

SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS: PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) - EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROVISION FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY AGED PUPILS

Purpose of the 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 10 March 2022.
2. The purpose of the Cabinet report is to inform Cabinet of the responses received following public consultation on proposals to extend and realign special school and Specialist Resource Bases (SRBs) for pupils across Cardiff with emotional, health and wellbeing needs.

Background

3. At its meeting on 15 July 2021 the Cabinet authorised officers to consult on proposals to:
 - increase the capacity of The Court Special School from 42 to 72 places. The school would transfer to new build accommodation across two sites at Fairwater Primary School and the current St Mellons CiW Primary School site in Llanrumney with 36 pupils on each site from September 2025.
4. At its meeting on 14 October 2021 the Cabinet authorised officers to consult on proposals to:
 - increase the capacity of Greenhill School from 64 to 160 places. The school would transfer to new build accommodation across two

sites at the Ty Glas in Llanishen and the Dutch Garden Centre site with 80 places on each site from September 2025

- establish a 20-place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Cardiff West Community High School from September 2022.
- establish a 20-place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Eastern High from September 2022.

5. This Scrutiny Committee considered the above proposals on the 13th July 2021 and 13th October 2021, and extracts from the Chair's letters arising from this issue, and corresponding responses from Councillor Merry is attached at **Appendix B**.

Structure of Papers

6. The following issues are highlighted in the Cabinet report, as at **Appendix A**:

- **Responses received regarding the proposal The Court Special School** (*points 7 – 18 in the Cabinet report*)
 - Views Expressed (*points 21 - 26 in the Cabinet report*)
 - The Court Special School Pupil Representation (*points 27 - 29 in the Cabinet report*)
 - Fairwater Primary School Pupil representation (*points 30 – 33 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 4*)
 - Response to views expressed (*points 34 - 44 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 7*)
- **Responses received regarding the proposal for Greenhill School during the consultation period** (*points 45 - 53 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendices 6 - 8*)
 - Greenhill School Pupil representation (*points 56 - 63 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 4*)
 - Response to the view expressed (*points 64 - 70 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 7*)

- **Responses received regarding the establishment of emotional health and wellbeing Specialist Resource Base provision for learners aged 11-19 (Cardiff West Community High School and Eastern High) during the consultation period** (*points 71 - 80 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendices 6 & 7*)
 - Cardiff West Community High School Pupil representation (*points 81 - 84 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 6*)
 - Eastern High Pupil representation (*point 85 in the Cabinet report*)
 - Response to the views expressed (*points 86 - 96 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 7*)
- **Formal responses received during the consultation regarding Additional Learning Needs Provision** (*points 97 – 105 in the Cabinet report*)
 - Response to the view expressed (*points 106 - 111 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 7*)
- Health provision (*points 112 - 113 in the Cabinet report*)
- Admissions arrangements (*point 114 in the Cabinet report*)
- Learner Traveller Arrangements (*points 115 - 118 in the Cabinet report*)
- Community Impact (*point 119 in the Cabinet report*)
- Local Member Consultation (*point 120 in the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 6*)
- Scrutiny Consultation (*point 121 in the Cabinet report*)

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

- Financial Implications (*points 123 - 129 in the Cabinet report*)
- Legal Implications (*points 130 - 146 in the Cabinet report*)
- HR Implications (*points 147 - 153 in the Cabinet report*)
- Property Implications (*point 154 in the Cabinet report*)
- Traffic and Transport Implications (*points 155 - 178 in the Cabinet report*)
- Impact of the proposals on the Welsh Language (*points 179 - 191 in the Cabinet report*)

- Wellbeing of Future Generations (*points 192 - 194 in the Cabinet report*)
- EIA (*points 195 - 196 in the Cabinet report; plus Appendix 9*)

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

- **Appendix 1:** Consultation documents
- **Appendix 2:** Summary documents
- **Appendix 3:** Notes of meetings with Governing Bodies and Staff
- **Appendix 4:** Notes from pupil engagement meetings
- **Appendix 5:** Notes from public meetings
- **Appendix 6:** Formal responses received
- **Appendix 7:** Summary of responses received, and appraisal of views expressed
- **Appendix 8:** Summary analysis of responses received
- **Appendix 9:** Equality Impact Assessment

Issues highlighted in the report to Cabinet

Consultation Methodology

9. The consultation period for The Court Special School proposals ran from 11 October 2021 until 17 January 2022.

10. The consultation period for the Greenhill School proposals and the secondary Specialist Resource Base provision for learners with emotional health and wellbeing needs ran from 14 December 2021 until 01 February 2022.

11. The consultation process for each set of proposals involved:

- Publication of bilingual consultation documents outlining background, rationale and implications to parents, staff and governors of affected schools, Headteachers and Chairs of Governors city-wide, elected Members, local residents and other stakeholders (a copy of the consultation documents can be seen at Appendix 1);

- Publication of bilingual summary documents setting out the main points of the consultation documents (a copy of the summary documents can be seen at Appendix 2);
- Publication of information in community languages upon request;
- Consultation meetings via Microsoft Teams with school governors and staff at The Court Special School, Greenhill School, Fairwater Primary School and Cardiff West Community High School. The Governing Body and staff of Eastern High declined the offer of meetings as a number of meetings had been held ahead of the consultation and they had sufficient information available to them (notes from the meetings can be seen at Appendix 3);
- Consultation meetings with pupil representatives at The Court Special School, Fairwater Primary School, Greenhill School and Cardiff West Community High School (notes from these meetings can be seen at Appendix 4);
- Two public consultation meetings via Microsoft Teams at which the proposals were explained and questions answered (notes from the meetings can be seen at Appendix 5);
- Drop-in sessions via Microsoft Teams where officers were available to answer questions (there were no requests for drop-in sessions);
- Letters setting out details of the proposals and where further information could be found were sent to local residents and businesses in the area surrounding the school sites subject to the proposed changes;
- A communication campaign via social media;
- A consultation response slip for return by post or e-mail, attached to the consultation documents and summary documents;
- An online response from at www.cardiff.gov.uk/ALNschoollproposals

12. For stakeholders who did not have access to digital platforms the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes via telephone was available.

13. The views expressed at Council organised meetings, drop-in sessions, telephone calls, and on paper or electronically through the appropriate channels, have been recorded.

14. Views were sought from interested stakeholders via online surveys and hard copy versions of the surveys within the consultation documents.
15. The details presented in this report, represent the views expressed during the consultation process. These include the wider stakeholder surveys, formal responses, e-mail responses, views expressed at public meetings, drop-in sessions, telephone calls and pupil consultation meetings.
16. The views expressed in the wider stakeholder surveys reflect those raised in the e-mail responses received.

Results

17. In total there were 44 responses received, including 35 online responses and 9 e-mail responses.

18. Formal responses were received from:

- Estyn
- The Court Special School Governing Body
- The Court Special School Headteacher
- The Court Special School Staff
- Fairwater Primary School Governing Body
- Pen y Bryn Primary School Governing Body

19. Of the 35 online responses received, 88.6% supported the proposal to increase the capacity of The Court Special School from 42 to 72 places, with 60% of responses supporting the proposed transfer of the school to new build accommodation across two sites at Fairwater Primary School and the current St Mellons CiW Primary School site in Llanrumney.

Views Expressed

20. Reasons for supporting the proposed changes included:

- The need to respond to the growing demand for additional learning needs provision.

- A dual site arrangement could allow for pupils to have stronger links with their local communities.
- The potential for active travel/children to spend less time in taxis commuting to school.
- The potential benefits arising out of co-location with mainstream provision.
- The opportunities to develop stronger links with local communities.
- The provision of purpose-built facilities would provide an improved learning environment.
- The opportunity for enhanced development opportunities for children and staff.

21. Whilst there was support for the expansion and redevelopment of The Court Special School there were a number of concerns related to:

- The ability to maintain one school ethos across two sites.
- The current lack of Welsh-medium additional learning needs provision.
- The need to maintain small class sizes in order to be able to provide appropriate levels of support.
- The need for both school sites to be new and purpose built.
- Potential safeguarding concerns around co-location with mainstream provision.
- Access arrangements to both proposed sites and the potential for increased traffic around the sites.
- Staffing arrangements and the need to ensure sufficient time is allowed for upskilling of new staff.
- The safety of children on school sites during the construction phase.
- The design/layout of any new build needs to allow for suitable distance and security with the integrity of both mainstream and special school provision maintained.
- The future of existing Wellbeing provision at Fairwater Primary School.

22. The Governing Body of Fairwater Primary School expressed a wish for greater detail on the proposed changes, including detail on site matters

such as access, boundaries, buildings and organisation of the two schools on the shared site.

23. Separate to the proposed changes, Fairwater Governing Body asked for consideration to be given to the establishment of nursery provision at the school.

24. A number of alternative suggestions were put forward. These included the use of land at Fitzalan High School, the former Michaelston Community College site and at the school playing fields in Cardiff West Community High School.

25. It was also suggested that a more rural location would be better for the school, that single site provision should be developed, and that the age range of the school be extended to age 19.

Recommendations set out in the Cabinet Proposals

26. The Cabinet is recommended to

- 1) authorise officers to proceed on proceed to publish proposals in accordance with section 48 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 on proposals to:
 - Increase the capacity of The Court Special School from 42 to 72 places. The school would transfer to new build accommodation across two sites at Fairwater Primary School and the current St Mellons, CiW Primary School site in Llanrumney with 36 pupils on each site from September 2025.
 - establish a 20-place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Cardiff West Community High School from September 2022.
 - establish a 20-place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Eastern High from September 2023.
- 2) Not progress the proposal to increase the capacity of Greenhill School.

- 3) Note that officers will bring a further report to Cabinet for consideration, setting out details of revised proposals for the provision of secondary English-medium and Welsh-medium education health and wellbeing special school places.

Scope of Scrutiny

27. 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 10 March 2021.

Way Forward

28. 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 Brett Andrewartha (SOP Programme Manager) will present the report to the Committee, and be available to answer any questions Members may have.
29. 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

30. 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

31. 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

3 March 2022