

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

18 OCTOBER 2022

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

OUTCOME OF PUBLIC NOTICE TO OPEN PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS ESTABLISHING A LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE FOR PUPILS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER AT TREMAINS PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the public notice on the proposal to open provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), establishing a learning resource centre (LRC) for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) at Tremains Primary School.

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 focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for 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 to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Local authorities across the United Kingdom are experiencing a rise in the demand for services for children and young people with ALN and the cost to support this challenging budget. Anecdotal evidence from many local authorities suggests that not only are these needs becoming more numerous by volume, but also in their complexity.
- 3.2 This is putting pressure on all local authorities to meet and resource these needs, and this will only be exacerbated by the additional pressures that have been caused by COVID-19. In this context, many local authorities are reviewing their current provision to respond to changes in demand and to make services fit for purpose in terms of addressing the current and future needs of children and young people with ALN.

- 3.3 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has taken a proactive approach to this by commissioning an additional learning needs strategic planning provision review in 2020.
- 3.4 An Additional Learning Needs Strategic Planning Provision Review Board has been established. One of the areas which has been identified for additional provision is at Key Stage 2 for children with ASD. There is an identified need to open an additional LRC for children with ASD.
- 3.5 Adaptation works to Tremains Primary School funded through the Schools Maintenance capital grant has begun, which would afford the space required to open an ASD LRC.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The statutory public notice was issued on 30 June 2022 and the closing date for objections was 27 July 2022. The statutory notice sets out the details of the proposal to allow the public to object to the proposal.. The statutory notice is open for a period of 28 days. Any objections made within this period must be submitted in writing to the Council. The Council must then publish an objections report summarising any objections together with the Council's response to those objections.
- 4.2 There were no objections received during the statutory notice period. Cabinet is, therefore, now able to determine the implementation of the proposal.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

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

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or 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.

Long term	Affords pupils with a diagnosis of ASD a place in a school as near to their home as possible. Provides additional places required to meet the needs of an increase in diagnosis of pupils with ASD.
Prevention	Provision of locally based LRC's enables pupils to be educated as part of the graduated response as stipulated in the ALN Code of Practice and ultimately preventing being placed out-of-authority.

Integration	The ASD LRC is key in ensuring that pupils with a diagnosis of ASD have access to mainstream education experiences with their peers and also have the opportunity to reintegrate into mainstream education where appropriate. There are also efficiencies related to this proposal as the cost of an out-of-authority place far outweighs the cost of opening an LRC locally.
Collaboration	There is excellent collaboration between the local authority with schools that have LRC's. The Learner Support Service provides on-going support, advice and guidance to all schools.
Involvement	A range of key stakeholders are involved with a pupil placed in an ASD LRC ensuring that the individual needs of the pupil are met.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 The funding for the LRC would be allocated through the mainstream school's delegated budget, via the school's funding formula allocation, and using a combination of a class allocation and the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) element.
- 8.2 Funding levels would be derived from notional current staffing needs and are based on the salary of a teacher and two support staff. One-off funding for the set-up costs would be £10k.
- 8.3 As part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021-2022, a budget pressure of £82k was approved for an additional primary school ASD LRC/class to cater for Key Stage 2 children. This budget will be used to fund the LRC, including the set-up costs, at Tremains Primary School should the proposal go ahead.
- 8.4 Adaptation works to Tremains Primary School to facilitate the space required to open an ASD LRC have been funded through the Schools Maintenance Capital Grant.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
 - note that no objections were received during the public notice period; and
 - approve the implementation of the proposal with an opening date of autumn term 2022.

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Background documents:

None