

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

23 JULY 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

WELSH-MEDIUM CHILDCARE – BETTWS AND OGMORE VALLEY

1. Purpose of report

1.1 This report

- details the outcome of the options appraisal process for the delivery of Welsh-medium childcare provision in the Bettws and Ogmores Valley areas, and

seeks approval to proceed with the options for delivery of childcare provision, as recommended by the School Modernisation Strategic Programme Board (the Board).

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report relates to the following Corporate Improvement Plan priorities:

- **Supporting a successful economy** - we will take steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
- **Helping people to be more self-reliant** – we will take early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

3. Background

3.1 In November 2018, the authority secured £2.6 million of Welsh Government (WG) Capital Grant for the development of Welsh-medium childcare provision in four geographical areas of the county borough. The purpose of the grant was to support WG national policy, 'Cymraeg 2050, a million Welsh speakers'.

3.2 The four areas identified for investment were Bettws, Ogmores Valley, Porthcawl and Bridgend Town. Schemes would be delivered incrementally, with Bettws and Ogmores Valley projects being scheduled for completion first

in order to support pupil admission to the relocated Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg (YGG) Calon Y Cymoedd at Bettws.

4. Current situation

- 4.1 A Welsh-medium steering group, comprising of officers and key stakeholders was established in order to help inform each project, develop business plans and aid the future sustainability of provision post construction.
- 4.2 The role of the steering group is to support the development and delivery of the Welsh-medium childcare capital programme. The group, through consultation and collaboration, offer a cohesive approach to the provision of effective and sustainable community buildings, with a focus on increasing opportunities for children and the wider community. The group work together to support the programme which will promote the Welsh language within the county borough.
- 4.3 Officers commenced work by identifying buildings and sites within the areas that are within Council ownership.
- 4.4 A project team was formed consisting of technical, childcare and school modernisation officers, plus representatives of the steering group. The team conducted site visits, and subsequently scored each site using a scoring matrix.

4.5 Bettws

The sites identified for development of the provision within the village included:

- Option 1 - Bettws playing fields – new build
 - Option 2 - School site – new build
 - Option 3 - Trem y Mor and adjacent land at Glynteg – new build
 - Option 4 - Bettws Life Centre - adaptation
 - Option 5 - Valleys to Coast (V2C) land – new build
 - Option 6 - Bettws Boys and Girls Club – adaptation
 - Option 7 - The bunkhouse - adaptation
- 4.6 Following an initial appraisal, it was determined that Option 1, the Bettws playing field site, should not be taken forward for further investigation. This decision was taken due to the location of the field and potential implications with the loss of play provision for the area. The school site, Option 2, was also discounted due to insufficient land available.
- 4.7 Option 3, new build on land adjacent to Trem y Mor. This option was joint highest in the scoring exercise (score = 117). The land is within the ownership of BCBC and a new-build would provide a fit-for-purpose childcare facility. However, it is located on the outskirts of Bettws and it was thought that the other options provided a better location adjacent to the new Welsh-medium school.

- 4.8 Option 4, adaptation at Bettws Life Centre (score = 73). This option involved adaptation/remodel of the existing building. However, there were a number of activities running each day and sole use of any space for the full week was not possible. The building would also have been difficult to adapt for childcare use.
- 4.9 Option 5, new build on land adjacent to the surgery (Valleys to Coast (V2C) owned). This option was joint highest in the scoring exercise (score = 117). The land is within the ownership of V2C and negotiations would have been required with them to acquire the land. The new build would provide a fit-for-purpose childcare facility. However, it is located on the outskirts of Bettws and it was thought that the other options provided a better location adjacent to the new Welsh-medium school.
- 4.10 Option 6, adaptation of the Bettws Boys and Girls Club (score = 82). This option involved extensive adaptations to the existing provision. Adapting the building, which is in poor condition and is in a state of disrepair, was considered problematic. However, the site was identified as being in a good location within the village.
- 4.11 Option 7, adaptation of the bunkhouse building (score = 90.5). This option involved the adaptation of the bunkhouse to provide an adequate childcare space with ancillary areas. This would have been problematic and costly due to the existing layout, which was set out in 'dormitory' style with a small kitchen area in the centre.
- 4.12 The following table sets out the results of the appraisal in order of the highest score:

Site	Score
Option 3 New build on unused BCBC owned land adjacent to the council's Trem y Mor administrative offices, Bettws Road, Bettws	117
Option 5 New build on land next to the surgery (V2C owned)	117
Option 7 Adaptation of the currently unused bunkhouse building adjacent to the Bettws Boys and Girls Club (currently leased to NSA Afan)	90.5
Option 6 Adaptation of the Bettws Boys and Girls Club	82
Option 4 Adaptation at Bettws Life Centre	73

- 4.13 Although adaptation to the Bettws Boys and Girls Club did not score the highest from a technical development perspective (due to the condition of the building), the site was considered a good location due to its proximity to other key buildings in the area. A survey was undertaken of the Bettws Boys and Girls Club building. Based on its poor condition, technical officers of the

authority recommended it for demolition. It was therefore discounted as an option for adaptation.

- 4.14 Officers were advised that NSA Afan wished to relinquish the lease on the site, which incorporates the Boys and Girls Club building and the adjacent bunkhouse. The Boys and Girls Club of Wales confirmed that they would be interested in taking on the lease for the bunkhouse, including a charge that had been placed on the building by The Big Lottery.
- 4.15 It was considered that if the Boys and Girls Club building was demolished and the new childcare provision built on the site, together with the use of the other buildings in the area, it would present an opportunity to develop a Welsh 'hub'. This strategy would support the vision for the wider Welsh-medium stakeholder group. The demolition of the Boys and Girls Club and the redevelopment of the site by building new childcare provision therefore became a further option (revised Option 6).
- 4.16 The revised Option 6 scored 107.5, which is less than the other 'new build' options (due to the additional works required for the demolition of the existing building). Although the two 'new build' options on alternative sites scored higher, advice received from the local member (who had met with the community to gather their views) was that they would not welcome another new stand-alone building in Bettws when there are vacant community buildings in the village.
- 4.17 Notwithstanding the proposed development of the site, NSA Afan have handed back the lease to the Council. Legal and property officers are currently undertaking the legal process to surrender the overall lease from NSA Afan and re-grant the bunkhouse section of the site to the Boys and Girls Club of Wales and return the Bettws Boys and Girls Club building to the Council.
- 4.18 The outcome of the options appraisal was reported to the School Modernisation Strategic Programme Board. The Board supports the development of a new build on the Bettws Boys and Girls Club site (revised Option 6), as this was the only site where the 'hub' approach could be achieved. The Board also agreed:
- to meet the associated legal costs in respect of the lease from BCBC revenue budgets;
 - for technical officers to commence surveys on the Bettws Boys and Girls Club building, to inform the demolition process, subject to legal and property approvals; and
 - to meet the cost of demolition of the building from the grant.

4.19 **Ogmore Valley**

The sites/buildings initially identified in the Ogmore Valley area included:

- Option 1 - Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club – new build

- Option 2 - Isfryn Industrial Estate – new build
- Option 3 - Former Nantymoel Infants School site – new build
- Option 4 - Ogmore Valley Life Centre – adaptation and extension
- Option 5 - Former Aber Infants School site – new build
- Option 6 - Land at former Bryant OAP Centre – new build
- Option 7 - Ogmore Vale Fire Station – new build

- 4.20 The team conducted site visits, and then subsequently scored each site using the scoring matrix.
- 4.21 Option 1, developing land adjacent to the Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club scored the highest (score = 109) and was favoured by the Welsh-medium steering group; a ‘hub’ approach to support the development of the Welsh language could be achieved at that location, given the proximity of the adjacent Boys and Girls Club building to the development site. Access to the site is good. The site’s potential for complaint generation or objection is assessed as minimal and the site scored highly in terms of its Impact of Wellbeing and Future Generations Act aggregate score. The site is located in the north of the Ogmore Valley.
- 4.22 Option 2, Isfryn Industrial Estate, Blackmill (score =108.5). The site is good in terms of its location for serving the Ogmore Valley. The site topography is relatively good with only a nominal slope; therefore, expensive retaining walls should not be required. Access to the site and the highway drop-off is good. Good parking would be achievable and active travel could be developed with some works required. Due to its close proximity to a Flying Start provision at Blackmill, the site has potential for complaint generation or objection. Locating Welsh-medium childcare at the site may have the potential to impact on other childcare businesses (new provision opening in Bryncethin may be impacted).
- 4.23 Option 3, the former Nantymoel Infants School site (score = 103). The site has significant issues in relation to on-site and off-site costs of development ie level issues, requirement for retaining walls and costs associated with DDA compliance.
- 4.24 Option 5, the former Aber Infants School site (score = 67.5). The site has significant issues relating to the highway; very poor access, parking and active travel opportunities. Site levels are very poor, DDA achievability would be extremely difficult and in addition, the site has ecology issues which would make development problematic (bats are present on site).
- 4.25 Options 4, Ogmore Valley Life Centre and Option 6, land at former Bryant OAP Centre, Nantymoel were discounted due to the sites being located in a flood plain.
- 4.26 Option 7, Ogmore Vale Fire Station was discounted as it is an active site.
- 4.27 The following table sets out the results of the appraisal in order of the highest score:

Site	Score
Option 1 Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club (New build childcare on land adjacent)	109
Option 2 Isfryn Industrial Estate, Blackmill	108.5
Option 3 Former Nantymoel Infants School site	103
Option 5 Former Aber Infants School site	67.5
Option 4 Ogmores Valley Life Centre (Adaptation)	Discounted (flood plain)
Option 6 Land at former Bryant OAP Centre, Nantymoel	Discounted (flood plain)
Option 7 Ogmores Vale Fire Station	Discounted (active site)

4.28 In order to keep the building central within the valley and enable the whole community to engage, additional sites in the Ogmores Vale area were also sought. A search of properties (both commercial and residential) currently advertised for sale in the area was subsequently undertaken however, no suitable properties were available.

4.29 Option 4, the Ogmores Valley Life Centre, was re-visited and re-scored and Option 8, the former Ogmores Vale Nursery School site, was considered in addition to other key properties within Ogmores Vale. The outcome of the second evaluation is detailed in the following table:

Site	Score
Option 8 Former Ogmores Vale Nursery School site	95.5
Option 9 Petrol station site, Ogmores Vale	94
Option 10 Bethania Chapel, Ogmores Vale	Discounted (insufficient site size)
Option 4 Ogmores Valley Life Centre (Revisit/re-score)	Remains discounted (flood plain)

4.30 Option 4, Ogmores Valley Life Centre, is of insufficient size without building an extension (not possible due to a flood plain issue).

4.31 Option 8, the former Ogmores Vale Nursery School site (score = 95.5). The Council do not own the land; it acts as a charitable trustee. The Council acting as trustee, could approach the Charity Commission for permission to sell the site as trustees to the Council. There is no guarantee that the Charity Commissioner would agree to the same. However, if permission was given there would be a cost to the Council and the land would be subject to an independent valuation.

- 4.32 Option 9, the petrol station site (score = 94). The site privately owned, (without knowing the condition of the petrol tanks or if any ground contamination exists, the estimated current value provided by Corporate Landlord is £32.5k - £87.5k).
- 4.33 Option 10, Bethania Chapel in Ogmores Vale was discounted due to the site being insufficient in size.
- 4.34 The outcome of the options appraisal was reported to the School Modernisation Strategic Programme Board. The Board supports Option 1, the development of a new build on land adjacent to Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club, due to the added value that the location presents in terms of the adjacent building and in turn, the creation of a Welsh hub to support an increase in the Welsh language and assist in delivering the Cymraeg 2050 target.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment initial screening has been carried out for both projects. The assessments confirm that there would be a positive impact on the Welsh language provision currently available in the areas.

7. Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (2015)

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment provides a comprehensive summary of the outcomes expected from the implementation of the service. The required assessment template has been completed and a summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is outlined below:

Long-term	This project will meet both short and long-term planning with regard to both the number of childcare places available in the borough, alongside increasing Welsh-medium provision and focussed Welsh language benefits for the communities identified.
Prevention	It will reduce the impact of long-term demands on the level of childcare in relation to information on the Bridgend local authority Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA). The project also has at its aim the ability to increase Welsh speakers and the number of children entering Welsh language education.
Integration	The project will deliver social, economic and cultural outcomes, as it will be a community asset.

Collaboration	The project development and planning phase is being supported by a steering group, where stakeholders with vested interests both internal to Bridgend County Borough Council and external, are members.
Involvement	The stakeholders involved in the steering group reflect both childcare and Welsh language organisations. The schemes will deliver beyond the key focus of childcare and education with other services planned, focused on sustainability, community benefit and wellbeing of citizens.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 The £2.6 million capital allocation equates to £650k per project, which covers costs associated with the design and construction of the building. No capital contribution is required from the Council as the build cost is 100% funded by WG.
- 8.2 Further feasibility work will be required in order to determine the specific costs associated with the development of each site. WG has approved in principle that the costs associated with the demolition of the Bettws Boys and Girls Club, can be met from the grant. WG has also indicated that should the costs exceed the available budget on one project, there may be an opportunity to re-profile, as long as the costs are kept within the overall funding envelope. If costs exceed available budget, a further report will be presented to Council.
- 8.3 WG has not made revenue funding available for the ongoing running cost of the buildings, so all associated costs eg energy, cleaning etc for the settings will have to be borne by the end user. It is therefore critical for the steering group to work together to ensure the future sustainability of the buildings. If the facility were to become financially unsustainable, it should be noted that the physical asset belongs to BCBC and consequently the authority would be responsible for any ongoing revenue associated with its ownership (eg potential boarding up costs, ongoing insurances etc).
- 8.4 Loose furniture, equipment and ICT will also have to be provided by the end user.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 Cabinet is asked to consider the outcome of the option appraisals for both sites.
- 9.2 Determine whether to proceed with the Bettws area, revised Option 6, as recommended by the Board and develop the new childcare provision on the site of the existing Bettws Boys and Girls Club building (as detailed in paragraph 4.18 of this report).

- 9.3 Determine whether to proceed with the Ogmore Valley area, Option 1, as recommended by the Board and develop the new childcare provision on the site adjacent to Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club.

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Background documents

Cabinet Report (18 December 2018): "WELSH-MEDIUM CAPITAL GRANT"

WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015 ASSESSMENT

Equalities Impact Assessments