

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

25 JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: PROPOSED REGULATED ALTERATION IN THE FORM OF PERMANENT ENLARGEMENT TO COYCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report is to seek approval from Cabinet to consult on the proposal to make a regulated alteration to Coychurch Primary School in the form of an enlargement with effect from 1 January 2018.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report supports the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2016-2020:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Smarter use of resources

- 2.2 In March 2015, the Council approved five key principles within a policy and planning framework which would inform the organisation and modernisation of our schools:

1. Commitment to high standards and excellence in provision.
2. Equality of opportunity, so that all pupils can access quality learning opportunities, regardless of which school they attend.
3. Inclusive schools, which cater for the learning needs of all their pupils.
4. Community focused schools, where the school actively engages with its local community.
5. Value for money.

- 2.3 The policy and planning framework set out 17 areas where these principles should apply. Particularly relevant in the context of this report is the size of primary schools (to ensure that “all Bridgend’s primary schools are large enough to make the full range of necessary provision”).

3. Background

- 3.1 In 2013, Bridgend County Borough Council made a temporary capacity increase at Coychurch Primary School (the capacity temporarily increased from 81 pupil places to 134) by installing a double mobile classroom on the school site. The temporary increase was required as the Council agreed in November 2012 that the new Linc Cymru development in the north-east of Brackla would be assigned to the catchment area of Coychurch Primary School, with effect from September 2014 (it was further

agreed that the situation would be in place for a period of five years and be reviewed in 2019).

- 3.2 Pupil numbers in the south east of the County Borough are now such that, even with the new Coety Primary school opened, the temporary Coychurch Primary School capacity increase needs to be made permanent to support the efficient admission of pupils.
- 3.3 Prior to the temporary installation of the double mobile classroom on the school site the Published Admission Number for the school was 12

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 In order to continue to accommodate pupil numbers, it has become necessary for the school to utilise the double mobile classroom installed in 2013 which was originally intended to be used for teaching and storage and since 2012 has been used consistently for teaching purposes. This has resulted in an increase to the capacity of the school and this change has been implemented on a temporary basis until now.
- 4.2 It is considered that there is a need to formalise this temporary arrangement in order to comply with the School Organisation Code.
- 4.3 The capacity of the school five years prior to the date of the proposed implementation (ie 2012-2013) was 93. The permanent addition of mobile classroom spaces at the school will result in the capacity increasing to 127 which is greater than 25% of the current capacity. As a result, the published admission number in respect of pupils admitted into reception will increase to 19 (resulting in an 18 place nursery). In order to formalise this increase in capacity, it is necessary to undertake a regulated alteration to enlarge the school under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, as set out in the School Organisation Code (the Code).
- 4.4 In order to bring about a change of this nature, the Code requires that a consultation exercise with the school governing body, staff, parents, pupils and interested parties is undertaken. This is the first step in the statutory process. If carried through to completion, this proposal will come into effect on 1 January 2018. The consultation paper will set out the implications of the proposal.
- 4.5 The necessary statutory processes will be followed. If Cabinet approves, an initial six-week consultation period will start in September 2017, to allow all interested parties to comment on the proposals contained in the consultation paper. This would be undertaken by publishing the proposals and inviting responses.
- 4.6 Following this period of consultation, a further report on the outcome of the consultation would be submitted to Cabinet to consider the result of that process. Cabinet would then need to decide whether to authorise the publication of a statutory notice. If such a notice were issued, it would invite formal objections during the statutory 28-day period.
- 4.7 At the end of the statutory notice period there would then be a further report to Cabinet on the outcome of the statutory notice process and any objections received. If there are no objections in response to the public notice, Cabinet would be recommended to make a final decision.

- 4.8 If there are any objections, an objections report containing a formal response will be prepared and submitted to Cabinet. Cabinet will need to give consideration to and approve the objections report and also make a final decision on whether or not the proposals should be implemented. The approved objections report would then be published, followed by a decision notice. All proposals would therefore follow due process and comply with all statutory requirements and Welsh Government guidance.
- 4.9 The statutory code states that consultation must take place in term time and therefore the consultation will not commence until 5 September 2017 at the earliest.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the policy frameworks or procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment initial screening has been carried out.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The proposal merely formalises the existing temporary arrangement in order to meet demand. The area which would be permanently incorporated into the capacity calculation (ie the double mobile classroom) is already within the school site and is already fully funded via the funding formula allocation.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve that consultation can be conducted with the governing body, staff, parents, pupils and all other interested parties as set out in the School Organisation Code on a proposal to make a regulated alteration to Coychurch Primary School in the form of an enlargement with effect from 1 January 2018. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet in due course.

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Background documents

Cabinet Report 3 March 2015: "PRINCIPLES DOCUMENT"

Equality Impact Assessment

Cabinet Report 13 November 2012: "SCHOOL CATCHMENT AREAS – COETY and COYCHURCH"