

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 JUNE 2021

Present: Councillor Bridgeman(Chairperson)
Councillors Cunnah, Hopkins, Joyce, Melbourne, Molik, Phillips,
Mia Rees and Singh

1 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED:

- To note that Council at its Annual Meeting on 27 May 2021 appointed Councillor Lee Bridgeman as the Chairperson and the following Members to the Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022:

Elected Members: Councillors Cunnah, Hopkins, Joyce, Melbourne, Molik, Phillips, Mia Rees and Singh

Co-Opted Members: Patricia Arlotte (Roman Catholic Representative), Carol Cobert (Church in Wales Representative), Karen Dell'Armi (Parent Governor Representative) and Matthew Richards (Parent Governor Representative)

2 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED:

To note that the Council at its Annual Meeting on 27 May agreed the Committee's Terms of Reference for the municipal year 2021/2022

3 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received. Councillor Mia Rees had indicated that she would be late in attending the meeting.

4 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.

5 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15 March 2021 were approved as a correct record of that meeting as proposed by Karen Dell'Armi and seconded by Councillor Mike Phillips.

6 : 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS BAND B: THE EXPANSION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF CATHAYS HIGH SCHOOL

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education &

Lifelong Learning), Michele Duddrige-Friedl (Operational Manager, Planning & Provision), Richard Portas (Programme Director of School Organisation Planning) and Brett Andrewartha (Team Manager, School Organisation Planning) to the meeting.

Councillor Merry was invited to make a statement during which she referred to the feedback received in relation to the expansion of Cathays High School.

Members were provided with an outline of the proposals regarding the expansion and redevelopment of the site.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members enquired whether any alternatives to 8 forms of entry (FOE) had been considered, particularly expanding capacity at schools in other areas that were already in the Band B programme. There is indication that population growth in Cardiff may not be as rapid as previously expected and demand for secondary school places will be 500 less by 2030. Members were advised that the proposal to increase to 8 FOE had been carefully considered. Cathays High School provides flexibility as it is centrally located with good transport links to different areas. Data indicates there will be enough pupil numbers to sustain the school. It is recognised there will need to be an adjustment of catchment areas to closer match pupil numbers to school capacity in due course.
- Members questioned how the future demand for Welsh Medium secondary education might affect the proposed expansion and whether the modelling of such demand could be further developed. Members were advised that the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) was being brought forward and had been considered in relation to the proposal. It is possible to predict with some accuracy the demand for Welsh medium education will be up to 2029-30 and into the next decade.
- Members queried why the expansion of Cathays High School was prioritised over that of Cardiff High School, which turns away hundreds of pupil applicants every year and what provision has been made for the safety of children in relation to open access to community facilities? Members were advised that the Council's aim was for all schools to be excellent. When bringing forward proposals for schools safety is at the forefront. School spaces are often close to community facilities, but security is designed in. There will be more green space available under the proposed expansion and open access will be assured. The Cardiff High School site is very constrained.
- Members were concerned that the consultation had failed to engage BAME parents. Members were advised that it is difficult to engage parents in a consultation of this sort because the timescale of expansion makes it appear irrelevant to them. Every effort had been made to engage members of the school community.

- Members were concerned that the shared open space and the facilities at the Maindy Centre would be available to the local community, and that consultation should take place over any impacts on the local community. Members were advised that details of the design are not yet available and modifications are possible, but the key principles and amount of space involved are committed in the plan. At every stage of development the community will be consulted.
- Members sought reassurance that cycle facilities at Maindy would remain available until the Velodrome was delivered. Members were advised that there would be a temporary expansion at Maindy and that there would be no loss of cycle provision in Cardiff as a result of the school coming forward.
- Members sought clarification on the future of the 21st Century Schools project and the mixed funding of the Cathays High School expansion. Members were advised that whilst MIM funding was available for the school expansion, ancillary aspects of the project will have to be financed from the capital budget. The Council will look to accelerate future projects. There is pressure on the prices of construction materials as a result of the Covid pandemic.
- Members enquired whether the Maindy site would be large enough to accommodate all the planned facilities. Members were advised that a proportion of the existing site would need to remain as facilities for the new school. The buildings would be located on the Maindy Centre site and much of the sports provision would be on the Cathays High School site. Early stage due diligence has been carried out but many design details are not yet available.
- Members enquired when a traffic and transport analysis would be carried out in respect of New Zealand Road and Crown Way. Members were advised that early transport assessments will be carried out and a transport analysis would be part of the planning application.
- Members sought further details on any analysis that had been done on the cost of the MIM funding and the real envelope of cost budget that the Council was working to, in the context of cost pressures on construction materials and schemes. Members were advised that the Cabinet has signed up to the Strategic Partnership Agreement with MIM. A financial analysis was carried out using the calculator provided by the Welsh Government. Further cost information will become known as the details of the design are worked out ahead of the project approval process. Benchmark rates will be considered at a later stage. Once the school is handed over the Council will pay an annual unitary charge which includes maintenance for 25 years.
- Members were concerned that there would be a loss of cycling facilities for local people who would have to travel across the city to the Velodrome. Members were advised that while there would be extra travel for people in the Cathays area, travel would be reduced for people from other areas currently having to travel to Cathays.

RESOLVED:

- That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations during the Way Forward.

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

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education & Lifelong Learning), Michele Duddrige-Friedl (Operational Manager, Planning & Provision), Richard Portas (Programme Director of School Organisation Planning) and Brett Andrewartha (Team Manager, School Organisation Planning) to the meeting.

Councillor Merry was invited to make a statement in which she referred to the proposals for expansion in respect of Allensbank Primary School. The expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan into Allensbank Primary School has now been halted but the reduction of the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) at Allensbank Primary School will proceed.

The proposals were outlined and Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members enquired how well-conceived the consultation had been, bearing in mind the comments that had been received from Estyn. Members were advised that Estyn was liaising with S4C to withdraw its comments which it had confirmed had been reported in error. The interim proposal balances a number of pressures. Consultation with the local community, schools and stakeholders will help shape the long-term proposals. The WESP presents an opportunity to consider the proposal in a wider context. A longer-term plan will be brought forward in due course.
- Members enquired when the draft WESP would be available for scrutiny. Members were advised that engagement and build-up work with Welsh Education Forum partners had been ongoing over the last 12 months. The target date for consultation is September/October of this year.
- Members enquired by how much would the PAN be reduced at Allensbank Primary School and whether there would be space for additional provision. Members were advised that there would not be a significant impact on the school which is currently operating below 1 FOE. It will allow the school to consolidate and build the 1 FOE into its strategic planning. The school is making use of all its rooms.

RESOLVED:

- That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations during the Way Forward.

8 : SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Members were provided with the first combined Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21 which is to be considered by full Council on Thursday 24 June 2021.

RESOLVED:

- To approve the draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21 to be laid before Council.

9 : WORK PROGRAMME 2021/2022

Members were provided with the proposed schedule of meetings for 2021/22 and discussed the approach to developing the Committee's work programme for 2021/22 to be brought back to Committee in September for formal approval.

RESOLVED:

- To note the proposed schedule of meetings for 2021-22

10 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were tabled at this meeting.

11 : WAY FORWARD

Members discussed the information received and identified a number of issues which the Chairman agreed would be included in the letters that would be sent, on behalf of the Committee, to the relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.

12 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is on Tuesday 13 July 2021 at 4.30 pm via MS Teams

The meeting terminated at 6.54 pm