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**PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL  
LEARNING NEEDS (ALN)**

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**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 21 March 2024.
2. This report also sets out details of discussions between the **SOP Task & Finish Group** with the Cabinet Member and SOP Officers on the 12 March 2024, which is set out in *paragraphs 16 and 17* in this report.

**Structure of Papers**

3. Attached to this report are the following:
  17. **Appendix A** – the draft Report to Cabinet – 21 March 2024. This in turn has a number appendices, namely;
    - **Appendix 1** – Consultation Documents
    - **Appendix 2** – Summary Consultation Documents
    - **Appendix 3** – Record of Consultation Meetings with School Governing Bodies
    - **Appendix 4** – Record of Consultation Meetings held with School Staff
    - **Appendix 5** – Record of Consultation Meetings held with Pupil Representatives
    - **Appendix 6** – Record of Public Meetings
    - **Appendix 7** – Record of in person and online Drop-in Sessions
    - **Appendix 8** – Formal Consultation Responses

- **Appendix 9** - Summary of responses received and appraisal of views expressed
  - **Appendix 10** – Summary Analysis of responses received
  - **Appendix 11** – Single Impact Assessment
4. Also enclosed in this report (at paragraphs 16 and 17) are the views and observations of the SOP Task & Finish Group, which considered the Cabinet Proposals in detail at its meeting with the Cabinet Member and officers on the 12 March 2024.

### **Background to the Cabinet Proposal**

5. At its meeting on 13 July 2023 the Cabinet authorised officers to consult on proposals to increase the number of places for learners with emotional health and wellbeing needs as set out below:
- establish a new 8 place Specialist Resource Base for Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
  - establish an 8 place Specialist Resource Base for Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Fairwater Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings. This would replace the existing Wellbeing Class.
  - establish a new 16 place Specialist Resource Base for Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Herbert Thompson Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
  - establish a 16 place Specialist Resource Base for Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Lakeside Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings. This would replace the existing Wellbeing Class.
  - establish an 8 place Specialist Resource Base for Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Springwood Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings. This would replace the existing Wellbeing Class.

- establish an 8 place Specialist Resource Base for Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch from September 2024 within the existing buildings. This would replace the existing Wellbeing Class.
  - establish a 20-place Specialist Resource Base for Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
6. The Cabinet also authorised officers to consult on proposals to increase the numbers of places for learners with Complex Learning Needs / Autism Spectrum Condition as set out below:
- establish a 20 place Specialist Resource Base for Complex Learning Needs/ Autism Spectrum Condition at Coed Glas Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
  - establish a 20 place Specialist Resource Base for Complex Learning Needs/ Autism Spectrum Condition at Greenway Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
  - establish a 20 place Specialist Resource Base for Complex Learning Needs/ Autism Spectrum Condition at Severn Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.

### **Background and methodology of the consultation set out in the Cabinet Report**

7. The consultation period for proposals to increase the number of Emotional Health and Wellbeing Specialist Resource Base places and for proposals to increase the number of Complex Learning Needs/Autism Spectrum Condition Specialist Resource Base places ran from 20 November 2023 to 19 January 2024.
8. The consultation process for all 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. These were made available in Arabic, Polish and Bengali. (a copy of the summary documents can be seen at **Appendix 2**);
- publication of information in further community languages upon request;
- consultation meetings offered to all Governing Bodies via Microsoft Teams/in person. Meetings were held with full Governing Bodies or groups of governors at Baden Powell Primary School, Fairwater Primary School, Herbert Thompson Primary School, Lakeside Primary School, Springwood Primary School, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr, Coed Glas Primary School, Greenway Primary School and Severn Primary School (notes from the meetings can be seen at **Appendix 3**);
- consultation meetings offered via Microsoft Teams/in person with staff, where requested by the school. Meetings with staff were requested by Fairwater Primary School and Coed Glas Primary School (notes from the meetings can be seen at **Appendix 4**).
- consultation meetings offered to all schools via Microsoft Teams/in person with pupil representatives at Baden Powell Primary School, Fairwater Primary School, Herbert Thompson Primary School, Lakeside Primary School, Springwood Primary School, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr, Coed Glas Primary School, Greenway Primary School and Severn Primary School (notes from these meetings can be seen at **Appendix 5**);
- public consultation meetings were offered in person and via Microsoft Teams at which the proposals were explained and questions answered. Meetings took place where attendance had been pre-booked (notes from the meeting can be seen at **Appendix 6**);
- drop-in sessions in person and via Microsoft Teams where officers were available to answer questions (records of sessions held can be seen at **Appendix 7**);
- letters setting out details of the proposals and where further information could be found were sent to local residents and businesses in the areas 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;
  - online response forms at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/ALNschoollproposals](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ALNschoollproposals) The response form was also available in Arabic, Polish and Bengali.
9. For stakeholders who did not have access to digital platforms the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes via telephone was available.
10. The views expressed at Council organised meetings, drop-in sessions, telephone calls, and on paper or electronically through the appropriate channels, have been recorded.
11. Views were sought from interested stakeholders via an online survey and a hard copy version of the survey within the consultation documents.
12. 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.
13. The views expressed in the wider stakeholder surveys reflect those raised in the e-mail responses received.

### **Further Information Highlighted in the Cabinet Report**

14. The Cabinet Report attached at **Appendix A** is set out as follows:
- **Responses received to the consultation on the proposals to increase the number of Emotional Health & Wellbeing Specialist Resource Base places overview** - paragraphs 11 – 17
  - **Wider Stakeholder Survey** – paragraphs 18 – 22
  - **Pupil Representation Overview** – paragraphs 23 -24
    - **Baden Powell Primary School** – paragraphs 25 – 27
    - **Fairwater Primary School** – paragraphs 28 – 32

- **Herbert Thompson Primary School** – paragraphs 33 – 35
- **Lakeside Primary School** – paragraphs 36 – 38
- **Springwood Primary School** – paragraphs 39 – 41
- **Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr** – paragraphs 42 – 44
  
- **Responses to views expressed during the consultation** – paragraphs 45 – 93
- **Responses received to the consultation on the proposals to increase the number of Complex Learning Needs and/or Autism Specialist Resource Base places** – paragraphs 94 – 101
- **Views expressed - Wider Stakeholder Survey** – paragraphs 102 – 110
- **Views expressed - Pupil representation overview** – paragraphs 111 – 112
  - Coed Glas Primary School - paragraphs 113 - 115
  - Greenway Primary School - paragraphs 116 – 118
  - Severn Primary School – paragraphs 119 – 121
- **Response to the views expressed during the consultation** - paragraphs 122 – 159
- **Admission Arrangements** – paragraphs 160 – 163
- **Learner Travel Arrangements** – paragraphs 164 – 167
- **Local Member consultation** – paragraph 168
- **Scrutiny Consideration** – paragraph 169

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

- **Impact of the proposals on the Welsh Language** – paragraphs 171 - 181
- **Wellbeing of Future Generations** – paragraphs 182 - 184
- **Financial Implications** – paragraphs 185 - 186
- **Legal Implications** – paragraphs 187 - 194
- **Human Resources Implications** – paragraphs 195 - 198
- **Property Implications** – paragraphs 199 - 200
- **Traffic and Transport Implications** – paragraphs 201 – 209

- **Impact Assessment** – paragraph 210 and *Appendix 11 to the Cabinet Report*
- **Community Impact** – paragraphs 211 - 212

### **SOP TASK & FINISH GROUP MEETING – 12 MARCH 2024**

16. On the 12 March 2024, the SOP Task & Finish Group (Councillors Bridgeman and Hopkins; and Patricia Arlotte) met with Councillor Merry and officers to consider this report in detail, and they agreed the following comments and observations. Members are requested to consider the following comments and add to them at this meeting.

17. Members are requested to note that references to “The Group” or “Group Members” relates to Members of the SOP T&F Group, not everybody in attendance.

(i) The Group acknowledged that they were struck by the scale and extent of the proposals – and welcomed the fact that schools, parents and pupils were largely supportive of the proposals.

(ii) The Group stated that it recognised that this report sets out a stage in the SOP process in relation to ALN, and much of the detail is not yet available. What will be key going forward, and that this scrutiny committee is required to do is to monitor the following:

- How will this proposal improve the quality of learning and provision for the children & young people themselves?
- Does demand meet supply – how will this be monitored and adjusted accordingly?
- Has/will there be an evaluation of the impact of the proposals and when? Will this be undertaken in partnership with schools?
- A need for evidence on outcomes

(iii) Group Members stated that the Cabinet Report (**Appendix A** in the *scrutiny papers*) provided a detailed overview of this agenda item, particularly as this agenda item totalled nearly 1000 pages.

**Committee Members** may wish to concentrate their efforts on **Appendix A** as a good basis for questioning at formal committee. In addition, it was agreed that, to aid Members at this meeting, it would be useful to highlight some of the key issues arising from the consultation, including some questions related to specific schools.

(iv) The Group agreed that much of the above had been addressed in the Council's response to the consultation (*as set out in Appendix A to the scrutiny papers*) but there may be further clarity sought around Costs; location of spaces within buildings etc., which may not be available at this stage of the process.

#### Emotional Health and Wellbeing and Complex Learning Needs

(v) Group Members discussed the following issues that could form part of the **next** Cabinet report:

- The need to explain further the context of having these places – to give better provision to those already known as having ALN? Potential new cases? The new system being more flexible and responsive.
- The movement/transition from well-being classes to SRBs
- The capacity and demand for these placements, including those children and young people remaining longer in these places and the impact of this.
- The impact on the wider school community, given the financial constraints and challenges facing schools
- The benefits to the school in having an SRB, including on the wider school community, as well as practice, expertise and training.
- The opportunity to remove any “barriers” to the having a SRB at the school – not a “them and us” set up, but an amalgamation of the



whole school working together - a development of the school provision.

- Support for governors in planning and operating the provision
- Impact on the Welsh Language and communicating the message that there will be parity of provision in the Welsh medium

(vi) Group Members raised the **Estyn responses** received which highlighted that the proposals are likely to retain standards, but also highlighted other issues that required further detail. Where possible, answers to the questions had been responded to in the Cabinet Report (**Appendix A** in the scrutiny papers):

- Support in establishing the provisions
- How out of county provision relate to the proposals
- Whether the places are sufficient to meet demand
- The need for more information on the benefits to the learners (curriculum and wider support provision)
- Eligibility for free transport and the need for clarity in this area
- Ensuring correct placements are made
- Need for more information on:
  - Transition arrangements (including from mainstream into the provision)
  - Costs
  - Amendments to some of the buildings
  - Identification of space within the buildings
  - Proposed staffing of SRBs
  - Welsh Provision (the Welsh Impact Assessment had been provided to Estyn)
  - Community Impact Assessment – the need for clarity on this.
- Impact of learners and their parents
- Response re the recent ALN Inspection document
- Suitability of accommodation and space available for other professionals
- Support for governors in planning and operating the provision

(vii) In relation to specific schools, Group Members discussed the responses received from schools, as set out in **Appendices A, 3 and 8 in the scrutiny papers**, namely:

- Coed Glas
- Lakeside Primary School
- Greenway Primary School
- Pwll Coch (which stated that it does not wish to proceed with the proposal)
- Plasmawr
- Herbert Thompson Primary School
- Fairwater Primary School

#### Suggested Way Forward by The Task & Finish Group

The Group agreed that the Cabinet Member and Officers provide assurances to formal committee on the following:

- Rationale for the proposal
- Why is this being done?
- What the implementation arrangements are
- How the funding elements are being addressed
- How the impact will be evaluated in consultation with the schools themselves
- Emphasis on partnership working with individual schools – including addressing pressures and issues raised by individual schools during the consultation

#### **Reason for Recommendations**

18. To meet increasing demand for specialist resource base places for learners with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs and Complex Learning Needs and/Autism.

## Recommendations set out in the Cabinet Proposals

19. The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Authorise officers to proceed to publish proposals in accordance with the section 48 of The Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 to:
  - establish a new 8 place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
  - establish an 8 place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Fairwater Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings. This would replace the existing Wellbeing Class.
  - establish a new 16 place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Herbert Thompson Primary School from September 2025, within existing buildings or new building.
  - establish a 16 place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Lakeside Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings. This would replace the existing Wellbeing Class.
  - establish an 8 place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Springwood Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings. This would replace the existing Wellbeing Class.
  - establish a 20-place Specialist Resource Base for learners with Emotional Health and Wellbeing Needs at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
  - establish a 20 place Specialist Resource Base for Autism at Coed Glas Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
  - establish a 20 place Specialist Resource Base for Complex Learning Needs and /or Autism at Greenway Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.

- establish a 20 place Specialist Resource Base for Complex Learning Needs and/or Autism at Severn Primary School from September 2024, within the existing buildings.
- (ii) Not progress the proposal to establish an 8 place Specialist Resource Base for emotional health and wellbeing at Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch.
- (iii) Note that prior to implementation of the proposals a further report will be provided to Cabinet providing details of any objections received, the response to those objections and recommendations for implementation or otherwise of the proposals.

### **Scope of Scrutiny**

20. 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 20 March 2024. Members are also required to consider the comments and observations of the SOP Task & Finish Group when formulating the way forward for this Agenda Item.

### **Previous Scrutiny**

21. This issue has previously been considered by this Committee as follows:

- **4 July 2023** - [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 4th July, 2023, 4.30 pm : Cardiff Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

## **Way Forward**

22. At this meeting, the following have been invited to attend. There will be a verbal introduction given at the beginning of the Item, with a Q&A session afterwards.

- Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education)
- Richard Portas (Programme Director for the School Organisation Programme)
- Brett Andrewartha (School Organisation Programme Planning Manager)
- Michele Duddridge-Friedl (Operational Manager, School Organisation Programme Strategy)
- Jennie Hughes (Achievement Leader, Inclusion)

23. This report will enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

## **Legal Implications**

24. 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**

25. 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 and its appendices, attached at **Appendix A**, together with any information provided at the meeting;
2. Consider and agree the observations and comments of the Task & Finish Group, as highlighted in paragraph \* in this report.
3. Provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and senior officers prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

**Leanne Weston**  
**Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer**  
**14 March 2024**