

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2021

Present: Councillor Bridgeman (Chairperson),
Councillors Cunnah, Hopkins, Joyce, Melbourne, Molik, Phillips and
Singh

Co-opted Members: Patricia Arlotte (Roman Catholic representative),
Carol Cobert (Church in Wales Representative) and Karen Dell'Armi
(Parent Governor Representative)

Mia John (Cardiff Youth Council Representative)

60 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mia Rees. Councillor Phillips had indicated that he would be late attending.

61 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest, in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct, were made:

| COUNCILLOR | ITEM NO. | NATURE OF INTEREST |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Cllr Bridgeman | 8 – WESP | Personal – Family Member in Welsh medium education |
| Cllr Molik | 8 – WESP | Personal – Family Member in Welsh medium education |
| Cllr Melbourne | 8 – WESP | Personal – Family Member in Welsh medium education |
| Cllr Melbourne | 9 – TY GLAS SITE | Personal – Ward Councillor for Llanishen and Thornhill |
| Cllr Phillips | 8 – WESP | Personal – Family Member in receipt of ALN provision |
| Karen Dell'Armi (Parent Governor Rep) | 9 – TY GLAS SITE | Personal – Chair of Governors at Llanishen High School. |

62 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on the 15 June 2021 and the 13 July 2021 were approved as a correct record of that meeting as proposed by Karen Dell'Armi and seconded by Patricia Arlotte.

The Chair expressed the Committee's thanks to Matthew Richards, Parent Governor Representative, who has decided not to renew his tenure on the Committee, for his commitment and contribution to the work of the Committee. A message of thanks and appreciation has been sent.

63 : CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME 2021-22

The Chair invited Alison Jones, Principal Scrutiny Officer, to outline the main points of the report on the Work Programme 2021-22.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme 2021-22 be agreed and the Forward Plan be published.

64 : EDUCATION PANDEMIC RECOVERY UPDATE

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education & Lifelong Learning), and Mike Tate (Assistant Director of Education & Lifelong Learning) to the meeting.

Councillor Merry was invited to make a statement, during which she provided Members with an update on activities over the summer and expressed gratitude to teachers, staff and partners who had taken part.

Officers provided Members with a presentation and provided with details of the Summer of Smiles, Enhanced Youth Service Provision, Summer Holiday Enrichment Programme, and the School September Restart.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members thanked and commended Officers on the social media campaign around the summer activities and the level of engagement it had inspired. Members sought clarification on whether participation was representative of the population of Cardiff, and whether there was any positive impact on school attendance. Members were also interested in whether there was detailed data for the different categories of young people, such as Children Looked After or with additional learning needs (ALN). Members were advised that data was being collated for a report that would address some of these questions. Attendance in September was lower than in previous years, but this was partly to be explained by the impact of outdoor events such as festivals immediately before the return to school.
- Members were interested in learning whether there were any plans to follow up the engagement particularly in relation to young people most at risk of becoming NEET. Members were advised that the identification of and intelligence on vulnerable groups had improved over the course of the pandemic because of the support that had been put in place. It is intended to build on that knowledge and share the intelligence with schools. Multi-agency support will continue in a long-term and sustainable way. Both young people who attended a project, and those who did not have been assigned a youth mentor for ongoing support. Members were advised that data in relation to tracking these young people can be provided at a future meeting together with information about the schools view of the impact of the summer programme.

- Members sought clarification on what equalities monitoring had revealed about the level of engagement with different communities. Members were advised that more information would be shared with the Committee when Officers had collated it.
- Members asked for information the guidance given to schools in relation to Track and Trace and the circumstances in which teachers and pupils have to self-isolate. Members were advised that the Council follows the Welsh Government guidance. People who are under 18 or have been double vaccinated and are close contacts of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 do not have to isolate. It is suggested that if there are people in the same household who have tested positive it is more sensible to self-isolate. This however is not a legally enforceable requirement. If cases rise more measures may be put in place.
- Members were advised about the widespread use of Lateral Flow Device Tests (LFTs), pupils in secondary schools and school staff have been very proactive in the use of these tests. The key thing is continuity of education, but staff illness or staff having to stay home as they are looking after children who have tested positive for Covid could prove a challenge. To help with this, 62 additional Non-Qualified Teachers (NQTs) have been put in place for the autumn term, funded by Welsh Government. Schools can use their top up recovery monies to fund those placements for a further two terms. Members also queried the inconsistencies in the approach taken by different schools and were advised that further conversations are taking place. Currently there are national guidelines in relation to isolation, but there are occasions when it would be prudent for pupils to remain at home, for example if there are a large number of cases recorded at the school.
- Members sought clarification on the engagement to be carried out with parents and children by schools and the Council in relation to vaccinations. They were advised that Welsh Government and NHS will be administering the programme.
- Members queried the arrangements for pupils being removed from role as they have been abroad, for example in Pakistan. Members were advised admissions are working closely with schools to ensure that the policy followed appropriately.
- Members sought reassurance that some of the successful programmes will be run again. Members were advised that there must be continued evaluation and celebration of those schemes with a view to ensuring continued funding from Welsh Government and continued involvement of partners who helps in ensuring the continued success of those schemes.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations during the way forward.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Caro Wild (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport) Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills), Councillor Graham Hinchey (Cabinet Member for Children & Families), Simon Gilbert (Head for Planning) and Stuart Williams from the Planning Transport and Environment Directorate to the meeting.

Councillor Caro Wild was invited to make a statement in which he referred to the length of the process to date, but also stressed the importance of getting it right. Whilst 1200 responses have been received to the consultation to date, which in the main have been supportive, there is additional consultation planned for November to February to try and reach minority groups and also our young people; they are the future and the plan needs to be shaped in a child friendly way.

Councillor Sarah Merry was invited to make a statement in which she referenced the connection between the LDP, planned population growth, school provision, environmentally friendly policies and green spaces; all of which have a significant impact on our young people. It is important that the voices of our children and young people are heard.

Councillor Graham Hinchey was invited to make a statement in which he referred to the importance of providing appropriate community places and open spaces, particularly for our looked after population. They need to be planned for and embraced properly.

A presentation had been provided covering a number of topics:

- an overview of the Local Development Plan (LDP);
- the Consultation, its process and the results;
- the recommendation contained in the Cabinet Report: to approve the Replacement LDP Vision and Objectives and ISA Scoping Report;
- the LDP timetable next steps;
- the next consultation stage – strategic options; and
- Information in relation to population and household projections

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members sought clarification about the next phase of the consultation process, and how will it capture as many groups as possible. Members noted that officers were anxious to do more than during pandemic, for example face-to-face drop in sessions; use of videos to engage young people; digital platforms and social media; engage with schools and also the hard to reach groups.
- Members queried how far are the considerations emerging from the consultation are going to influence the development of future school sites and buildings. Planning officers advised schools

need to be placed in the most accessible place; connectivity and safe routes need to be considered, together with catchment areas.

- Members referred to the responses to the consultation and linking some of the responses with objectives of the 15 minute city. Officers believed that it was important to put in some criteria so it does not become just a badge.
- Members asked about public transport and the need to reduce or eliminate travelling through town to get to other areas of the city. Members were advised that consideration is being given to reducing the number of unnecessary journeys; increasing the number of park and ride facilities, and working with partners/large employers to create some bespoke services to get employees to work without the need for them to drive.
- Members asked whether, in relation to the new house building targets, are they realistic and feasible, particularly as there has been gaps in meeting targets previously. Members were advised that currently there are a large number of planning permissions to be built. That was not the case at the time of the previous LDP. Discussion will start in earnest in November when consultation on strategic options starts which will then inform the consultation on a preferred strategy which will be the subject of further consultation this time next year. The population projections are a starting point but should be treated with a degree of caution.
- Members sought information in relation to the engagement strategy and the detailed planning to be conducted in respect of that process. Members were reminded that there are good corporate frameworks, there is collaborative work with Access Forums to provide the right contacts to reach targeted groups, there are also champions within the organisation who are able to assist. There is an awareness that some groups need encouragement and confidence to become involved, and that a bespoke process may be required.
- Members referred to the lack of youth provision in the Cyncoed area, this does not appear to have been addressed in the previously LDP. Members were advised that the LDP does not have a budget although it was noted that planning and development management can help to ensure that any new developments contribution towards community development.
- Members made reference to the large amount of student accommodation in the area and sought reassurance that there is enough and will be enough family provision. Members were advised that part of the rationale for putting students in high density and managed accommodation is to free up family homes. It is important that we deliver a range of housing options.

- Members asked how the Committee can add value to the next stage of the consultation process; what stakeholder evidence can we bring forward; would it be of any use to you; and which external witnesses would add value, if any. Members were advised that that is a collective conversation with all scrutiny chairs, members, scrutiny officers and other officers. The process has been started through this pre-decision scrutiny by recognising the benefit of a collective voice. It helps to provide a level of diligence in a lengthy process. There will be a public enquiry on the plan which will not take place for a number of years, that enquiry is evidence based.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations during the way forward.

66 : SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS (BAND B) WILLOWS HIGH SCHOOL

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education & Lifelong Learning), Richard Portas (Programme Director, School Organisation Planning (SOP)), and Michele Duddridge-Friedl (Operational Manager, Planning and Provision) to the meeting.

Councillor Merry was invited to make a statement in which she stated that the formal process in terms of the new development and location has been undertaken; there has been a public engagement exercise on the proposals; and Cabinet will be provided with an appraisal of the responses (218) at its next meeting.

Officers advised that approval is being sought from Cabinet to implement the proposal and to change the funding mechanism from the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) to the Band B 21st Century Schools capital funded programme, which is subject to Welsh Government approval.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members referred to the need for flexibility in capacity at the school and sought clarification as to whether it is anticipated that the school intake will be broadly as it is currently, or whether, once it becomes established, it will hold on to rather more of its catchment creating a 'knock on' effect with other schools. Members were advised that the aim is for the school to meet the needs of the catchment and get as close to the six forms of entry (FE) as possible. It is accepted that bearing in mind the drop in the birth rate, which normally happens in 20 year cycles, further consideration may be required. There does need to be flexibility when the numbers increase in the long term.

Cathays High School is centrally located within the City, it does draw from different areas not just Willows catchment. Consideration will be given in due course, when there is the capacity in the system, a review will be conducted.

- Members asked about the plans for marketing Willows High School, without any post 16 provision, so parents do not see that as a negative. Officers advised that the visioning exercises being undertaken at the present time. It is important that the learning pathways are appropriate for that school, appropriate for the City and are mapped out properly.
- Members highlighted the responses in the consultation in relation to traffic management and congestion. Officers advised that a full transport assessments will be conducted; there is a proposal to close part of Parc Lewis Road. This is an opportunity for place making and it is important to embrace the opportunities presented.
- With reference to the planned Sports facilities with other providers, Members queried the plans in place to ensure that the school is not let down by others involved. The agreement to purchase the 3g pitches is not quite complete but there will then be a Management Lease facility which will ensure security for the school.

Members asked whether there would be any costs to the schools budget for those arrangements and were advised that there would not be.

Members queried the contractual arrangements with House of Sport and whether those existing agreements mean they automatically pick up on new school developments, or whether, bearing in mind comments in the consultation documents, there will be a tender process. Officers advised it is not a specific model, however there is provision which the House of Sport has built and owns; it will be hugely beneficial for the school. It is not automatic however, it is dealt with on a case by case basis.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations during the way forward.

67 : SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING: CARDIFF WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN (WESP) 2022 - 2032

*Councillors Melbourne, Molik and Bridgeman advised that they had a personal interest in this item as they all have children family members
Councillor Phillips advised that he had a personal interest in this item as he has a family member in receipt of ALN provision*

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education & Lifelong Learning), Richard Portas (Programme Director, School Organisation Planning (SOP)), and Michele Duddridge-Friedl (Operational Manager, Planning and Provision) to the meeting.

Councillor Merry advised that Members are being provided with a briefing at this stage, it will enable Members to feed in and help shape the proposals as they come forward.

Members were provided with a presentation which outlined the following:

- the National Policy Context;
- the ambition - the availability of Welsh Medium Education will be a key feature of meeting the target of one million Welsh speakers;
- the 2050 targets and aspirations;
- the incidence of ALN in Welsh Medium Education;
- the key priorities; and
- The timeline

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members discussed the importance of making the Welsh medium offer as attractive as possible in the future; the need to have Welsh role models; and making the plan more current and relevant for the final version in the future.
- Members queried whether there was a need to create more Welsh immersion centres and where they were currently based. Officers advised that the current primary unit is located at Ysgol Glan Ceubal. The current secondary unit is located at Ysgol Bro Eder; there was a need to increase places; and secondary aged pupils wanted to be on a site with their peer group. There needs to be proactive promotion of Welsh immersion as opposed to a reactive one; that would require greater provision. The Plasdwr model will provide greater visibility and offer more steps on the ladder to Welsh medium education.
- Members referred to the Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC) 2020 figures in relation to numbers receiving Welsh medium education and sought information as to whether the reduction in figures between primary and secondary uptake was due to the lack of secondary provision or parental choice. Officers advised that there has been significant growth in the availability of primary places because there has been a spike in the population figures which started in 2005. Those are the numbers now promoting through to secondary school. There needs to be confidence that there are secondary places available.

Members queried what external environments, for example links with Cardiff University, are available for those pupils going through the Welsh medium curriculum. Members were advised that it often depends upon the manner in which schools promote it; one school, during lock down, had alumni return and talk about their experiences of going through Welsh medium education and having left school. Promoting an enhanced range of opportunities is a key priority. There is a lot more to be done highlighting that bilingualism and fluency in Welsh is really valuable in the long term.

- Members discussed how far support provided to those with ALN reaches for those who need the support and those in Welsh medium education. Members were advised that if a child chose Welsh medium education it is important that that is an assurance that they are able to succeed bearing in mind their personal needs; they have to be taken into account. There has to be high quality ALN input, which will need very careful consideration and planning to ensure linguistic parity.
- Members sought clarification of the current costs of the immersion programme and were advised that they could be circulated in due course to Members. Costs would depend a lot on where provision is based.
- Members discussed:
 - the need to ensure not only the importance of Welsh in a Welsh medium forum but also the English medium forum, there must be a balance;
 - the need to make the transition from Welsh primary to Welsh secondary as easy as possible, including in terms of transport; and
 - those children moving from Welsh to English medium education should not be penalised, an example of which was a young person who could not take a Welsh GCSE in the English medium school to which he had transferred.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations during the way forward.

68 : SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING: TY GLAS SITE ACQUISITION

Councillor Melbourne declared a personal interest in this item as she is the Ward Councillor for Llanishen and Thornhill. Karen Dell'Armi declared a personal interest, as Chair of Governors at Llanishen High School.

Members were reminded that Appendices 3 – 6 of this report contain exempt information of the description contained in paragraph 14 of Part 4 and paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education & Lifelong Learning), Richard Portas (Programme Director, School Organisation Planning (SOP)), and Michele Duddridge-Friedl (Operational Manager, Planning and Provision) to the meeting.

Members were advised that the recommendation to Cabinet will be to acquire the freehold interest of land at Ty Glas Road, Llanishen to allow the Council to progress options for a mainstream community secondary school and special school provision.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members referred to the allocation being reflected in the Band C programme and whether further information in respect of Band C should be provided. Officers advised that Welsh Government will support the Council with the full acquisition and demolition cost; the intervention rate will be levelled out in due course. Members were advised that it is a strategic purchase, the site is large enough. It is not possible to say that the site will be purchased for a given project at this stage.

The Committee RESOLVED that the public be excluded for discussion in relation to the confidential appendices as they contained exempt information by virtue of paragraphs 14, 16 and 21 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

After discussion in the Way Forward the Committee RESOLVED that the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations during the way forward.

69 : WAY FORWARD

Members discussed the information received and identified a number of issues which the Chairman agreed would be included in the letters that would be sent, on behalf of the Committee, to the relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.

70 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were tabled

71 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2021

The date of the next meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 7 October 2021 at 4.30 pm via MS Teams

The meeting terminated at 8.40 pm