

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

13TH MAY, 2014

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Authors: Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Tel: 01443 744001
Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools
Tel: 01443 744220

SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with details to approve the introduction of major capital works to Trerobart Primary School and Llwynocrwn Primary School into the Education and Lifelong Learning capital programme and the associated future release of capital monies to fund these schemes.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Approve the construction of the new junior block at Llwynocrwn Primary School at an estimated cost of approximately £4.7M.
- 2.2 Approve the acceptance of the £1.8M reallocated from WG transformational school funding towards Llwynocrwn Primary School and agree to utilise £2.9M ring fenced in the Council Education and Lifelong Learning capital programme for 2014/15.
- 2.3 Approve the remodelling works to Trerobart Primary School as reported to Members at Cabinet on the 21st January 2013.
- 2.4 Approve the use of savings accrued from amalgamating Trerobart Primary School and Glanffrwd Infants School to utilise Prudential borrowing to finance the Council investment towards Trerobart Primary School at an estimated cost of £1.920M (subject to Council approval).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At a meeting of Cabinet on the 28th June 2010, Members were provided with details of the bids made to Welsh Government for funding of school building projects under Tranche 3 of the WG Transitional Capital Funding. Abercynon

Community Primary School was one of the projects allocated funding and the new school was completed in July 2013.

- 3.2 Through collaboration with appointed Designers, Contractors and stakeholders the Council delivered the 21st Century new community primary school project in Abercynon under budget. The Council then approached WG to enquire whether the savings could be re-allocated from the transformational school funding previously awarded to another project to bring another school in Rhondda Cynon Taf up to 21st Century School Standard.
- 3.3 Welsh Government approved 'in principle' to the submission of a new Business Justification Case to the reallocation of the funding.

4. PROJECTS

Llwyncrwn Primary School

- 4.1 A Business Justification Case (BJC) was subsequently submitted to WG in July 2013 for Llwyncrwn Primary School and in April 2014 we received approval of the BJC by the Department for Education and Skills to the re-allocation of £1.8M funding previously awarded.
- 4.2 Llwyncrwn Primary School is a scheme that has been agreed by Members at Cabinet on the 15th November 2010 as a priority for investment as part of the 21st Century Schools – Strategic Outline Programme.
- 4.3 In October 1997 the school suffered a major fire to the infant block which was rebuilt and handed over for occupation in 1999. However, the remaining CLASP junior block dates back to 1968 and as with many of the CLASP buildings in the UK asbestos based products were widely used in the construction industry. The Council has undertaken full scale surveys to the junior block and identified asbestos present in the building. Management plans, control actions and measures are in place to currently manage the risk but the school building cannot be easily adapted and even minor repair works are very expensive to undertake under licensed controlled conditions. Therefore the school is unable to develop the building to improve the classrooms to ensure a 21st century learning environment.
- 4.4 Therefore, the proposal is to facilitate the demolition of the existing junior block with additional classroom accommodation to be replaced with a standardised build approach where the core design (i.e. hall, main block, classrooms, plant kitchen, and circulation areas) can be replicated on several future school replacement schemes providing a cost effective solution.

Trerobart Primary School

- 4.5 At the Cabinet meeting held on 22nd October 2012, Members gave approval to begin a process of formal consultation on the proposal to close Glanffrwd Infants School and transfer education provision to Trerobart Primary School. Following this period of consultation, on 21st January 2013, Members gave

approval to issue a formal statutory notice in relation to the proposal, which was duly published on 8th February 2013. Due to the receipt of statutory objections, the proposals were referred to the Welsh Government for determination.

- 4.6 On 17th July 2013, following due consideration, the Welsh Government approved the proposal to discontinue Glanffrwd Infants School and transfer the pupils to Trerobart Primary School for September 2014.
- 4.7 During the consultation process future building development plans were agreed and these included:
- Refurbishment of toilet facilities for Foundation Phase pupils
 - Removal of a hired mobile classroom unit for nursery pupils and construction of a new single classroom extension to the current infant block
 - A new school assembly hall, with new kitchen facilities
 - Upgraded outdoor play areas for Foundation Phase pupils.
- 4.8 The capital works to refurbish the toilets in the Foundation Phase area of the school have been completed, the new nursery extension is due for completion in May 2014 and the upgraded outdoor play area is planned for the summer. These schemes have been funded from within the existing Education and Lifelong Learning capital programme.
- 4.9 The remaining project to provide a new school hall and kitchen facilities together costing £1.92M is required for September 2014 to enable pupils to be received from Glanffrwd Infants School.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The estimated cost of the building works required is:
- Llwyncrwn Primary School - £4.7M
 - Trerobart Primary School - £1.9M
- 5.2 The Council has agreed £2.9M contribution to replace Llwyncrwn Primary School in the Education and Lifelong Learning capital programme 14/15, however the project cost is estimated at £4.7M. Therefore the award of the £1.8M from WG provides the additional funding required bridging the budget shortfall.
- 5.3 The estimated cost of the building works £1.920M for Trerobart Primary School can be met from using the £141k per annum savings that accrue from amalgamating Glanffrwd Infants School and Trerobart Primary School to utilise Prudential borrowing to finance the Council investment towards the project.

6. CONCLUSION

Commitment of monies in the capital programme to fund the two projects identified in this report needs to commence from the financial year 2014/15.

The opportunity therefore exists to utilise the Grant funding of £1.8M awarded to the Council from WG to supplement the Education and Lifelong Learning Capital Programme to fund the project at Llwynocrwn Primary School; and using savings that accrue from the amalgamation of Glanffrwd Infants School and Trerobart Primary School to utilise Prudential Borrowing to finance the scheme at Trerobart Primary School.