

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

15 SEPTEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

#### SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B

#### MYNYDD CYNFFIG PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### 1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- apprise Cabinet of the outcome of the education and site evaluation process conducted in respect of the proposed replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School;
- seek approval for the shortlist of education options to be considered at Outline Business Case stage;
- seek Cabinet approval for the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School junior site to be taken forward to the feasibility stage as the preferred site option; and
- seek approval for the proposed 2 form-entry (FE) plus 75-place nursery replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School to be considered through the feasibility study process as the preferred education option.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** - taking steps to make the county borough a great 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 borough.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

2.2 On 3 March 2015, Cabinet approval was received for the Council to adopt revised principles as a framework for school organisation in Bridgend. Five key principles were set out to inform the organisation and modernisation of our schools. These are:

- commitment to high standards and excellence in provision;

- equality of opportunity, so that all pupils can access quality learning opportunities, regardless of which school they attend;
  - inclusive schools, which cater for the learning needs of all their pupils;
  - community-focused schools, where the school actively engages with its local community; and
  - value for money.
- 2.3 The Policy and Planning Framework sets out 17 areas where these principles should be applied in practice.
- 2.4 The principles which are particularly relevant in the context of Band B are:
- the size of primary schools (to ensure that “all Bridgend’s primary schools are large enough to make the full range of necessary provision”); and
  - value for money, efficiency and effectiveness (“narrowing the gap between the most and the least expensive provision currently”).

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 In April 2009, Cabinet approved a number of individual projects that emerged from a feasibility study, which reviewed 3 to 18 learning provision in the Cefn Cribwr, Cornelly, Kenfig Hill and Pyle area. Approval was received to progress a project to cater for a proposed amalgamation of the then Mynydd Cynffig Infant and Junior Schools.
- 3.2 In December 2010, the Council’s Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme was submitted to Welsh Government (WG) and a replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School scheme was identified as a Band A project. In 2011, the project was again confirmed as a priority Band A scheme in a further SOP submission to WG.
- 3.3 A feasibility study was undertaken in 2011 to establish the most suitable site for the primary school. That study considered the establishment of primary provision on Mynydd Cynffig Infant and Junior Schools’ sites plus the site of Cynffig Comprehensive School, the outcome of which determined that the preferred site was that of the Junior School.
- 3.4 Following the establishment of Mynydd Cynffig Primary School in September 2015, a decision was made to undertake further feasibility work to explore the potential of remodelling Cynffig Comprehensive School, in order to accommodate Mynydd Cynffig Primary School at that location.
- 3.5 The feasibility study showed that Cynffig Comprehensive School site allowed for suitable alternative solutions to the critical issues of sufficient developable area and appropriate site access. It also offered sufficient space to develop a 2-form entry (FE) school plus nursery and remove some secondary surplus places.
- 3.6 The outcome of the feasibility study was reported to Cabinet in July 2016 and approval was provided to commence the consultation process to relocate the primary school to the secondary school site.

- 3.7 The outcome of the consultation was reported to Cabinet in January 2017. The community strongly opposed the proposal and Cabinet determined to consider a counter proposal from the objectors (ie to locate the new school on the junior school site).
- 3.8 In March 2017, the outcome of a review of the 2011 feasibility study and the counter proposal was reported to Cabinet together with concerns regarding revised budget estimates for the new school development at the secondary school site. Cabinet determined to abandon the proposal, as there was insufficient funding available to take forward the scheme at the comprehensive or junior school site.
- 3.9 In October 2017, Cabinet approved Bridgend's Band B priorities and agreed that further feasibility work would be undertaken for a replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School which, depending on the outcome and available funding, could be delivered as a priority scheme in Band C.
- 3.10 In November 2019, the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School's infant site suffered a catastrophic failure of its heating system and the repair forced the temporary closure of the school building.
- 3.11 A subsequent building condition survey reduced the school from its previous condition, that is, "C" to a category "D" (ie 'Bad – life expired and/or at risk of imminent closure, requiring significant immediate/urgent works'). The nature and assortment of the disrepairs highlighted within the survey made isolated repair works to individual fabric elements at the school extremely challenging and economically unfeasible. As a result of the health and safety risk to pupils and staff, it was agreed that the school building would close and alternative teaching accommodation would be provided as a matter of urgency.
- 3.12 Funding was made available through the capital programme to procure temporary accommodation.
- 3.13 On 30 June 2020, Cabinet approval was received to reprioritise Band B, bringing forward the replacement school scheme for Mynydd Cynffig Primary. Approval was received to submit a revised SOP to WG to reflect this and for officers to commence an options appraisal and feasibility study for the proposed replacement primary school.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 All Band B schemes are required to follow a rigorous WG business case process in order to ensure that projects meet their objective. A school organisation option cannot be progressed in isolation, and must be considered in conjunction with land availability and suitability.
- 4.2 The revised SOP has been submitted to WG and the outcome will be confirmed in due course. In order to start progressing the scheme and comply with the WG business case process and the School Organisation Code, it is necessary to consider the potential education and site options, identify a shortlist of education options and confirm the preferred site and education option which will be the basis of the feasibility study.

- 4.3 Education officers, using their knowledge and expertise, evaluated options in respect of school organisation.
- 4.4 Sites were identified by the Strategic Asset Management and Infrastructure (SAMI) Team and evaluated by officers from the Education and Communities Directorates, including Planners, Highways, the SAMI and Major Projects Team. Consideration was given to a wide range of categories which were evaluated and scored.
- 4.5 The following sets out the longlist of education options considered:
- Option 1 Do nothing
  - Option 2 Refurbishment of the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School infant block, the junior building 'as is'. The school remains on two separate sites
  - Option 3 New-build extension for the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School infant department on the junior site
  - Option 4 New-build replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School - 2FE plus 75-place nursery provision on the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School junior site
  - Option 5 New-build 2FE school on Mynydd Cynffig Primary School's infant site
  - Option 6 Refurbishment of the sixth form block and an early years new build extension for Mynydd Cynffig Primary School on the Cynffig Comprehensive School site
  - Option 7 Refurbishment of the sixth form block and an early years new build extension to create a 3 to 19 school on the Cynffig Comprehensive School site
- 4.6 Extensive feasibility work completed previously considered the development potential of the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School junior and infant sites and Cynffig Comprehensive School site. The project team revisited the information held (still regarded as applicable) and consideration was given to a wide range of categories which were evaluated and scored. The following list of sites was evaluated and is presented in order of highest ranking by officers:
- Option 1 Mynydd Cynffig Primary School - junior site
  - Option 2 Cynffig Comprehensive School site
  - Option 3 Mynydd Cynffig Primary School – infants site
- 4.7 While consideration was given to locating the primary provision on the secondary site, site constraints limit what can be achieved at that location. Although the site size is sufficient, the infrastructure, configuration and arrangement of buildings/carpark, plus potential flood risk area (school playing

fields) limits the opportunity to create primary places. Also, developing primary provision at that location would impact on the available space that may be required to meet the future secondary demand for places from within the school's catchment, as the Pyle area has been identified as a proposed residential strategic growth location and is currently being considered by Planners for inclusion within the next Local Development Plan. Despite known land issues at the junior site that would need to be resolved, early indications are that they are not insurmountable and can be worked through.

4.8 Locating the primary school on the infant site was discounted during the option appraisal process as the site size is not large enough to accommodate the whole school.

4.9 It is recommended that following shortlist of education options are taken forward to the next stage in the business case process which will test each option against a series of individual key objectives and critical success factors. As part of the Outline Business Case, which is the next stage in the process, the 'do nothing' option will be explored alongside the other options detailed in the following shortlist. The exploration of the 'do nothing' option at this stage is used to demonstrate the need for investment.

Option 1 Do nothing

Option 2 Refurbishment of the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School infant block, the junior building 'as is'. The school remains on two separate sites (shortlisted – do minimum)

Option 3 New-build extension for the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School infant department on the junior site (shortlisted – do intermediate)

Option 4 New build replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School - 2FE plus 75-place nursery provision on the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School junior site (shortlisted – do maximum)

4.10 The outcome of evaluations indicate that the feasibility study should be progressed on the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School junior site. The study will run concurrently with the Welsh Government business case process. It is anticipated that the 'do maximum' option will require the largest landtake and therefore it is this option, a new build replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School - 2FE plus 75-place nursery which should be taken through the feasibility stage as the preferred option.

## **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 initial screening has been undertaken for Mynydd Cynffig Primary School, the outcome of which indicates that a full Equality Impact Assessment will be required prior to any formal decision in terms of a specific proposal.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment provides a comprehensive summary of the outcomes expected from the implementation of the service.

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|---------------|---|
| Long term     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fulfils the Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient pupil places.</li><li>• Allows teaching and learning to take place on one site, assisting with sharing expert knowledge and resources.</li><li>• Supports the day-to-day management and operation of the school.</li><li>• Helps parents with drop-off and pick-up arrangements, as all pupils will attend one site.</li></ul> |
| Prevention    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safeguards the Council's position in terms of any potential legal challenge regarding the supply of school places.</li></ul>  |
| Integration   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensures that the curriculum can be delivered from a purpose built facility that meets social, environmental and cultural objectives.</li></ul>  |
| Collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Works effectively with schools and many internal and external partners to ensure that the building meets the short-term and future needs of users and the community that it will serve.</li></ul>   |
| Involvement   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement of potential stakeholders including Cabinet, members, governors, staff, pupils, community, internal and external partners.</li></ul>   |

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 In December 2018, Council approved a programme envelope of £71.3m covering Band B new school builds of £68.2m, along with funding for potential highways works, which is currently budgeted at £3.4m across all Band B schemes (the cost of highway works will have to be met in full by the local authority, as there is no match funding from WG).

8.2 A detailed feasibility study will determine whether the £10.2m capital funding allocation in respect of this scheme is sufficient, as there is the potential for site abnormalities which may impact on the funding requirement. Also, WG will only fund part-time nursery provision for rising 4s and therefore additional places required to create full-time provision for the rising 4s, plus any part-time places for rising 3s, will have to be funded through the capital programme. The financial implications for this scheme, including nursery provision and any required highway investment will be confirmed in a future report, following the completion of the feasibility study.

## **9. Recommendations.**

## 9.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- note the outcome of the education and site evaluation process conducted in respect of the proposed replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School;
- approve the shortlist of education options to be considered at Outline Business Case stage, as set out in 4.8 of this report;
- approve the Mynydd Cynffig Primary School junior site be taken forward to the feasibility stage as the preferred site option; and
- approve that the proposed replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School be considered through the feasibility study process as the preferred education option ie a 2 form-entry (FE) plus 75-place nursery provision.

### **Lindsay Iorwerth Harvey**

#### **Corporate Director - Education and Family Support September 2020**

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### **Background documents**

Cabinet Report (28 April 2009): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: PHASE 2 3-18 PROVISION IN THE AREA OF CEFN CRIBWR, CORNELLY, KENFIG HILL AND PYLE"

Cabinet Report (2 November 2010) "THE SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME OVERVIEW AND BRIDGEND'S 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS' STRATEGIC OUTLINE PROGRAMME SUBMISSION TO WELSH GOVERNMENT"

Cabinet Report (28 June 2011): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: SITE RECOMMENDATION FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN MYNYDD CYNFFIG"

Cabinet Report (9 December 2014): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION: PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON THE PROPOSAL TO CLOSE MYNYDD CYNFFIG INFANTS SCHOOL AND EXTEND THE AGE RANGE OF MYNYDD CYNFFIG JUNIOR SCHOOL TO CREATE AN ALL THROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL"

Cabinet Report (16 June 2015): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: OUTCOME OF PUBLIC NOTICE ON THE PROPOSAL TO CLOSE MYNYDD CYNFFIG INFANTS SCHOOL AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2015 AND EXTEND THE AGE

RANGE OF MYNYDD CYNFFIG JUNIOR SCHOOL FROM A 7-11 TO A 3-11 SCHOOL TO CREATE AN ALL THROUGH PRIMARY WITH EFFECT FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015

Cabinet Report (5 July 2016): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: MYNYDD CYNFFIG PRIMARY SCHOOL – OUTCOME OF FEASIBILITY STUDY AND PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON THE RELOCATION AND ENLARGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL"

Report to Council (6 July 2016): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: UPDATE ON REPLACEMENT MYNYDD CYNFFIG PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME"

Report to Cabinet (10 January 2017): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS TO MAKE A REGULATED ALTERATION TO MYNYDD CYNFFIG PRIMARY SCHOOL"

Cabinet Report (3 October 2017): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B (2019-2024)"

Cabinet Report (19 December 2018): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B"

Council Report (20 December 2018): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B"

Cabinet Report (19 March 2019): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B"

Council Report (20 March 2019): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B"

Cabinet Report (21 January 2020): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B"

Cabinet Report (30 June 2020): "SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – BAND B - MYNYDD CYNFFIG PRIMARY SCHOOL"