
SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING - ANNUAL REPORT ON INVESTMENT IN THE EDUCATION ESTATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with a copy of the draft School Organisation Planning (SOP) Annual Report, to enable Members to consider progress of the School Organisation Programme to date; and next steps, including the development of the School Organisation Planning Strategy.
2. The SOP Annual Report, attached at **Appendix A**, will also be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on the 19 January 2023.

Structure of Papers

3. Attached to this report are the following:
 - **Appendix A** – the draft Report to Cabinet – 19 January 2023. This in turn has a number of appendices, namely:
 - **Appendix 1:** Annual Report Summary Data
 - **Appendix 2:** Single Impact Assessment
 - **Appendix 3:** K29 Energy Usage of the Education Estate Report
 - **Appendix 4:** Energy Usage Individual School Example (CHS)

School Organisation Planning Task & Finish Group recommendation

4. As Members will be aware, a SOP Task & Finish Group has been established to consider many of the SOP Items that are scheduled to be considered during 2022/23.

5. The SOP Annual Report was considered by the Task & Finish Group on the 10 January 2023 where Members met with the Cabinet Member and SOP Team to consider the contents of the draft Cabinet Report and its appendices.
6. The Task & Finish Group recommended that, given that the Annual Report is a strategic issue, it should be considered by the whole committee.
7. **Members of the Task & Finish Group recommended that Members of this Scrutiny Committee use the session at this meeting as an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the SOP process and the strands that feed into the whole programme; how individual proposals fit together; and have the opportunity to commence discussions with the Cabinet Member and Officers towards the development and implementation of the SOP Strategy, which will be brought to this Scrutiny Committee in due course. The session will therefore be focussed on this approach, and a presentation will be given by officers accordingly.**

Background *(taken from the draft Cabinet report attached)*

National and local context

8. There are a wide range of national and partner influences that impact on how education is to be delivered at a local level. These must be considered when planning for change to ensure provision is able to adapt to expectations and can continue to deliver and improve the quality of access to education and the learning opportunities in Cardiff. These include but are not confined to the following:

- Cymraeg 2025 and Cardiff Welsh in Education Strategic Plan;
- Curriculum for Wales;
- Additional learning Needs (ALN) Reform;
- Community Focussed Schools;
- A Nation (and City) of Sanctuary;
- Starting Well Partnership;

- Move More Cardiff – Physical Activity & Sport Strategy; and
- One Planet and Active Travel.

9. In 2019, the Council and its partners outlined in a clear vision for education in the city, 'Cardiff 2030: a ten-year vision for a capital city of learning and opportunity', which built upon its achievements from its Cardiff 2020 strategy. Outlined within Cardiff 2030 is the commitment to realising the delivery of the New National Curriculum for Wales, high quality learning environments that are fit for purpose and high-quality school places for young people which meets the needs of Cardiff's growing and changing population.

10. In order to build on the high standard of education delivered in Cardiff as recognised by the recent Estyn Inspection, the Council has reiterated its commitment to making every school in Cardiff a good school, where every child can receive a great education.

11. This includes continued commitment to elevated levels of investment in new and existing school buildings alongside continuing to drive up educational attainment and delivering on the commitment to put the views of children and young people at the heart of the Council's policy agenda. In doing so, the Council is keen to place a particular focus on supporting Cardiff's most vulnerable children, from supporting them and their families in their early years and through school, to the world of work and higher education.

12. The Council later published its 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' document in June 2022, setting out the key themes and commitments for the next five years with a strong focus on putting children and young people front and centre of their ambitions for the city. Central to this is the explicit belief that good education is the surest route out of poverty and, in turn that, the long-term prosperity of the city relies on firm support for our children and young people to reach their potential.

13. Education is consistently ranked as the top priority for children and young people in Cardiff, a key social and cultural right which plays an essential role in overcoming poverty and disadvantage.
14. Through the 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' document commitments are made for projects including 'new campuses for Willows, Cathays, Cantonian, Fitzalan and Cardiff High schools through Band B of the 21st Century Schools programme'. There are also commitments to close the gap for our most vulnerable learners with a particular focus on children in care, those educated other than at school and children from the most deprived communities; to promote the benefits of bilingualism, expanding uptake in Welsh-medium education in line with Cymraeg 2050; and provide additional funding to support maintenance in schools not covered by the Sustainable Communities for Learning capital investment programme (formerly called 21st Century Schools).

Programme context

15. At its meeting on 12th October 2017, the Cabinet received a report on the development of the education estate in Cardiff. The report set out the Council's proposed vision for its Band B 21st Century Schools programme to address the most acute sufficiency and condition issues in Cardiff. All properties across the school estate were given a rating from A to D for the following issues, with D being the worst category:
- Sufficiency of places available;
 - Condition of the school buildings; and
 - Suitability of the environment for teaching.
16. Priority schemes were identified based on these ratings which took account of the building condition and suitability information available, and the most recent birth rate and school census information as at 2016/17.
17. To address the eight form of entry sufficiency requirement that was projected to be required in the secondary age phase during and beyond the investment cycle, schemes for five English-medium secondary schools were proposed. In addition, priority schemes for the Band B programme

included an approach to the delivery of a significant level of provision for learners with ALN through the development and expansion of provision in Cardiff schools. A further four schemes in Band B were included to increase Welsh-medium and English-medium primary provision to meet projected localised demand.

18. At its meeting on 14 December 2017 Cabinet approved the prioritised schemes under Band B of the 21st Century Schools Programme ahead of implementation from the start of the 2019/20 financial year.
19. The opportunities presented through Band B were further supplemented because of the Cabinet decision in its meeting in February 2018 to allocate an additional £25m to education asset renewal, of which circa £6m would be used to implement plans to ensure the suitability of existing provision to meet Additional Learning Needs. Combined with the existing £3m each year, this brought together a total of £40m over a 5-year period to be invested in improving the condition and suitability of the school estate.
20. In the 2021 budget, the Council also allocated an additional £10m invest to save towards the Education capital programme and secured Welsh Government Capital Grant funding of c£2.8m to support the reorganisation and expansion of Welsh-medium primary school provision.
21. Recently in November 2022, WG advised Local Authorities that the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme will transition away from fixed bands of funding to a more agile rolling programme. Cardiff Council already delivers its large-scale school estate investment on a rolling programme basis as it delivers on a project-by-project basis. This is a key mechanism to control cost and to ensure affordability is maintained within the programme envelope.
22. It is expected as Local Authorities near completion of the Band B programme, there will be a requirement to submit new Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) which would initiate the start of the rolling programme with the latest submissions to this programme to be before March 2024.

23. This is to be a nine-year rolling capital programme, including an indicative funding forecast for the nine years to be submitted and the following will apply:

- Band B projects can be included at the beginning of our 9 Year Capital Programme if appropriate;
- Current intervention rates would be retained to support the deliverability and affordability of delivery partners' individual programmes; and
- Projects identified for delivery under the Education Mutual Investment Model (MIM) delivery framework will continue to be classified as Band B projects.

Further Information Highlighted in the Cabinet Report

24. The Cabinet Report attached at **Appendix A** is set out as follows:

- Background – *paragraphs 4 - 19*
- Programme Progress – *paragraphs 20 – 57*
- Changes to inform strategic planning of future investment – *paragraphs 58 – 128*
- Considerations for the next 12 months – *paragraphs 129 - 134*
- Financial Implications – *paragraphs 136 – 140*
- Human Resources Implications – *paragraph 141*
- Legal Implications – *paragraphs 142 - 151*
- Transport Implications – *paragraph 152*
- Property Implications - *paragraph 153*
- Single Impact Assessment – *paragraph 154*

Reason for the Cabinet Recommendations

25. To inform Cabinet of the progress of investment to date but also the considerations which encompass both challenges and opportunities facing Cardiff in the development of the education estate at the current time and to highlight aspects which require proposals to be brought forward to subsequent Cabinet meetings.

Recommendations set out in the Cabinet Proposals

26. The Cabinet is recommended to note the matters outlined in this report and considerations for the next 12 months for the School Organisation Programme.

27. The Cabinet is recommended to bring forward a School Organisation Strategy within the next financial year that leads to priority projects against the next tranche of funding of the Sustainable Communities for Learning.

Scope of Scrutiny

28. The scope of this scrutiny is for Members to consider and provide comments to Cabinet, prior to its consideration of the report on the 19 January 2023.

Way Forward

29. At this meeting, the following have been invited to attend. A brief presentation will be given at the beginning of the Item, with a Q&A session afterwards.

- Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education);
- Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education and Lifelong learning),
- Richard Portas (Programme Director for the School Organisation Programme)
- Michele Duddridge-Friedl (Operational Manager: School Organisation Programme Strategy)
- Brett Andrewartha (School Organisation Programme Planning Manager)
- Jennie Hughes (Senior Achievement Leader Inclusion, E&LL)

30. 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

31. 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

32. 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:

1. Review and assess the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix A**, together with any information provided at the meeting;

2. Provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and senior officers prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services

10 January 2023