

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/CllrBridgeman

13 March 2020



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Councillor Sarah Merry
Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member – Education, Employment and Skills
County Hall
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Dear Sarah,

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2020, providing an opening statement and answering questions on the **School Organisation Programme – Update Report**.

I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning for the update report, advice and answering Members questions.

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be briefed on the progress being made in the School Organisation Programme and Members were very pleased with progress made to date. Following Members consideration of the report and answers to questions, the Committee during the way forward identified a number of comments, and concerns, namely:

- In terms of asset management, and in order to understand the full depth of the challenge, the Committee would welcome further information which details how many properties sit in the 'urgent need' category. In particular, Members hold concerns as the Band C phase has not yet been confirmed by the Welsh Government.
- With regard to the programme being supplemented by £25m of funding via capital receipts, Members would appreciate clarity on if this funding will be provided by education only assets or if it will be funded through other Council assets.
- Committee were concerned to hear that under the current arrangements of the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) the authority has less control over building specifications and the possible implications this could have in terms of community availability. Members would appreciate further information detailing the current arrangements in this respect.

GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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- Whilst Members appreciate the difficulties explained at Committee with regard to developing specific 'masterplans' for developments, Members do hold concerns over restrictions especially given recent initiatives such as the development of Welsh medium provisions. Members believe it essential that information which captures need, benefit and risk is drawn upon formally and would like further information on how such information, captured through consultations and other means, is both captured and utilised when developments are being progressed.

I hope that the comments and requests mentioned above will be welcomed by the Directorate and be of use. The Committee wishes for these comments to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 19 March and a formal response provided within one month.

Thank you again for your attendance at Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. BRIDGEMAN', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR Lee Bridgeman
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Cabinet Office.