



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

To: All Consultees

Gofynnwch Am:
Please Ask For:

21st Century Schools

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Dyddiad: 19th July 2019
Date:

Dear Consultee,

PROPOSAL: REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE PONTYPRIDD AREA

The Council's Cabinet, at their meeting held on 18th July 2019, resolved to approve the above proposals to be implemented in September 2022. This decision is subject to call-in. The proposal to remove the sixth form at Cardinal Newman Roman Catholic School is still subject to determination by the Welsh Ministers and the Council is awaiting a decision on this particular proposal.

A copy of the Objection Report that was prepared in respect of the proposals can be viewed on the Council website at the link below. Hard copies are available on request.

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>

The rationale behind the proposals and the reasons underpinning the decision to implement them were fully outlined and explained in the consultation document that was widely circulated in October of last year, and continues to be available on the Council website. Cabinet also fully considered all comments received following the consultation process that ended in January of this year and the objections received following the publication of the statutory notice, together with the several impact assessment documents that were prepared to inform the consultation process. A summary of the reasons for the decision to implement these proposals is given below:

- **Quality and standards in education**

The interests of the children and young people who attend our schools are of paramount importance. It is the Council's view that creating larger sixth forms and 3-16 schools will:

- improve educational outcomes;

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Gaynor Davies

Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant | Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Dewiswch iaith a diwyg eich dogfen | Available in alternative formats and languages

Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhowch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewis iaith e.e Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog. We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.



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- improve educational provision, and
- improve leadership and management.

- **The need to rationalise school places and improve accessibility**

These proposals will allow for the investment of £37.4m for building new schools and/or refurbishing and remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have access to high quality, viable and sustainable 21st Century learning environments. It will ensure that the schools have sufficient places, which includes removing the inefficient and costly surplus capacity that currently exists in some provisions, as well as increasing Welsh medium places in the area to support Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers target. Schools will be accessible and fully compliant with statutory legislation. Transport provision will be made in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy, which exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory obligations.

In summary, the sixth form provisions in the three secondary schools remain financially and educationally unviable.

- there is unnecessary duplication of sixth form provision across schools and colleges;
- class sizes are too small and resources intended for learners in key stages 3 and 4 are being utilized to subsidise unsustainable sixth form provisions in settings;
- the poor retention rates at post 16 is having a detrimental impact financially and educationally;
- the cumulative deficit position of Cardinal Newman RC School, Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School is in excess of £1.5M.

The creation of the new 3-16 all-through schools will deliver 21st Century School learning environments that will:

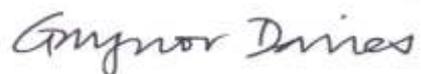
- provide buildings that are fully accessible and which meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010;
- remove surplus places;
- create financially sustainable provisions;
- improve transition;
- enable greater continuity in teaching and learning opportunities across all key stages; and
- provide opportunities for developing a wholly inclusive community facility.

The creation of a new, larger, Welsh medium primary school will:

- deliver a fully accessible, modern and flexible 21st Century School environment;
- support the Equality Act 2010 and the inclusion of learners with additional learning needs;
- support Welsh Government's aspirational Cymraeg 2050 targets;
- provide external spaces to facilitate the delivery of the new curriculum;
- increase the number of Welsh medium school places in the Pontypridd area in line with Welsh Government legislation and strategy; and
- provide opportunities for developing inclusive community facilities.

The conclusion therefore reached by Cabinet when making their final decision is that the benefits that can be achieved in respect of improved educational outcomes, delivering 21st Century School environments for school pupils in this area, and creating financially sustainable provisions, are valid reasons for implementing these proposals.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gwynor Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Director of Education and Inclusion Services