

**EXTRACT FROM THE CHAIR'S LETTER ON SOP PROPOSALS – 16**  
**DECEMBER 2020**

**21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS, BAND B: EXPANSION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF CATHAYS HIGH SCHOOL**

Demand for Places

Members noted the responses received during the Q&A session on the rationale behind the proposals in meeting demand and sustainability of provision. We also noted responses in relation to the impact of housing developments and the movement of pupils to and from the school across the City.

Members would wish to seek further assurance on how robust the calculations have been underpinning the decision to make this proposal eight forms of entry. Members felt that the proposals were reliant on an influx of demand from other parts of the city. Members also questioned the impact of the growth of the Welsh-medium sector in this part of the city and the demand for an English-medium secondary school towards the end of the decade and over the longer term. Members would welcome a brief outlining this.

During the Q&A, you were asked about Welsh-medium secondary provision and meeting the requirements of Cymraeg 2050. Officers responded by stating that a strategic plan on Welsh-medium secondary provision would be drafted within the next 12 months and we would therefore request that the draft plan be considered by this Scrutiny Committee at the appropriate time.

Officers also reported that a catchment area review will be undertaken, and again, we would wish to see the output of this review as soon as it is available.

You were also asked whether the proposed additional SRB/ALN places proposed for Cathays High School would be sufficient, and officers responded by stating that a mapping exercise to identify ALN demand across the city was currently being undertaken. We would request that this be submitted to this Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

Funding and Costs of the Proposal

Members noted the response in relation to capital and revenue funding that falls outside of the MIM funding, and documented the response that some of this would

be covered by Capital Programme funding. Related to this, you were also asked about whether any Section 106 funding could be used within this proposal.

Whilst Members acknowledge that this proposal is in its very early stages, we would request that you provide us with information on what capital and revenue investment outside of the MIM is being sought and secured. We also request that you provide further detail on the contribution to be made from 106 monies given the relationship between this project and new housing developments elsewhere in the city.

### Planning and Development Issues

Members noted the responses received in relation to how this proposal and others within the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme are being considered alongside the LDP and other developments across the City. We were assured by the response in relation to the future of the cycle track at Maindy, but we will closely monitor the progress of this issue and other community facilities affected by the development, to ensure that the communities around Cathays High School are not adversely affected by the proposal. In addition, we were disappointed that no map or outline of the site development is yet available.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme Process

Members asked a number of questions around how the proposals across Band B had been prioritised and noted the response received. We questioned whether the decisions made 4 years ago on the schools included in Band B were still the right ones, and the perceived lack of flexibility or review in this. We also remain unclear about the criteria used for selection.

We are keen to ensure that due consideration, analysis and scrutiny be given on which schools will be considered for Band C.

We therefore **recommend** that this Scrutiny Committee be included in the review of which schools will be included in the next round of proposals for Band C. We would request that a detailed brief on schools across the estate be provided at the appropriate juncture; which schools are being proposed for Band C; and a detailed briefing on the selection criteria.

At this time, we require a response as to timescales in relation to this process, so we can include on our work programme.

## Consultation on the Proposals

The key recommendation arising from the Cabinet report is for officers to be authorised to undertake a consultation on the proposals. Members asked questions on the plans for this and who the stakeholders would be. Officers responded by stating that they were looking to undertake the consultation during February 2021, and were looking at methodologies and stakeholders, including lessons learned from the Fitzalan High School consultation.

Given that the consultation is two months away, we are very disappointed with the lack of detail provided on this issue. We believe that a detailed, robust and meaningful consultation plan should have been included in the Cabinet Proposal. Because of this, we are reluctant to agree the Cabinet recommendation to consult as we have no detail of what the consultation will be and is aiming to achieve.

Therefore, we request **as a matter of urgency**, a consultation plan for taking forward this proposal. We require that the plan include:

- Details of the stages of the consultation and timescales
- Who will be consulted during each stage
- Details of what will be consulted on – to include maps, details of the proposal, community impact, impact on community facilities at Maindy etc.
- Methodologies being used
- Anticipated outputs/outcomes