



FULL COUNCIL - INFORMATION REPORT

Date Written	26 September 2016
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Service Area	Schools
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	5 th October 2016

To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

21st Century Schools Programme

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the proposed new school building for Ysgol Y Graig Primary School.
- 1.2 As it is 5 years since the options were considered there will be an engagement and consultation process before the Outline Business Case detailing the preferred option is submitted to Welsh Government.

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Welsh Government 21st Century Schools and Education Programme represents a £1.4 billion investment over the five year period ending 2018/19. Local authorities were asked to submit bids for the refurbishment and rebuild of schools in the county borough. The programme is 50% funded by Welsh Government using a combination of capital and revenue funding, with the remaining 50% funding provided by local authorities and others.
- 2.2 Business cases are submitted in three stages:
 - Strategic Outline Case (SOC);
 - Outline Business Case (OBC); and
 - Full Business Case (FBC).

The main purpose of the SOC is to establish the need for investment; to appraise the main options for service delivery; and to provide a recommended or preferred way forward for further analysis. The SOC for both Afon Taf High School and Ysgol Y Graig Primary School were approved by Welsh Government and the second two

stages were undertaken for Afon Taf. The refurbishment of the school is now reaching a successful conclusion.

- 2.3 A range of sites in the Cefn Coed area were considered as candidate sites for the new school building for Ysgol Y Graig Primary. In 2011, consultation was held with the community over the emerging proposals. The aim of the public consultation was to capture and understand the views of all interested parties to aid the decision making process as to which site the new school should be built on. At that time members identified the former Vaynor and Penderyn High School site as the preferred site for the re-location of Ysgol Y Graig Primary to be utilised in conjunction with the existing playing fields at Godre'r Coed, should funding become available to proceed.

3.0 OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE FOR YSGOL Y GRAIG PRIMARY SCHOOL

- 3.1 As part of the Welsh Government's Band A 21st Century Schools Programme funding became available to progress the design development of Ysgol-y-Graig in 2016/17. The local authority began preparing the OBC for Ysgol Y Graig Primary School, which involves revisiting the case for change and the preferred way forward identified in the SOC; establishing the option which optimises value for money; outlining the deal and assessing affordability; and demonstrating that the proposed scheme is deliverable. At the OBC Stage, it may be necessary to update the Strategic Case in the light of any changes or new information.
- 3.2 In addition, the local authority sought expert advice on the public engagement and consultation process as it has been 5 years since the proposal was discussed. There are a number of options for the site including the six sites considered in the feasibility study prepared by Austin-Smith:Lord in March 2011. Following advice it has been agreed that there should be an engagement and public consultation process in order to ensure that the community has access to the information about all of the possible options before any decision is made. It will also give the community the opportunity to suggest alternatives.
- 3.3 An action plan has been agreed as follows:
- a risk awareness session on the engagement and public consultation process will be held at the end of October/early November 2016;
 - an Issues paper listing all the possible options will be produced at the end of November/early December 2016;
 - a listening and engagement process will take place at the end of January; 2017
 - co-production (See 3.5) will take place in February 2017;
 - a report will go to Council on 22nd March, 2017 listing options and requesting permission to go out to public consultation.
- 3.4 The listening and engagement stage involves pre-consultation with stakeholders in order to revisit what was explored before and to test it for suitability to take into consultation. The information will be provided in the issues paper. Stakeholders will be asked to discuss and debate possible sites and provide a rationale for their views so that these can be investigated before the consultation process.

3.5 Co-production is when the outcomes of the listening and engagement stage are reviewed so that local authority officers and other stakeholders can consider what options to recommend to take forward into the consultation process.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Funding is contained within the budget.

5.0 SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT SUMMARY

5.1 The Single Integrated Plan & Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed and the proposals impact positively on people in Merthyr Tydfil having the opportunity and aspiration to learn and develop their skills to maximise their potential. No negative impacts have been identified.

6.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time. The form can be accessed on the Council's website/intranet via the 'Equality Impact Assessment' link.

GARETH CHAPMAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COUNCILLOR PHIL WILLIAMS
CABINET MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE
AND CORPORATE SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.