

# CABINET

## 06/12/2021

### MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

#### PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE MYNYDDYGARREG AND GWENLLIAN AREAS

**Recommendations / key decisions required:**

It is recommended that the Cabinet approves:

- The observations received and the Local Authority's responses following the Consultation Period (Consultation Report attached);
- The modifications to the implementation dates of the proposal as noted in the report;
- The publication of a Statutory Notice to implement the proposal.

**Reasons:**

- To comply with statutory procedures and guidance in relation to school re-organisation.

**Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted:** No

**Cabinet Decision Required:** Yes – 06/12/2021

**Council Decision Required:** No

**Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)

**Directorate:**

Education & Children

**Name of Head of Service:**

Simon Davies

**Report Author:**

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**Designations:**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
CABINET  
06/12/2021**

**MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

**PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION  
IN THE MYNYDDYGARREG AND GWENLLIAN AREAS**

**Background**

The Authority has a legal responsibility to review the number and type of schools it has in an area and whether it is making the best use of resources and facilities to deliver the opportunities that children deserve.

**Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg**

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg is a Welsh medium community primary school located in the village of Mynyddygarreg with capacity for 55 pupils between 4-11 years. In recent years pupil numbers have remained consistent but are still well below capacity. January 2020 PLASC showed that there were 36 pupils at the school with 19 surplus places, or 35%. Welsh Government through the School Organisation Code advises local authorities to review their provision where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area.

Whilst there are 113 pupils living within Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's catchment area **only 22 of those pupils attend the school**, meaning that 91 pupils living within the school's catchment area attend 16 other schools within the County, many being neighbouring catchment schools.

Based on projections (2020) it is estimated that pupil figures will remain well below capacity for the foreseeable future. Additionally, Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's building condition is 'poor' and the school has been in deficit since 2016/17 and remains with a deficit of £48,265 going into the 2020/21 financial year. Their original funding allocation for 2020/21 was £172k.

From an educational perspective having such a small number of pupils and mixed age classes makes it extremely difficult for the school to deliver the breadth and depth of curricular and social experiences which pupils of this age require to fully develop.

The culmination of these unavoidable facts presents a school model which does not represent a sound, stable educational model for best use of resources. With no prospect of there being a significant increase in pupil numbers for the foreseeable future, consideration is required on the sustainability of the school.

## **Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian**

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian is a Welsh medium 3-11 community primary school situated in the historical town of Kidwelly.

In recent years, pupil numbers have remained consistent and slightly below the school's capacity of 140. However, based on pupil projections (2020), pupil numbers are expected to increase the school is expected to be close to capacity by 2025 and this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. As a result, the Local Authority are developing a scheme to provide a new school with facilities fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century on a new site.

The project will re-locate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian from its current site to a new site which is within the current catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian. The new school will provide a Welsh Government standard primary school building with capacity to accommodate 240 pupils (210 + 30 nursery places) between the ages of 3-11 years old and ensure that the school is able to deliver the full curriculum in a modern, safe and inspiring learning environment with enhanced outside areas.

This proposed investment will address poor building condition and lack of adequate space and provision in the existing school by providing a category **A** school with sufficient places for current and projected demand.

As a result of the ongoing challenges that both schools face, it is not possible to sustain current arrangements.

### **Statutory Process**

In accordance with Executive Board's (now known as the Cabinet) instructions on the 21 December 2020 a formal consultation exercise was undertaken from 11 January 2021 and was due to end on the 21 February 2021. However, a decision was made by the Executive Board to extend the Consultation Period until the 16 July 2021. The results of the consultation exercise are contained in the attached Consultation Report.

Should the Cabinet grant permission to proceed to Statutory Notice, the intention is to publish in due course.

If approved, following the end of the Statutory Notice period, an objection report which summarises any objections received by stakeholders, will be presented to the Cabinet and ultimately to the County Council for determination.

### **Modifications**

As a result of the extension to the Consultation Period, the implementation dates for the proposal noted above require modification to ensure appropriate time to implement the proposal.

Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with this proposal it is recommended that the Cabinet accepts the modified dates as noted below:

- Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg as from 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2022.
- From 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2022 all pupils will be registered at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian operating on both sites (Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian and the former Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg) increasing its capacity to 178 + 17 nursery places.
- Re-designate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian's catchment area to include that of the former Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's catchment area as of 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2022.
- Relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian to a new site and increase its capacity to 210 + 30 nursery places as of September 2024, when occupation of the new school is proposed.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Cabinet approves:

- The observations received and the Local Authority's responses following the Consultation Period (Consultation Report attached);
- The modifications to the implementation dates of the proposal as noted in the report;
- The publication of a Statutory Notice to implement the proposal.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

**YES: Consultation Report**

## IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed:  Head of Access to Education

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

### 1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Developments are consistent with the Authority's Corporate Strategy and the Modernising Education Strategic Outline Programme.

### 2. Legal

Appropriate consultation was initiated in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures.

### 3. Finance

Revenue implications will be catered for within the Local Management of Schools Fair Funding Scheme.

### 4. ICT

ICT colleagues will be consulted with in relation to the potential relocation of IT equipment.

### 5. Risk Management Issues

The proposal may impact on the demand for school places at the school and surrounding catchment area schools. The situation will be monitored as part of the school admission process and ongoing data forecasting and analysis through the Authority's Modernising Education Programme.

### 6. Staffing Implications

Staffing implications will be addressed in accordance with the County Council's Policy and Procedures.

### 7. Physical Assets

- i. One redundant school site – Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg. Should the proposal be adopted the property will be transferred to Corporate Property Division of the Regeneration and Policy Department for the procedures outlined in the 'Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings' arising from the Modernising Education Programme policy to be actioned.  
This policy has been developed to allow the community to be offered the asset in the first instance before placing the site on the open market.
- ii. If the proposal is implemented to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian will proceed to operate on split sites occupying both current Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian locations until the proposed new Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian school building is ready for occupation.
- iii. Following the project completion of developing a new school building for Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian the current Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian will become redundant as point i. above.

## CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed:



Head of Access to Education

**1. Scrutiny Committee** – Consulted during the formal Consultation Period.

**2. Local Member(s)** – The local members is aware of the proposal and was consulted during the formal Consultation Period.

**3. Community / Town Council** – Consulted during the formal Consultation Period.

<b>4. Relevant Partners</b> – Consulted during the formal Consultation Period.	
<b>5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations</b> – Consulted during the formal Consultation Period.	
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED YES</b>	N/A

<b>Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:</b>	
<b>Title of Document</b>	<b>File Ref No./Locations that the papers are available for public inspection</b>
Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	<a href="https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan/">https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan/</a>
MEP Biennial Review	<a href="http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk">www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a> Executive Board 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2016
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Website	<a href="http://www.21stcenturyschools.org">www.21stcenturyschools.org</a>
Consultation Document	<a href="http://gov.wales">Mynyddygarreg and Gwenllian (gov.wales)</a>
Stage 1 (Permission to Consult) – ECS Scrutiny Committee Report	<a href="http://gov.wales">Agenda for Education &amp; Children Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 23rd November, 2020, 10.00 am (gov.wales)</a>
Stage 1 (Permission to Consult) Exec Board	<a href="http://modern.gov.co.uk">Agenda for Cabinet on Monday, 21st December, 2020, 10.00 am - Carmarthenshire County Council (modern.gov.co.uk)</a>