately having less of this Welsh 'experience'.

This was covered previously. This proposal will allow for the growth of Welsh-medium places in the local area as part of the wider Cymraeg 2050 policy. This is an approach that we have taken previously and that will allow time to see how this can work through in the longer term. There are a range of onsite solutions and school arrangements that could support this proposal. This will be worked through closely with the staff and governing bodies of both schools.

We have had temporary arrangements previously in other parts of the city. We try to keep these temporary arrangements to a minimum time period while a permanent solution can be worked through. Understandably parents may find it difficult to engage without knowing the permanent location of any new provision, therefore we seek to get agreement with stakeholders as soon as possible. It is however a way of being able to develop the Welsh language through existing assets.

There have also been executive head arrangements previously which can provide a collegial aspect.

The council is committed to providing a rich Welsh experience for learners but Cardiff is a multi-cultural society and it is important that children in Welsh-medium education benefit from a wider multi-cultural enrichment too. I can appreciate the anxiety associated with this but we have done this successfully before and in this way we can support parental preference sooner than we would be able to if waiting for a permanent solution.

Question 19

By exchanging schools what would Mynydd Bychan pupils gain apart from classes? The building is in need of repair, there is no outside space for the F.P. What are the advantage for the pupils?

There is already significant investment being undertaken in Allensbank along with other primary schools in the area. As part of this proposal there would also be access to the grant funding from the Welsh Government. All schools in the local area are limited in terms of outdoor space; it is therefore important that the proposal asks the community what we can do to utilise space for the whole area.

Question 20

One of the biggest challenges for the Welsh language is the struggle to promote the language as a social language. Parents who choose to send their children to Welsh-medium schools are not just choosing formal education through the medium of Welsh. Wouldn't the children on the Allensbank site have different social experiences to the children attending the Heath site?

This was covered previously.

Both schools are part of the same community and whilst it's important to ensure the promotion of the language and social use of the language, all children have different social experiences. Children need the opportunity to play and grow together. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would provide parity for all of the pupils within its care and would expect the school to maximise opportunities for all their children.

Question 21

Is Allensbank site suitable for 21st Century Learning?

21st Century learning is a Welsh Government grant funded programme that has design standards and principles that have to come forward as part of the investment. This proposal is not a 21st Century proposal however we would want investment to be made to improve the facilities. There are many high performing city centre schools that exist currently and therefore wouldn't expect this proposal to limit those opportunities.

There has been an offer from Owain Lewis from **Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg** to provide concerns or presumably ways to adapt or improve the proposal. His email address is in the published questions but please note that this is completely separate from the Councils proposal and engagement.

RP thanked all those who attended and the meeting closed at 19:15



Schools Programme
Record of Virtual Public Meeting – Welsh Language
Allensbank Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan
08 March 2021



Present: Richard Portas (SOP), Michele Duddridge Friedl (SOP), Brett Andrewartha (SOP), Rachel Burgess-Willis (SOP), Shirley Karseras (SOP), Jo Phillips (SOP), Ian Warburton (SOP)

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

Welcome and Introductions

Richard Portas (RP) opened the meeting, welcomed members of the public and outlined details of the proposals. He advised that there would be a presentation followed by a question and answer session.

The presentation covered:

- What is being proposed?
- Background
- English-medium places
- Welsh-medium places
- Recent and future take up of places
- Pupils enrolled – English-medium schools
- Recent and future demand for English-medium places
- Pupils enrolled – Welsh-medium schools
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- Quality and Standards
- Impact of the proposals
- HR implications
- Other considerations
- What happens next?

Questions and Answers

The questions submitted by those who attended the meetings are set out in *italics* below with the officer response given directly below.

Please note that the questions have been copied as written / translated directly from Teams Live Event meeting log.

Question 1

Why has it not been shared with parents that the split site proposal will happen this year?

The Council is consulting and no decisions have yet been made.

Question 2

What will happen in Sept 2021/22 if there is again an oversubscription for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan?

We would need to look at the number of places in total that have been requested and consider the number of applications that are from within catchment. Would look at the nearest alternatives in the medium of choice.

Question 3

Why has a full site swap of both schools not been considered in this consultation? Why can't the schools simply swap locations?

Consulting on an interim proposal and asking all stakeholders to shape the long term position. This could be the way forward, please let us know your thoughts in your consultation responses.

Question 4

Can you tell us what long term solutions are being considered?

We want to shape this with the community. Given the complexities of the sites available, we are asking the local community to help shape the best way forward. There will be a separate consultation on a long term proposal at a later date.

Question 5

What are the timescales for the proposals?

Timescales are outlined in the presentation and consultation document.

Question 6

Would there be an impact on St Monica CIW Primary School?

We haven't yet come forward with a long term proposal yet. There could be an impact. We would ask for views/concerns on this.

Question 7

Why is everything from the perspective of YMB? .What about the detrimental affect of loss of space on Allensbank Primary School?

All parties have been considered. We do potentially see this as a positive; two different cohorts on a shared site can be a positive thing. There is a significant amount of space that isn't currently utilised; the site is larger than the average primary school site. We would hope to encourage and foster good working relationships between the two schools; improving the amount of Welsh that children are exposed to. Cymraeg 2050

target. In terms of financial planning for Allensbank, this would be beneficial with regard to running a large site, building maintenance costs etc,

Question 8

Capital funding – could Council consider building a new school site?

The Welsh Government has provided £1.8 m towards this proposal and will require additional funding in addition to this. Consulting on an interim proposal and will need another statutory consultation on a permanent proposal.

Question 9

What are the long term options for Welsh-medium education? Would the capital investment only benefit YMB?

No. Allensbank currently having investment works as part of the Capital Asset Program.

Question 10

What impact analysis has been done on the impact upon ethnic minority pupils & those pupil with EAL?

Question 11

Can the pupils from the two schools mix at breaktimes etc?

Question 12

Why do less minority children attend Welsh-medium schools and what might the impact be on them? Allensbank has high numbers of EAL, and FSM – we use the extra space to provide additional support.

Question 13

Will Allensbank have all the black and ethnic minority children and YMB all the white children?

There is no reason why there cannot be some integration between the two schools. We abide by the Equalities Act 2010. We are responsible for meeting needs of those with protected characteristics, to foster good relations and to tackle prejudice.

When we have undertaken consultation across the city we have seen misconceptions about which children are eligible for Welsh-Medium education. We seek to further promote Welsh-medium education and explore the reasons why families from Black and Minority Ethnic families may not want to access Welsh-medium provision.

The reality is the number of families from Black and Minority Ethnic groups taking up Welsh-medium places have risen. We need to do further research on the choices that families make re language provision.

Concerns re loss of space are understood. Pupils with additional needs will still be supported, as they are at other schools across Cardiff, regardless of the school size. There is full trust that the school will continue to provide a high level of support to all pupils as they do now, even if operating from marginally smaller space.

Question 14

What will happen if there is no oversubscription in 2021/2022?

It does look like the applications for places at YMB will exceed 30.

Question 15

The new build Cathays site – could this be the site for a new expanded YMB?

The Council has considered this, but the site is not large enough for a 2FE primary school. We need to consider the school estate that we have.

Question 16

Split site arrangements – how will the classes be split, will additional staff be needed? How long will a split site be needed?

There isn't a specific timescale set as we don't yet know what the long term solution will be.

We've issued a couple of options to the governing body of each school; have provided some drawings; there are various options. A whole range of discussions will need to be had with both schools. We have tested out the options with fire safety officers, health and safety.

Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would still be full Welsh immersion. Some Cardiff schools have dual language stream, e.g Creigiau; they function well. We have had site sharing arrangements with schools in the past – both temporary and permanent.

Site sharing between English-medium and Welsh-medium schools in Cardiff is not a new thing e.g. Gabalfa Primary School and Ysgol Glan Ceubal, Bryn Celyn Primary School and Ysgol Pen y Gores and Pentrebanne share a site with Ysgol Coed y Gof. Site sharing is also common across Wales.

No detail yet about revenue funding arrangements because we do not want to pre-empt the outcome of the consultation. These details will be discussed with the schools at a later date.

RP thanked all those who attended and the meeting closed at 19:15