

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	24 JUNE 2025
Report Title:	SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME ENLARGEMENT OF YSGOL GYMRAEG BRO OGWR MODIFICATION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION DATE
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE
Responsible Officer:	GAYNOR THOMAS MANAGER, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	Approval is sought to modify the implementation date of the replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to modify the implementation date of the replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr to September 2027.

2. Background

- 2.1 In November 2021, Cabinet received a joint report from the then Corporate Director Education and Family Support, and the Corporate Director Communities, which detailed the outcome of a feasibility study in respect of the land off Ffordd Cadfan and confirmed the site's suitability for development. At the same meeting, Cabinet approval was received to proceed with the acquisition of the site.
- 2.2 In November 2021, the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) received Ministerial approval.
- 2.3 On 18 January 2022, Cabinet approval was received to commence a statutory consultation process to make a regulated alteration to enlarge Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr to a 2.5-form-entry school, with a 90-place full-time-equivalent Nursery plus an 8-place observation and assessment class on land off Ffordd Cadfan. Childcare provision will be co-located at the school site.
- 2.4 In order to progress the proposal, consultation exercises were conducted between February 2022 and March 2022 in accordance with the statutory School

Organisation Code, 2018, the outcome of which was reported to Cabinet in June 2022.

- 2.5 The statutory public notice was published in June 2022 for a period of 28 days and formal written objections were invited during this time.
- 2.6 In October 2022, a report to Cabinet detailed the outcome of the statutory notice in respect of the proposed enlargement of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr. Cabinet approval was given to implement the proposal with effect from September 2025.

3. Current situation/proposal

- 3.1 The internal and external layouts of the replacement school have been agreed in consultation with the school. Architectural design is progressing through Royal Institute of British Architects stages, and mechanical and electrical design work is ongoing. WSP (UK) Limited is currently reviewing and finalising the transport assessment to support the planning application.
- 3.2 Certain professional services have been procured to support the design development (for example, drainage, civils, and structures). The design has been informed by site surveys (for example, site investigation, drainage, transport impact assessment), and is based on a Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) standardised approach to primary school layouts. While the school is a bespoke design to suit site constraints, the design approach provides consistency throughout different projects, in terms of the general arrangement for teaching elements and building and services specification.
- 3.3 There are ecology issues at the Ffordd Cadfan site and part of the site has been cleared of scrub and bramble. However, the consultant ecologist has delayed further work from being undertaken due to the presence of reptiles. The ecologist is currently assessing suitable receptor sites for reptile translocation (which will take place during the summer 2025 period), after which the remainder of the site can be cleared. Further site investigation works (for example, boreholes and trial pits) are required to inform the sub-structure design and the ecology issues are impacting on the timing of these works. The site investigation can begin once the ecology work has concluded, and the reptiles have been relocated.
- 3.4 The development of the scheme has been challenging due to the ecology issues which has prevented clearance of the Ffordd Cadfan site. This has impacted on the original planned implementation date (that is, September 2025). The Major Projects Team has developed a revised programme for delivering the replacement school. However, the planned implementation date, as approved by Cabinet is no longer achievable. Cabinet approval to modify the implementation date to September 2027 is required to coincide with the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year. The local authority has consulted with Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr's Governing Body regarding the modification and there is no objection to the proposed revised date.
- 3.5 Ahead of submitting a formal planning application for the replacement school, a pre-application consultation (PAC) will be undertaken. A planning consultant has been appointed and information to inform the PAC process, including computer-generated imagery, is currently being finalised. Following the PAC process and

subject to obtaining the necessary planning consent, the local authority will then be in a position to tender the scheme, subject to Cabinet approval.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 A full equality impact assessment (EIA) has been conducted as part of the development of this proposal. The full EIA considers the impact of the proposal on the nine protected characteristics, the Socio-economic Duty, and the use of the Welsh Language.
- 4.2 The EIA 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.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 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

- Fulfils the Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient pupil places and will allow teaching and learning to take place in a building and site which is suited to the needs of the learners and staff.
- Supports the day-to-day management and operation of the school.
- Increases the number of Welsh-medium primary school places in the county borough and promotes the Welsh language.

Prevention

- Safeguards the Council's position in terms of any potential legal challenge regarding the supply of school places.
- Commitment to Cymraeg 2050.

Integration

- Ensures that the curriculum can be delivered from a purpose-built facility that meets social, environmental, and cultural objectives.

Collaboration

- 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.

Involvement

- Engagement of potential stakeholders including Cabinet, members, governors, staff, pupils, community, internal and external partners.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 The local authority's 'Bridgend 2030 – Net Zero Carbon Strategy' and Welsh Government's carbon reduction commitments will also be addressed through the School Modernisation Programme, as all new provision will be designed to ensure that it is Net Zero Carbon 'in operation' and embodied carbon targets are achieved.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 BCBC is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity through all our services and dedicated to treating all citizens, employees and visitors with respect, while providing services which respond to people's individual needs.
- 7.2 The Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-2026 ensures that equality and fairness remain firmly at the heart of how the council plans, provides, and delivers important services to the people of Bridgend County Borough.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 In 2021, Welsh Government approved the Outline Business Case (OBC) to replace Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr at a cost of £12.6m. The funding breakdown is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1

BCBC	Welsh Government	Total
£4.858m	£7.742m	£12.6m

- 8.2 However, since that time, the construction industry has seen costs escalate due to COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, costs of incorporating decarbonisation measures and energy price increases. Consequently, in August 2024, a revised OBC was submitted to Welsh Government detailing the increased cost of the project. On 31 October 2024, the Cabinet Secretary for Education gave approval to progress the scheme to Full Business Case (FBC) stage based on the revised costs submitted. In November 2024, Council approved additional funding to deliver the scheme, as part of the Capital Programme. Table 2 sets out the total cost of the scheme, and the approved budget allocations/funding streams required to deliver the project.

Table 2

BCBC / Section 106	Welsh Government	Total (excluding highways and childcare)	Welsh Government capital grant (childcare)	BCBC (off-site/highways)	Total
£6.325m	£11.464m	£17.789m	£550k	£261k	£18.6m

- 8.3 As detailed in Table 2, Welsh Government grant funding approval for £550k has been secured to co-locate the proposed Bridgend Town Welsh-medium childcare provision with the replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr at Ffordd Cadfan. However, given the cost increases experienced by industry since the original funding approval was received, Welsh Government has recently requested that the local authority submits a revised Business Justification Case detailing any increase in costs for the childcare provision. The outcome of the submission will be detailed in a future Cabinet report.
- 8.4 Once the scheme has been tendered and construction costs are known, the information will be presented to Welsh Government in a cost plan as part of the FBC. It is at that point in the process that Welsh Government funding approval will be secured. The local authority will not enter into a construction contract until the necessary approvals are in place.
- 8.5 Any revenue implications arising from the replacement school will be calculated based on the final design and any increased funding required as a consequence of this (for example, increased premises funding for the school from changes in business rates, energy) will be treated as a budget pressure and considered as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy process going forward.
- 9. Recommendation**
- 9.1 Cabinet approval is sought to modify the implementation date of the replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr to September 2027.

Background documents: None