

**ANNUAL REPORT ON INVESTMENT IN THE EDUCATION  
ESTATE**

**EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR SARAH MERRY)**

**AGENDA ITEM: \***

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**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**Reason for this Report**

1. To provide Cabinet with an update regarding the education estate across Cardiff, including outlining the challenges and opportunities facing the authority.
2. This report is the first of this type after which it is intended annual versions are to be presented to Cabinet and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to support greater visibility of progress and enhanced opportunities for input from elected members to inform strategic planning going forward. The annual report intends to:
  - Report annually against agreed School Organisation and capital investment priorities and spend;
  - Update on progress made and lessons learnt during the last year;
  - Reflect any potential notable changes based on opportunities/risks/issue presenting that could impact on programme in short, medium, long term;
  - Confirm plans (including proposals and projects) for forthcoming year.
3. This report will continue to be brought forward in the Autumn term annually.

**Background**

National and local context

4. 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 taken into account 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 and are not confined to the following:

- Cymraeg 2025 and Cardiff WESP
  - Curriculum for Wales
  - ALN Reform
  - Community Focussed Schools
  - A Nation (and City) of Sanctuary
  - Starting Well Partnership and RPB
  - One Planet and Active Travel
5. 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.
  6. 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.
  7. This includes continued commitment to high 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.
  8. 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.
  9. 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.
  10. 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 Bands A-C.

### Programme context

11. 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 School strategy 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;
  - Suitability of the environment for teaching.
12. To address the eight form of entry sufficiency requirement that was estimated to be required at secondary level, schemes affecting five English medium schools were proposed. In addition, priority schemes for Band B included an approach to the delivery of a significant level of provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) through the development and expansion of provision in Cardiff schools. A further three schemes in Band B were included to increase Welsh-medium primary provision to meet demand. At its meeting on 14 December 2017 Cabinet approved the prioritised schemes under Band B of the 21st Century Schools Programme.
13. The opportunities presented through Band B were further supplemented as a result of the Cabinet decision in its meeting in February 2018 to allocate an additional £25million to education asset renewal, of which circa £6million would be used to implement plans to ensure the suitability of existing provision to meet Additional Learning Needs. Combined with the existing £3 million each year, this brought together a total of £40million over a 5-year period to be invested in improving the condition and suitability of the school estate.
14. The first part of this report outlines the following citywide context, progress against planned projects and the report then sets out the plans for the next 12 months, including:
  - How the remaining proposals included within Band B should best be progressed;
  - Cardiff priorities for the next phase of Sustainable Communities for Learning investment and future grant funding more broadly;
  - Scope to continue the enhanced funding for the management and maintenance of the existing education estate;
  - Substantiating and the approach to the development of provision additional learning needs (ALN), including the development of new, and the remodelling of existing, provision in Cardiff schools.

## Issues

### Analysis of sufficiency needs of the school population

#### City-wide context – mainstream places

15. The Welsh Government School Organisation Code provides guidance that, where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area overall, local authorities should review their provision and should consider whether to make proposals for their removal if this will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of provision.
16. There are a range of factors that influence the sufficiency of school places in Cardiff including resident birth rates; an ambitious Cardiff LDP programme; net migration patterns pre and post Brexit and the Covid pandemic as well as the differences in the different organisations projecting populations which inform planning public services including education.
17. Intakes to Reception classes city-wide peaked at c4,370 pupils in 2015/16 and 2016/17, corresponding with peak birth rates recorded in 2010/11 and 2011/12. Comparing intakes to the number of places available of c4,700, Cardiff retained approximately 8% surplus places.
18. City-wide intakes to primary education in September 2021 to September 2025 are projected to reduce significantly as a consequence of a sustained fall in the birth rate and changes to migration patterns. These are evidenced in data published by the Office of National Statistics and the most recent NHS GP registration data sets. However, changes to populations are not consistent in all parts of the city.
19. Intakes to mainstream Reception classes in 2021/22 fell to c3,820 pupils, a fall of c510 pupils since the peak, and are projected to fall further to c3,600 by 2025/ 2026, an overall fall of c18%. Comparing projected intakes to the number of places available of c4,700, Cardiff's surplus places would increase to c23% city-wide. This represents the equivalent of 18 surplus two-form entry primary schools. Parental preference patterns mean that the impact on some schools will be negligible, whilst for other schools the impact on pupil numbers will be far greater than the city-wide average of a 18% fall.
20. As birth rates in Cardiff, and nationally, have followed a long-term cycle of approximately 25 years intakes to primary schools are not anticipated to return to high levels until later than 2030. Nationally, the previous lowest birth rates were recorded in 1977, followed by a significant uplift and then fall to a low in 2001. This was then followed by a period of uplift to 2011/12, and falls from this date. Whilst a small uplift has been recorded in ONS data for the 2021 calendar year, no uplift has been recorded in NHS GP

registration data in the most recent dataset for the 2020/21 academic year period.

21. Intakes to secondary education city-wide are projected to peak at c4,240 pupils in 2023/24, again corresponding with the peak birth rates recorded in 2010/11 and 2011/12 and subsequent peak intakes to primary education. Intakes are projected to fall to c4,030 in 2024/25, and to fall further to c3,780 from 2028/29, the fall off-set by inward migration to the city in new housing developments.
22. The Council has utilised temporary measures at secondary school city wide, to provide a low but sustainable level of c5% surplus places at entry during the peak intake periods. Parental preference patterns mean that many schools have few surplus places, whilst a small number have a high surplus overall.
23. The city-wide surplus will inevitably increase above the 10% guidance level as a consequence of the recent and significant fall in the birth rate. The projected falling intakes to secondary education in 2028/29, would result in c11% surplus at entry, and surplus across secondary schools would exceed 10% by 2031/32.
24. In the context of great variance in birth rates and intakes to schools in Cardiff, the Council must utilise temporary measures at peak intakes to mitigate the impact that carrying surplus places causes for all schools, and particularly those that are lower ranked in parental preferences.
25. For further information regarding projections please see Appendix 1.

#### City-wide context – specialist places

26. At its meetings on 15 July 2021 and 14 October 2021 the Cabinet considered reports outlining the growing demand for specialist placements and authorised officers to consult on proposals to expand primary and secondary provision for primary and secondary age learners with Complex Learning Needs, Autism Spectrum Condition and Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs.
27. The reports noted that the number of pupils with severe and complex needs, requiring a place in a special school or specialist resource base has continued to grow due to a number of factors including pupil population growth, improved survival rates for children born with significant disabilities, resulting in a higher incidence of severe and complex disabilities, increased incidence and identification of specific needs and higher incidence of children and young people with emotional health and wellbeing needs.

#### Primary phase - Emotional Health and Wellbeing

28. Proposals considered by Cabinet in July 2021 noted the projected increasing demand for primary age places for children resident in Cardiff

with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs, to 119-131 places by 2025/26.

29. The Council has approved proposals in 2022 to expand The Court Special School from 42 places to 72 places, with effect from September 2025.
30. The Council also operates 48 temporary placements for primary-age learners with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs at five Wellbeing Classes within mainstream schools city-wide, taking the total places to 120, and is developing proposals to further expand these places from September 2023.

#### Primary phase - Complex Learning Needs and/ or Autism Spectrum Condition

31. Proposals considered by Cabinet in July 2021 noted the projected increasing demand for primary age places for children resident in Cardiff with Complex Learning Needs and/ or Autism Spectrum Condition, to 547-602 places by 2025/26.
32. The Council has approved proposals in 2022 to expand this provision by 182 places, with expansion being phased from September 2022 to September 2023. By September 2026, the implementation of these proposals combined with other approved changes will increase the number of for these learners to 660 places.

#### Secondary phase - Emotional Health and Wellbeing

33. Proposals considered by Cabinet in October 2021 noted the projected increasing demand for secondary and post-16 places for learners resident in Cardiff with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs, to 380-419 places by 2025/26.
34. The Council has increasingly relied on the independent sector to provide a significant proportion of places for secondary and post-16 learners with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs, funding 86 places in the independent sector in 2022. However, at a time when the secondary-age population is increasing, the ability of the independent sector to respond to increased demand is limited. The costs of each additional placement in the independent sector places a significant financial burden on the Council of c£50,000 per learner per year.
35. The Council has approved proposals in 2022 to establish Special resource bases of 20 places each at Cardiff West Community High School and Eastern High, with effect from September 2022 and September 2023 respectively, increasing capacity to 194 places. Proposals to expand Greenhill Special School by 96 places were not progressed.
36. The Council is developing school organisation proposals to further expand EHW provision. In addition to this, the Council is further developing PRU provision to provide places for Key Stage 3 (age 11-14) learners alongside

an enhanced tuition service to provide a broad offer for the needs presenting.

#### Secondary phase - Complex Learning Needs and/ or Autism Spectrum Condition

37. Proposals considered by Cabinet in October 2021 noted the projected increasing demand for primary age places for children resident in Cardiff with Complex Learning Needs and/ or Autism Spectrum Condition, to 629-692 places by 2025/26.
38. As of February 2022, 560 secondary and post-16 learners resident in Cardiff with Complex Learning Needs and/ or Autism Spectrum Condition were placed in specialist provision, including 276 in special schools and 284 in Specialist Resource Bases in mainstream schools.
39. The Council has approved proposals in 2022 to expand this provision by 179 places, with expansion being phased from September 2022 to September 2023. By September 2026, the implementation of these proposals combined with other approved changes will increase the number of for these learners to 781 places. Whilst the factors above would broadly apply to the national context, in Cardiff, it is believed that the proportion that resident in the authority is higher than average due to factors such as proximity to the University Hospital of Wales.

#### Placements in independent schools, neighbouring Local Authorities or PRU provision

40. The immediate insufficiency of specialist places compared to need was projected to increase over coming years and the Council has therefore funded some places at special schools maintained by other LAs, or in independent schools. As at August 2022, 151 FTE learners were placed in independent/ OoC provision. To secure a sufficiency of places is available to meet current demand and ensure statutory duties are met, the Council has actively engaged with the independent sector to increase the number of places available through expansion of this provision.
41. Reasons for these placements include insufficient specialist places in Cardiff including Greenhill, PRU, Ty Gwyn (including whilst additional permanent provision is developed), and/or pupils need multi agency highly specialist placements, LAC OoC, or LAC residential, with the rising needs presenting it is clear that the proposals agreed to date will not be sufficient long term. Costs associated with this provision are as set out below:
  - £6.18m / average of £40.8k per learner
  - Highest costs per place PMLD / ASD provision £64k pa per learner (Ty Gwyn equivalent)
  - EHW / anxiety placements c£30k pa
  - EHW / behaviour placements c£44 – 52k
  - c£2.15m / average of £45.6k per learner due to insufficiency of Greenhill/ Court EHW / behaviour places

42. The Council continuously monitors the individual needs of learners, and how each learner's needs evolve, and analyses this data for trends to inform the planning of places and learner support. Since proposals to expand provision were considered by Cabinet in 2021/22, trends have been updated in respect of the number of children requiring specialist placements either within Cardiff's maintained special school and Specialist Resource Base provision, or within alternative provision including placements in independent schools, neighbouring Local Authorities or PRU provision.
43. Appendix 1 confirms that, when comparing the number of learners accessing specialist provision to the overall school population in the past five years, a year-on-year increase can be identified. Continuation of this trend projection would marginally exceed the range of figures (1,675 – 1,844 places in 2025/26) previously identified, by 43 pupils. The identified trend of growth from c2.9% in 2017/18 to c3.4% in 2022/23, if continued, would reach 3.9% (1,961 pupils) by 2027/28. However, such growth trends cannot be modelled to continue indefinitely and it is not anticipated that such a high proportion of specialist provision would be required.
44. The recent and current shortfall in Cardiff's specialist provision has resulted in:
- Significant continued reliance on places in the independent sector and in neighbouring Local Authorities;
  - Some learners remaining in mainstream schools with high levels of support, contributing to the significant growth in the cost of mainstream statements;
  - A number of learners with highly complex needs who would be better placed in special schools, attending SRBs. While the bases have the expertise to meet the needs of these learners, the pupils themselves receive little benefit from placement in a mainstream environment and this over-reliance on SRBs reduces the places available for learners who need and can benefit from an SRB;
  - Increased risk of appeals to Tribunal.
45. Whilst the factors above would broadly apply to the national context, in it is believed that the proportion that resident in the authority is higher than average due to factors such as proximity to the University Hospital of Wales. The medium to long-term impact on learners of the Covid-19 lockdown is uncertain. Cardiff's schools have reported concerns in respect of behavioural, emotional and social development of learners that are at present supported in mainstream provision and it is noted that there has been a further increase in the number of children presenting with complex needs following the pandemic.
46. The Council is continuing to develop proposals to expand specialist provision, to ensure that an appropriate balance in the number of, distribution of and types of provision are brought forward in early 2023.



47. School census data captured annually (PLASC) allows the Council to monitor city-wide net migration patterns and also allows for monitoring of the impact of new housing developments in each community.
48. In the past five school census data sets, the following patterns can be identified from the number of pupils promoting from one cohort in Cardiff's schools to the next cohort:
- A reducing net out-migration overall, from 470 pupils (2018-2019) to 83 pupils (2021-2022);
  - Continued net out-migration in the secondary age phase, fluctuating between 71 and 169 pupils;
  - Fewer year 6 children in Cardiff promoting to schools outside of Cardiff, independent schools or home education, reducing from 165 pupils (2018-2019) to 84 pupils (2021-2022);
  - A reversal of migration in the primary age phase, from net out-migration of 136 pupils (2018-2019) to in-migration of 129 pupils (2021-2022).
49. As a proportion of the city-wide totals these figures are relatively small, however, the impact on schools in different areas of the city can be significantly different. The reasons for the changes to migration patterns include but are not limited to:
- Brexit, and changes to UK-EU migration
  - An increase in the number of dwellings in Cardiff, as new housing is developed on strategic housing sites in the North-East and North-West of the city
  - A greater number of places available at entry to Cardiff's secondary schools, and fewer places for Cardiff pupils at schools in neighbouring Local Authorities
  - An increased number of families opting to educate children at home
50. The most recent annual report on Cardiff's Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) confirmed the completion of over c2,100 new dwellings on strategic sites over a seven-year period since 2015 including:
- 954 properties built at St Edeyrn's, North-East Cardiff
  - 216 properties at Lisvane/ Pontprennau, North-East Cardiff
  - 739 properties at Plasdwr, North-West Cardiff
  - 213 properties on the site North of Junction 33, North-West Cardiff
51. A number of new developments in existing communities have also progressed, including those through the Cardiff Living partnership, while further developments are at earlier planning stages.
52. Whilst many of the children and young people resident in these new housing developments are new to those communities, analysis of school data indicates that many are from neighbouring areas or elsewhere in the

city, offsetting the number of new school places that may be required to serve developments.

53. Overall, the net yield of pupils city-wide is estimated at c1 form of entry per year, over a period extending approximately 15 years, necessitating the phased expansion of provision serving these areas over this period.
54. Since the school census data for 2022 was extracted, Cardiff has welcomed a number of children and young people to its schools from Afghanistan, initially placed in temporary accommodation awaiting long term dispersal, and from Ukraine both through the super-sponsor scheme and others placed in temporary accommodation.
55. It is anticipated that the school census data for 2022 – 2023 will evidence a net in-migration overall; however, there is insufficient information available to the Council at this time to have medium term or long term certainty around the continuation of use of temporary accommodation and dispersal of families to permanent homes within or outside of Cardiff.

#### Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2031 and the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy 2022-2027

56. The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Strategy sets out the vision of a million Welsh speakers across Wales by 2050.
57. The Welsh Government published its Cymraeg 2050 strategy in 2017 which sets out a vision of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050. By 2050, the aim is for 40 per cent of children (in each year group) to be in Welsh-medium education. Of those in English-medium education, the assumption is that half of those leaving school will report that they are able to speak Welsh. The strategy assumes that, nationally, 70 per cent of 15 year olds will be able to speak Welsh by 2050, made up of 40 per cent in Welsh-medium schools and 30 per cent in English-medium schools.
58. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 make provision for a local authority to prepare a ten-year Plan. Cardiff's WESP was well received, it was published on the Council's website 1<sup>st</sup> September following approval by the Welsh Minister in July 2022.
59. Since 2001, the number of Welsh speakers in Cardiff aged 3+ has increased by almost a third, with the most recent census indicating that over 17.5% of the city's population have one or more skills in the Welsh language. This means that Cardiff now has the third highest number of Welsh speakers in Wales.
60. In February 2022, the number of pupils enrolled in Reception in Welsh-medium education was 643 pupils, which was 16.8% of the total intake. To reach Cardiff's adopted lower range WESP target of 25% of learners enrolled in WM Reception classes by 2032, there would need to be a percentage increase of approximately 8.2%. To reach the upper range

target there would need to be a percentage increase of approximately 12.2%.

61. When compared to the most recent school census data for Reception classes in February 2022, the existing capacity in Welsh-medium primary schools and classes of 27.9FE leaves c23% surplus in Welsh-medium Reception classes. The Cardiff WESP includes a range of actions to both stimulate uptake of existing provision and to increase the number of places and distribution of provision across the city including increasing the number of specialist Welsh-medium ALN places available.

#### Condition & Suitability

62. Cardiff has a very large education estate, with over 127 school properties. Many sites comprise of multiple blocks, constructed during different decades and large areas of the estate in urgent need of upgrade.
63. Condition and suitability ratings for each Cardiff school are prepared independently, using Welsh Government approved methodology to classify all properties across the school estate from A to D, with D being the worst category for the following issues:
- Condition of the school buildings;
  - Suitability of the environment for teaching.
64. Table 1 shows the Property Condition of all schools and their classification.

Property Condition	2012	%	2017	%	2020	%	2021	%
A	6	5%	6	6%	3	2%	3	2%
B	98	75%	47	47%	37	30%	41	33%
C	27	20%	43	44%	84	66%	80	63%
D	0	0%	3	3%	3	2%	3	2%
Total	131		99		127		127	

65. There are three High Schools in Cardiff that are classed as “D”, which means that they are at the end of life in terms of their condition. These are Cantonian High, Willows High and Fitzalan High. All are being rebuilt as part of Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Programme.
66. A large proportion of primary, secondary and special schools are classified as “C” condition, which means that they are exhibiting major deterioration. This represents 63% of the overall estate. The Court Special School and Riverbank Special School, classified as “C” condition, are both due to be rebuilt as part of the Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Programme.

67. The above table reflects the most recent assessed position in 2021; however, Band B projects will remove all three category “D” schools, a number of category “C” schools, and will increase the number of “A” schools.

### Suitability

68. In a number of Cardiff schools, teaching is inhibited by the suitability of both internal and external accommodation. Factors such as the flexibility of the space, its size and shape, levels of light, accessibility, safeguarding, ventilation and acoustics are restricting the access of young people to a broad and balanced curriculum.
69. From the suitability surveys in 2020, it was found that 111 secondary and primary schools surveyed were classed a “A” or “B” which is significantly above the condition levels of schools.
70. The surveys highlighted 5 schools that are classified as “D” for suitability. These properties have poor environments, with the buildings seriously inhibiting the schools’ ability to deliver the curriculum. All are due to be replaced as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

### **Programme Progress**

#### Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Programme (formerly 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools)

71. The Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Programme is a collaboration between the Welsh Government (WG) and Local Authorities. It is a major, long-term and strategic, capital investment programme with the aim of creating a generation of excellent zero carbon learning facilities at the heart of their communities across Wales. The programme focuses resources on the right schools in the right places, from early years through to Post-16.
72. The first wave of investment, (Band A) of the Programme was under the banner of 21st Century Schools and Education, and in Cardiff this represented a £164million investment over the five-year period ending 2018/19. The second tranche, (Band B) began in December 2017 and represented investment of £284m in Cardiff.
73. The programme envelope has since increased to £298.6m for Cardiff as Mutual Investment Model (MIM) is now excluded from the programme envelope and additional funding was secured for the acquisition of the Willows High School sites. In addition, Welsh Government is funding contributions for Net Zero Carbon (NZC) standards, which currently equates to circa £21m.
74. Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme is being funded through a combination of traditional capital route, along with a revenue funding stream known as the Mutual Investment Model (MIM).

The Welsh Government grant intervention rates vary depending on the type of project and whether it is capital or MIM funded.

75. The Band B programme of investment is ongoing with a range of projects progressing with a total committed spend to date at c£257m (excl NZC). This includes projects such as Fitzalan High School, St Mary the Virgin, Fairwater Community Campus and the Court School. Projects not started include Greenhill Special School, Cardiff High School, Fairwater Primary School, Ysgol Nant Caerau and Ysgol Pen Y Pil.
76. In November 2022, Welsh Government advised Local authorities that the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme will now transition away from fixed bands of funding to a more agile rolling programme.
77. It is expected that as all near completion of 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.
78. This is to be a nine year rolling capital programme, including an indicative funding forecast for the 9 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.
  - Projects identified for delivery under the Education Mutual Investment Model (MIM) delivery framework will continue to be classified as Band B projects.
79. As a result, phasing of the remaining projects is expected to continue with schemes not yet progressed in line with the proposed rolling future Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. When considering future priorities the Council may take into account the growing sufficiency needs in the city particularly in relation to ALN, the Local Development Plan commitments, condition and suitability of buildings.
80. However, on the basis of the current data there will not be a need for any permanent expansion of mainstream English-medium community places for the current resident population beyond those schemes already approved and/ or in progress, for the impact of this please see the Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 2. However, this will be kept under continual review to ensure a sufficiency places.

#### Local Development Plan

81. In addition to the Band B programme, the first primary schools to be delivered using financial contributions from the LDP are also in progress. The furthest progressed is the St Mellons CiW Primary School project on the St Edeyrn's development which is due to be completed in Spring 2023,

whilst the new school serving the early phase of the Plasdwr development, Ysgol Gynradd Groeswen Primary School is due to be delivered by September 2023. Early planning is also underway for the primary school projects at Junction 33 and the Churchlands development.

82. As new LDP developments progress, contributions on site (land, infrastructure and finance) and off site (financial contributions toward building additional places) continue to be sought and secured in line with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). Given the scale of some of the developments, ensuring the Council secures appropriate size sites to ensure an appropriate scale and distribution of education provision a cross the city continues to be pursued as a priority. This continues to remain highly relevant in Cardiff owing to the known challenges of trying to secure sites of the required scale at a reasonable cost in appropriate accessible locations at a later date in built up resident areas.

### Asset Programme

83. All Condition and Suitability issues identified are prioritised and assessed by qualified surveyors along with consultation with Council H&S officers, to ensure urgent priorities are being met, and that other priorities can be mitigated until they can be addressed. Priorities for the Condition and Suitability programmes are assessed in accordance with the following:
- Statutory – H&S, safeguarding, DDA, Sufficiency, catering
  - Priority Condition – weather tight, warm
  - Priority Suitability – toilets, modules, suitability affecting operations of the school
  - Non-Priority Condition – general maintenance, lifecycle, proactive asbestos strip
  - Non-Priority Suitability – specialist teaching upgrades, non-urgent safeguarding, general teaching upgrades, NZC, retrofit
84. Progress has been made with addressing historical maintenance and condition issues of the estate through the delivery of enhanced strategic capital investment with £18.6m asset management spend between 2021/22 alone.
85. However, Cardiff continues to have an un-precedented level of condition works required across increasing number of schools, particularly in relation to keeping buildings weather tight, warm and safe. Based on the priorities outlined above and needs as assessed by surveyors, anticipated costs for current 2022/23 and 2023/24 schemes related to Stonework, Drainage, Roofs, Pipework and Boilers alone is £33.2m. The anticipated costs for 2022/23 and 2023/24 schemes related to Sufficiency, H&S, Safeguarding, DDA, ALN and Catering is £65,825,542.
86. It remains a significant challenge to maintain this position with high level of ongoing investment essential alongside strategic reorganisation proposals prioritised to achieve greater impact where possible a continued

priority. Due to the extent of issues within the estate compared to available funding and resources, there has been a need to deprioritise programmed proactive roof and boiler works to future years.

87. The 22/23 and 23/24 condition programme has been planned to cover urgent issues relating to condition and H&S. During 21/22 there have been several instances of degradation of stonework facades on Victorian schools which has caused serious H&S concerns for the buildings and their users. These works have been prioritised over proactive maintenance /replacement programmes and require high levels of funding to resolve.
88. It is acknowledged that the levels of spend outlined in the programme require further re-prioritisation to allow for delivery against Council resource and market capacity. However, any re-prioritising of the programme will need to be considered against risks.

#### Developing provision to meet Additional Learning Needs

89. The proposals approved by Cabinet in 2022, combined with other approved proposals, will enable a phased increase in Cardiff's specialist placements to:
- 660 placements for primary-age learners with Complex Learning Needs and/ or Autism Spectrum Condition
  - 781 placements for secondary-age and post-16 learners with Complex Learning Needs and/ or Autism Spectrum Condition
  - 120 placements for primary-age learners with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs
  - 194 placements for secondary-age and post-16 learners with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs
90. The additional places were brought forward against the strategic principles outlined below:
- Schools and settings that deliver an innovative curriculum with effective whole school approaches to teaching and learning; emotional health and wellbeing.
  - Excellent specialist services to enhance the capacity of schools and other settings to include children and young people with a range of ALN.
  - Effective early identification and research-based intervention to prevent the escalation of ALN wherever possible.
  - High levels of accessibility in every school building with sufficient flexible accommodation in every school appropriate to the age and stage of learning.
  - Strong partnerships to ensure a holistic, collaborative response to a child or young person's ALN (including health, children and adult services, early years and FE providers).
  - Effective multi-agency transition planning at every stage, from early years through to primary, secondary, post 16 and adult destinations, to support admission without delay.

91. The Council will look to achieve the following when providing additional places:
- An appropriate spread of specialist places across the city, including where relevant smaller local settings;
  - An SRB in each cluster for Emotional Health and Wellbeing needs, and Complex Learning and Autism needs;
  - Create a training hub around each school with an SRB;
  - Reduce transport costs per pupil;
  - Develop individual schools in line with ALN reforms and the principles outlined above.
92. Over the past year positive progress has been made with securing the necessary decisions to progress the majority of schemes featuring increased specialist provision, but the pandemic has resulted in some delays to implementation. This has necessitated use of a range of interim solutions including extending existing provisions through use of temporary accommodation as well as purchasing a greater number of places out of county and in independent schools. The latter is at capacity and the authority is now stimulating the market to deliver new/expanded provision. Much of this is high cost and often longer distances from the pupils home with associated increased transport costs.
93. In the short term, the Council is currently working with private providers to stimulate the market to deliver a greater number of places, along with developing additional places through delivery of an enhanced Community Teaching provision.
94. New options to increase the number of specialist places for children and young people with emotional and wellbeing needs (EWB) and increased provision for those educated other than at school (EOTAS) are due to be presented at a later Cabinet paper.

### One Planet Cardiff

95. Historically, the Council has measured and reported high-level carbon output across the estate. However, the Built Environment stream of the strategy provides the framework to undertake this work in considerably more detail and to actively pursue reduction through a common approach across all parts of the estate.
96. The Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26 will establish key aims and objectives outlining how the Council will reduce carbon output and off-set with new renewable energy sources. The strategy is provisionally targeting a 60% carbon reduction in retained estate – equivalent to a permanent 6% reduction per annum until 2030.
97. The 4 key areas of focus to achieve carbon reduction are:



- Relinquishment – where council property is surplus to operational requirements, property can be relinquished neutralising operational carbon
  - Modernisation of retained estate – covering a broad area including specific schemes such as refit or refurbishments to improve energy efficiency through component replacement, new standards and procurement relating to planned and reactive repair
  - Behaviour – utilise the baseline performance data to understand how existing behaviours impact energy performance in buildings. Establish best practice training for building users and managers to maximize efficiency
  - Off setting – building specific projects relating to solar, wind etc renewable energy opportunities that can be installed on site to off set carbon output
98. The school estate is essential to allow the Council to target investment in carbon reduction measures and to develop a meaningful behaviour programme. The programme has made strides in assessing the energy usage of the estate in partnership with K2N which can be found in Appendix 3 and an example school report at Appendix 4. The Council is beginning to explore the data with pilot schools and will be sharing with all schools in the New Year. The Council is also installing AICO multi-sensors that generate live data on CO<sub>2</sub>, humidity and temperature. This data will not only help guide targeted carbon reduction.
99. Alongside the generation of baseline data, the Council is also developing a school One Planet Pledge through the curriculum team that will support full integration of One Planet principles in the New Curriculum for Wales and throughout schools. This will support the beginnings of culture change inside and outside of the Council.
100. The Council has also made progress on the retrofit of schools through REFIT. REFIT is a programme of works that considers a blend of carbon reduction measures across whole schools or buildings. The REFIT 1 was a programme of 5 schools with works of a CAPEX of £1.1m and OPEX of £36k and through these works, estimated annual savings of £149k were generated and 641 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum. REFIT 2 included 11 schools and has recently been delivered and includes a CAPEX of £1.4m, OPEX of £17k, with predicted annual savings of £181k and 486 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Based on existing REFIT projects carbon savings of circa 12% are generated.
101. Next steps will include a business case to assess how a long-term programme estate modernisation can be delivered to reduce operational carbon across schools and the wider the estate.

### **Considerations for the next 12 months**

102. Going forward the priority for Cardiff is to deliver stronger, fairer and greener, education system that ensures every Cardiff learner is able to thrive and succeed through accessing inclusive inspiring education

opportunities in every community. Addressing the needs in the education estate in Cardiff is central to delivering this.

103. Critical to this is undertaking school organisation and investment that secures an effective pattern of education provision that ensures public money realises the intended impact for Cardiff learners. To do this every Cardiff school must be a good school that is trusted, connected to and accessed by its local community. Essential to ensuring quality is for each school/organisation to be of an appropriate size to support viability, including being able to attract and retain strong leadership and high calibre staff supporting delivery of varied offer and positive outcomes.
104. The current organisation of education provision in Cardiff is inefficient in some parts of the city and certain types of provision. Aspects of the existing pattern do not reflect modern curriculum nor take account of the challenges of resourcing high quality provision in the current climate.
105. In order to deliver change the Council will engage with stakeholders and bring forward its SOP Strategy setting out clear principles for how the education system across the city should be organised to take account of the Council's wider ambitions and for education to fulfil its role in supporting social mobilisation and, in turn the long-term prosperity of the city through ensuring our children and young people to reach their potential.
106. This SOP strategy together with the national investment aims for the Sustainable Communities for Learning New Programme will underpin the key organisation and investment priorities for Cardiff over the next ten years. Identifying appropriate Council contributions to support submission of a strategic case for the next iteration of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme will be critical in order to improve potential for success and secure the necessary in principle agreement from the Welsh Government for future schools' investment.
107. There are ongoing pressures that will be pivotal in rolling forward the School Organisation Programme for the medium term. In the current financial climate ensuring funding for education is targeted toward learning experiences and opportunities alongside support for families is critical. Whilst investment in the infrastructure is a key part of this to reduce spend on fixed assets, ensuring an appropriate and sustainable organisation of places distributed across the city is essential. This works alongside an effective strategy to maximise the potential of our teaching and learning staff to ensure best use of their talent thereby securing the greatest impact on learner opportunities and outcomes for all.
108. In addition, there are ongoing inflationary pressures which are currently operating at circa 10% BCIS per year (sums estimated in the programme) and a stringent need for prioritisation of schemes if capital financing costs are to be kept within the current revenue envelope. Risk management will need to be carefully considered with any further re-prioritisation.

## **Reason for Recommendations**

109. To inform Cabinet of the 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.

### **Financial Implications**

110. Whilst this report does not recommend any specific course of action or create any financial obligation, decision makers should be informed of the current progress in SOP Band A and Band B schemes, along with the current competing priorities against a restricted capital programme. In prioritising ongoing schemes consideration must be given to identified risks in relation to the current Local Development Plan S.106 shortfall, ALN reform, the condition of the school's estate and WESP targets. As such flexibility and potential reprioritisation of capital funding may be required to manage within the budget available. Additional Cabinet reports will be necessary as a result and will require financial evaluation of the options taken forward.
111. Further consideration will be needed on a project specific basis in relation to impact on revenue budgets and the financial impact/pupil numbers on schools in affected areas, particularly in light of the significant drop in birth rates since initial planning stages, which should inform future priorities.
112. Transport implications are outlined below. These will have a potential impact on revenue with any changes to routes, pupil numbers or school locations likely to increase costs further. In addition, capital expenditure for highways external to the school boundary are frequently excluded from WG funding and may need to be found from other budgets. Cost reduction and efficiencies should be sought within home to school transport to ensure minimal impact on available revenue budgets.
113. The risks highlighted in the report include inflation which is already having an impact on which schemes will be affordable within Band B and which schemes will need to be reconsidered in future iterations of funding. Band B funding in relation to capital receipts remains at risk with the £25 million target for Band B as yet unidentified.
114. It should be highlighted that as yet there is no specific funding within the Cardiff Council Capital Programme to match fund the rolling Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme at present.

### **HR Implications**

115. There are no direct HR implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. Future reports to Cabinet arising from this report will be assessed for HR implications which will be clearly set out as required.

## Legal Implications

116. The individual proposals referred to as part of this paper will be subject to separate reports, requiring individual legal advice on the implications under the School Standard and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the accompanying statutory School Organisation Code.
117. This report outlines the need to review Band B priorities and the following matters are relevant to Cabinet's consideration of this.
118. Under the Education Act 1996, the Council has general statutory obligations to promote high standards of education and to consider parental preferences for school places. The Council also has to satisfy its public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). This means the Council must give due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are: age, gender reassignment, sex, race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality, disability, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, religion or belief – including lack of belief.
119. When taking strategic decisions, the Council also has a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage ("the Socio-Economic Duty" imposed under section 1 of the Equality Act 2010). In considering this, the Council must take into account the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Minister (WG420044 A More Equal Wales The Socio-economic Duty) and must be able to demonstrate how it has discharged its duty.

## Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

120. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the Act") places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales – a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and is globally responsible.
121. In discharging its duties under the Act, the Council has set and published well-being objectives designed to maximise its contribution to achieving the national well-being goals. The well-being objectives are set out in Cardiff's Corporate Plan 2021-2024. When exercising its functions, the Council is required to take all reasonable steps to meet its well-being objectives. This means that the decision makers should consider how the proposed decision will contribute towards meeting the well-being objectives and must be satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to meet those objectives.
122. The well-being duty also requires the Council to act in accordance with a 'sustainable development principle'. This principle requires the Council to act in a way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Put simply, this means that Council decision makers must take account of the impact of their decisions on people living their lives in Wales in the future. In doing so, the Council must:

- Look to the long term
- Focus on prevention by understanding the root causes of problems
- Deliver an integrated approach to achieving the 7 national well-being goals
- Work in collaboration with others to find shared sustainable solutions
- Involve people from all section of the community in the decisions which affect them

123. The decision maker must be satisfied that the proposed decision accords with the principles above; and due regard must be given to the Statutory Guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers, which is accessible using the link below:

[Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015: guidance | GOV.WALES](#)

#### General

124. The decision maker should be satisfied that the decision is in accordance and within the financial and budgetary policy.

125. The decision maker should also have regard to, when making its decision, to the Council's wider obligations under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.

#### **Transport Implications**

126. There are financial pressures on school transport associated with supplier issues and increasing demand. The supplier costs have increased due to a combination of Brexit, COVID, Ukraine Crisis, driver shortages, vehicle shortages leading to increased contractor costs (increased costs of fuel, parts, vehicles and wages). The demand for school transport is increasing as the city is growing including the accommodation of refugees and pupil needs are becoming more complex and parental expectations have increased with a larger number of referrals and requests having to be managed. Key areas of improvement to help manage these supplier and demand issues are as follows:

- Increase Independent Travel Training to reduce the costs of the ALN provision.
- Additional staff resource to more proactively recruit new transport providers and improve contractor compliance by supporting them improving their systems and processes and training the staff in particular to better manage the complex pupils reducing the volume of issues that current arise.

- Increase the supplier base by holding regular supplier forums to advise suppliers how to become approved contractors which will increase our supplier base and stabilise contract rates with more competition.
- More effectively review and challenge all ALN Individual transport and part time placement transport.
- In the longer term, seek to review ALN Provision and placements with Education Services to get the provision located in the areas where the pupils are living which would reduce transport requirements.

### **Property Implications**

127. Strategic Estates continue to work with and support Education colleagues through the asset management process and any property matters relating and arising from proposals. Where there are any property transactions or valuations required to deliver any proposals, they should be done so in accordance with the Council's Asset Management process and in consultation with Strategic Estates and relevant service areas.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

**MEL GODFREY** Director of Education & Lifelong Learning

Published documents referred to in this report can be found through the links below:

- 12 October 2017 - DEVELOPING THE EDUCATION ESTATE IN CARDIFF [CARDIFF COUNCIL \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](http://modern.gov.co.uk)
- 14 December 2017 - 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS CARDIFF COUNCIL'S BAND B PRIORITIES [CARDIFF COUNCIL \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](http://modern.gov.co.uk)
- Cardiff Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2031 [CARDIFF Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-31.pdf](http://modern.gov.co.uk)

Appendices referred to in this report are listed below:

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)