
21st CENTURY SCHOOLS, BAND B: THE FUTURE FOR WILLOWS HIGH SCHOOL

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of proposals, attached at **Appendix A** (with further appendices attached), prior to its consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on the 23rd September 2021. The purpose of the attached report is to inform the Cabinet of responses received following a public engagement exercise on a proposal for a new build Willows High School; to seek Cabinet approval for implementation of the proposal; and to seek approval to change the funding mechanism for the new build Willows High School from Mutual Investment Model (MIM) to the Band B 21st Century Schools capital funded programme, subject to Welsh Government approval.

Background

2. At its meeting on 25 February 2021 the Cabinet agreed that the freehold interests for land at Lewis Road, Splott to deliver the new build Willows High School be acquired in line with Heads of Terms and an independent valuation, subject to Ministerial approval of the Welsh Government Business Justification Case.
3. It was noted that a public engagement exercise, with stakeholders including school staff, pupils, governors and the wider community served by Willows High School, would be undertaken following the acquisition, to help shape the proposals for replacing the existing Willows High School buildings with a new 21st Century School and that officers would bring forward a report advising Cabinet of responses received following the public engagement exercise.

4. A copy of the report can be seen at Appendix 1 to the Cabinet Report.

Issues highlighted in the report to Cabinet

The proposed new build school (points 5 – 11 in Appendix A)

5. The proposed replacement Willows High School would provide 21st Century educational facilities in a new build school. Pupils would have access to the high-quality learning environment to support and enhance teaching and learning.
6. The new school would be situated on three parcels of land at Splott Market, Portmanmoor Road and 3G pitches at the former tennis centre.
7. This new site provides enough space for the new school without taking away any existing open space.
8. The new school would have sufficient places for up to 900 learners, age 11-16, made up of 180 pupils per year group (six forms of entry).
9. The new build school would have easy access to high quality new sport facilities locally including:
 - Two 3G pitches which would have absolute reserved rights during school term time and be available for clubs and the community to use in the evening.
 - Cardiff Central Sport and Community Centre (CCSCC) at Ocean Park for changing rooms and potential additional teaching space, which could be used by the whole community outside of core school hours.

10. Partnerships would be made with other sports facilities in the area for Physical Education lessons. There would also be the opportunity for them to provide training and career opportunities. Other sports facilities are:

- A three-court tennis centre
- Splash Central swimming
- Cardiff Academy of Fencing

11. Pupils would remain at the existing Willows High School site until the new school build is complete to minimise the potential for disruption.

Summary of Consultation and Responses

12. The public engagement exercise ran from 14 June to 23 July 2021. The engagement sought the views of parents, pupils and the wider community on the development of the new Willows High School, the facilities it should offer, how the school could support learning and development, how the new school could benefit the community and how the community could benefit the new school.

13. In total 218 responses were received including 68 wider stakeholder survey responses, eight email responses, and 148 Learner Visioning survey responses.

14. Formal responses were received from:

- Willows High School Governing Body
- Willows High School Headteacher
- Cardiff Bay Business Centre
- Fluidity Freerun Academy
- Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust

15. Copies of the Engagement Document, notes from pupil engagement meetings, notes from drop-in sessions; and formal responses can be found at **Appendices 2 – 5** respectively, attached to the Cabinet Report.

16. Further details on the consultation can be found in the following points of

Appendix A and its appendices:

- Public Engagement and process overview (*points 12 – 15*)
- Responses received during the engagement period (*points 16 – 27, plus appendices 5 – 7*)
- Pupil Engagement:
 - Adamsdown Primary School (*points 28 – 32*)
 - Baden Powell Primary School (*points 33 – 37*)
 - Moorland Primary School (*points 38 – 42*)
 - Stacey Primary School (*points 43 – 47*)
 - St Alban's RC Primary School (*points 48 – 52*)
 - Tredegarville CiW Primary School (*points 53 – 56*)
- Learner Visioning survey (*points 57 – 59, plus Appendix 7*)
- Appraisal of views expressed in pupil engagement and Learner Visioning survey (*points 60 – 70*)
- Other responses received during the engagement period (*point 71*)

Appraisal of views expressed

17. The Cabinet Report sets out an appraisal of the views expressed across the consultation and are set out as follows:

- New School Facilities (*points 72 -77*)
- Location of new School (*points 78 - 84*)
- Travel and Traffic / concerns around road safety (*points 85 – 93*)
- Sport facilities (*points 94 – 97*)
- Size of school (*points 98 – 117*)
- Sixth Form Provision (*points 118 – 124*)
- Noise Levels (*points 125 – 128*)
- The Future of Splott Market (*points 129 – 130*)
- Positive Impact on Young People (*points 131 – 136*)
- How can the new school benefit the community? (*points 137 – 139*)
- How can the community benefit the new school? (*points 140 – 141*)
- What is good about the current Willows that can continue at the new school site? (*points 142 – 143*)

18. The following further issues are highlighted in the Cabinet report, as at

Appendix A:

- New Build Specification (*points 143 – 146*)
- Funding model (*points 147 – 158*)
- Admissions and Catchment areas (*points 159 – 163*)
- The current Willows High School site (*points 164 – 169*)
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (*points 170 – 172*)
- Impact of the planned changes on the Welsh Language (*points 173 – 181*)
- Local Member consultation (*point 182*)
- Reason for Recommendations (*point 183*)

19. The draft Cabinet report also provides details on the following areas:

- Financial Implications (*points 184 - 190*)
- Legal Implications (*points 191 – 201*)
- HR Implications (*points 202 - 204*)
- Property Implications (*points 205 - 206*)
- Traffic and Transport Implications (*points 207 - 234*)
- EIA (*points 235 - 236; plus Appendix 9*)

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

Appendix 1: Cabinet Report, 25 February 2021

Appendix 2: Engagement Document

Appendix 3: Notes from pupil engagement meetings

Appendix 4: Notes from drop-in sessions

Appendix 5: Formal responses

Appendix 6: Summary analysis of Wider Stakeholder Survey

Appendix 7: Summary analysis of Learner Visioning Survey

Appendix 8: Map of Willows High School catchment area (to follow)

Appendix 9: Statutory Screening Tool and Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 10: Cabinet Report, 19 March 2019

Recommendations set out in the Cabinet Proposals

21. Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) note the responses received during the public engagement exercise on the proposal to provide a new build school for Willows High School.
- (ii) note that Officers will be entering into the Deed of Adherence to enable new participants to become a party to and to be bound by the Strategic Partnering Agreement for delivering MIM schemes.
- (iii) approve the delivery of the scheme through the Band B 21st Century Schools capital funded programme, subject to Welsh Government approval.
- (iv) delegate authority to the Director of Education & Lifelong Learning (in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Education, Employment & Skills and Finance, Modernisation & Performance, the Director of Governance and Legal Services, and the Corporate Director for Resources) to determine all aspects of the procurement process (including for the avoidance of doubt (including approving the evaluation criteria to be used, commencing the procurement and authorising the award of the proposed contract) for the new build school and all ancillary matters pertaining to the procurement.

Scope of Scrutiny

22. 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 23rd September 2021.

Previous Scrutiny

23. This Scrutiny Committee has considered this issue on the following dates:

- 10 October 2017¹
- 9 July 2019²
- 21 January 2020³
- 23 February 2021⁴

Way Forward

24. 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.

25. 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

26. 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

¹ [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 10th October, 2017, 4.30 pm : City of Cardiff Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

² [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 9th July, 2019, 4.30 pm : City of Cardiff Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

³ [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 21st January, 2020, 4.30 pm : City of Cardiff Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

⁴ [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 23rd February, 2021, 10.30 am : City of Cardiff Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

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

27. 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

17 September 2021