



## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

24 JANUARY 2019

### 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION PROVISION IN CYNON VALLEY

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

**Authors:** Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of proposals to:
- Improve and increase education provision in Hirwaun by investing in a new school for Hirwaun Primary School;
  - Improve Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community Primary School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium Primary School;

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached Consultation Report, which includes details of items of correspondence received during the consultation exercise and notes of the various meetings held.
- 2.2 Note that the consultation report recommends that an amendment to the consultation proposals be made, which **will** allow new English medium admissions to Penderyn Community Primary School until such time that the change in category of Penderyn Community Primary School, from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school, comes into effect.
- 2.3 Agree to progress the proposals plus amendment to the next stage of the review process by firstly agreeing to publish the Consultation Report, and secondly issuing an appropriate Statutory Notice two weeks after the Consultation Report is published.
- 2.4 The modified proposals are to:

- create a new school for Hirwaun Primary School by September 2021;
- change the category of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school from September 2021;
- continue to allow new English medium admissions to Penderyn Community Primary School until such time that the change in category of Penderyn Community Primary School, from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school, comes into effect.

### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code).

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018, approval was given to begin a process to formally consult on a proposal to improve and increase education provision in Hirwaun by investing in a new school for Hirwaun Primary School; and improve Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community Primary School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium Primary School.

### **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Equality, Community and Welsh Language Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of this proposal and were published on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document that outlines the proposal in detail. Copies of all impact assessments are attached as an appendix to this report.

### **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and recently updated in November 2018. These arrangements stipulate that a Consultation Report must be prepared prior to the publication of any Statutory Notices which will progress the proposal. It further states that this Report must be published within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 in this instance.

- 6.2 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix B for your attention. It contains information in respect of meetings held to discuss the proposal, with copies of the notes taken at these meetings. It also contains a summary of the correspondence received during the consultation period and where appropriate, the responses given to the comments and queries raised. The report also references the Draft minutes of the Children & young People Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2018.
- 6.3 It must be noted that there has been a fair response to this particular consultation process with 58 written responses received; in addition to this approximately 60 people, plus pupils, from both Hirwaun Primary and Penderyn Community Primary School attended the open evening held to provide further information on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## **7. THE STATUTORY PROCESS**

- 7.1 The Statutory Notice for this proposal will refer to:
- Increasing education provision in Hirwaun by constructing a new school for Hirwaun Primary School; and
  - Improving Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community Primary School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium Primary School
- 7.2 If agreed, and subject to the matter not being called in for consideration by Scrutiny, the Consultation Report will be published on January 30<sup>th</sup> 2019. Following a two week period the Statutory Notice will be published on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
- 7.3 If any objections are received during this period, in accordance with the aforementioned Code, an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, probably in April 2019, for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 If the proposal proceeds, it is proposed that a new school building be constructed to accommodate the new Hirwaun Primary School and it is

estimated that the cost of this work will be approximately £10.4m. This will be funded by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme, which includes a 65% contribution from Welsh Government. The Council's 35% share of the capital costs will be met through prudential borrowing.

- 8.2 Any revenue and capital costs that accrue in completing the consultation and preparing financial business cases for Welsh Government approval will be met from within existing budgets.
- 8.3 The Welsh Government has approved in principle the Strategic Outline financial business case to construct a new Hirwaun Primary School. A more detailed Outline Business Case will be submitted to the Welsh Government in February 2019, and if approved a Full Business Case will follow.

## **9 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.**

- 9.1 The Council's Corporate Plan commits to "Continue to invest in improving school buildings, to ensure the County Borough's pupils have the learning environment fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The proposals considered in the report contribute to all 7 well-being goals within the Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

## **10 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, to agree to its immediate publication, and to give officers approval to publish an appropriate Statutory Notice on February 13<sup>th</sup> 2019 to progress this proposal.

### **Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People***

### **Appendices to the report are:**

- **Equality Impact Assessment**
- **Community Impact Assessment**
- **Consultation Report**

### ***Contact Officer***

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PLEASE NOTE THAT A WELSH VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE AVAILABLE PRIOR TO PUBLICATION

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CONSULTATION REPORT

**Proposal : To construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.**

#### 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 011/2018. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 1st October 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

#### 2. Who did we consult with?

A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

- The governing bodies of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Pupils of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Parents, carers and staff members of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education &
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium – Joint Education Service
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Communities for Work Plus Employment Support Programme
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council
- The Welsh Language Commissioner

- Skills
  - Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
  - Menter Iaith
  - Mudiad Meithrin
  - Neighbouring local authorities

Copies were also sent to all local authorities that share a boundary with Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### 3. The Proposal

The proposal is to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School buildings with a newly constructed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standard building, on the existing site of the current school with a capacity of 390 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be English medium; and to amend the language category of Penderyn Community Primary School from its current dual language status to a 3-11 Welsh medium community primary school with a capacity of 231 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be Welsh medium.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was circulated to all the stakeholders listed overleaf which is attached as Appendix 1; this also includes the Community Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and the Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

### 4. The Consultation Process

All stakeholders identified in Section 2 overleaf were sent paper or electronic copies of our consultation documentation. The following meetings were also convened:

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Penderyn Community Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Penderyn Community Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 / 3pm-6pm	Hirwaun Primary School

Notes of all of the above meetings were taken and are attached as Appendix 2. These notes record questions raised, comments and statements made, with responses provided where appropriate.

An open evening/exhibition was held at Hirwaun Primary School on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018, the purpose of which was to provide further information on the proposal, answer any questions, and give parents in particular the opportunity to ask questions. Officers from the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate, Corporate Estates, and Highways Directorate were in attendance. This event was attended by approximately 60 people, which included school governors, pupils, parents and local residents.

A meeting with the Children's and Young People's Scrutiny Committee was held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018, where the consultation proposals were presented and comments and questions on the proposals received and where appropriate were answered by the Officers in attendance. Notes of this meeting were recorded and are included at Appendix 3.

## **5. Summary of Responses to Consultation**

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 2 and 3. Also enclosed at Appendix 4 are summaries of the questionnaires and written responses received plus comments posted on a 'Have your say' board provided for this purpose at the open evening.

There were 58 written responses received during the consultation period and the number of those which are in favour of the proposals and those which are not are; 15 in favour, 22 against, and 21 unsure or their preference not specified.

Comments submitted during the consultation period, as well as feedback provided verbally at the public drop-in session, are recorded below. Where a number of letters received were duplicated, or a common theme raised by numerous respondents during the consultation process, we have captured this in a singular comment in this part of the report. Where required and/or appropriate our responses are included:

- **The consultation report does not quantify the number of children being taught through the medium of Welsh that live outside the Penderyn catchment area.**

The number of pupils that are educated through the medium of Welsh at Penderyn Community School that are within the Welsh medium catchment area is 89%, therefore 11% are out of catchment.

The language split of pupils that attend Penderyn Community Primary who reside in the Penderyn 'English' School catchment are 22 English and 17 Welsh.

- **Penderyn is a community school and all children should be able to attend.**

If these proposals are to go ahead then Penderyn will remain open as a community school, this will not change. The proposal is to remove the English language stream from the school not close it. The School Admissions Code will be implemented which ensures that all pupils who wish to attend Penderyn Community School, that live in catchment, will be able to do so.

- **Concerns were raised over Hirwaun Primary School's poor Estyn Report**

Since receiving their inspection report in February 2018, Hirwaun Primary School, Central South Consortium and the Local Education Authority, have been working closely to significantly improve upon the findings of the Estyn Report. A Post Inspection Action Plan has been written which focuses on those areas in need of improvement and provides targets to ensure that progress is made against each of the recommendations in the Estyn inspection report.

Progress continues to be closely monitored by the Director of Education and Challenge Advisors. The half term review suggests that progress is being made on the targets outlined in the PIAP. Ongoing support and monitoring will be provided to ensure that the school continues on its school improvement journey.

- **Concerns were raised that pupils will be unsettled if they move to a new school mid way through the primary phase**

Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption. Advice and support will be provided by the local authority to both Hirwaun Primary School and Penderyn Community Primary School to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and worry free as possible for the pupils.

- **Hirwaun needs a new school building**

- **Children are being discriminated against as they cannot be taught English in their local school**

School Organisation and School Admissions are administered through Statutory Codes and are requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. We ensure that all of our procedures are in line with this code which ensures we undertake due diligence so that no pupil is unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against. This consultation has been carried out in accordance with this code.

- **It is likely to result in job losses for the English medium staff currently employed at Penderyn. This is not acceptable.**

The impact upon staff is still unknown at this early stage in the consultation process. However RCT's Human Resources Department have confirmed that they will discuss any concerns with staff members on an individual basis.

- **Having children attend two different schools from September 2019 is not practical**

Having considered this and all comments that have been submitted during this consultation period, the recommendation is that this element of the consultation proposal is amended so that new English medium admissions **will** be accepted after September 2019. The recommendation will be to change the category of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school from September 2021, which will align with the proposed opening of the new Hirwaun Primary School.

- **The Penderyn catchment area was reduced so why not extend it again**

It can be confirmed that the former Mid Glamorgan Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council have not changed any catchments to Penderyn.

- **Penderyn School is subject to a restrictive covenant that is specific around the education of children through English and Welsh languages. Please could you confirm if there are covenants in place for Penderyn School**

The Conveyances for Penderyn Community Primary School have been checked and there are no covenants or restrictions on the title relating to the education of children through English and Welsh languages.

- **Making Penderyn Community Primary School will help to achieve the Welsh Government's target of creating 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.**

- **Free transport is not a suitable option for such young children.**

Rhondda Cynon Taf is experienced in providing safe transport for pupils upwards from the age of 3, and this service is provided in line with the School Transport Policy. The Council currently transports 2,292 primary age pupils to school, of which 252 are in their first year of school (aged 3-4). All primary school contracts are operated by drivers and passenger assistants that have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount to us at all times.

- **Object to the idea of all pupils accessing the school site via Glanant Street and Longfield Court throughout the construction of the new school**

This consultation process is in respect of proposals to provide Hirwaun with a new larger primary school and amend the language category of Penderyn Community Primary School and follows statutory guidance contained within the School Organisation Code. If the proposal progresses and a planning application for a new school is submitted in the future, then further consultation will be undertaken in the community under the relevant legislation (the Town and Country Planning Act). This is entirely separate from the current consultation process.

These objections are however noted for the purpose of this report.

### **The View of Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales) of the Overall Merits of the Proposal.**

*This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.*

*Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.*

*Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.*

#### **Summary/ Conclusion**

*The proposer is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, and the proposal relates to the construction of a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School (Hirwaun PS) and a change of language medium status - to Welsh medium only - at Penderyn Community Primary School (Penderyn CPS) from September 2021.*

*Overall, the proposal is likely to have a beneficial impact on the standard of education provision in the area.*

#### **Description and benefits**

*The proposer has given a clear description of the proposal and arrangements for responding to the consultation.*

*The proposer has made suitable reference to: the schools' performance data and trends; information about the condition of the estate; current and projected pupil numbers and*

*attendance; recent Estyn reports. Both of the schools affected by the proposal have been inspected within the past year, and the proposal acknowledges the judgements of Adequate and needs improvement, and Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement that were awarded at Hirwaun PS. It notes the relatively poor condition of the school buildings at Hirwaun PS.*

*The proposer has set out its rationale for changing Penderyn CPS to a Welsh medium-only school, both in terms of a trend of increasing numbers of pupils attending its Welsh medium stream, and in respect of the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). In relation to the change of catchment, the proposal sets out the priorities for allocating pupils a place according to the authority's school admissions policy. Pupils studying in the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS would transfer automatically to provision at Hirwaun PS without any additional application process.*

*The proposal addresses transport for pupils within the proposed changed school catchments appropriately. Pupils living in Trenant and Penywaun (within the expanded catchment area for Penderyn CPS) who wish to receive Welsh medium education would be eligible for free transport to school at Penderyn CPS. Pupils living in Penderyn (within the expanded catchment area for Hirwaun PS) who wish to receive English medium education would receive free transport to Hirwaun PS.*

*The proposal addresses potential staff changes as a consequence of closing the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS. Staff below SLT level would have the opportunity to apply for new posts at Hirwaun PS before they are externally advertised, and these posts would initially be 'ring fenced' to former Penderyn CPS teachers.*

*The proposer identifies a few disadvantages to the proposed changes. These include the perceptions by parents that a smaller school may be more appropriate to their child's needs and increased travelling distance for some pupils in some communities. The proposer has mitigated the increased travel for these pupils by providing free transport for those pupils affected. The proposal includes consideration of demographic changes in the area in the near future, including housing developments and future development at the site of the former Tower Colliery at Hirwaun. These are likely to lead to an increase in demand in both English- and Welsh-medium provision.*

*The proposer has considered alternative options, including maintaining the current language status of the two schools, and replacing the old buildings at Hirwaun PS 'like for like'. However, it has concluded that these would not address the increasing demand for Welsh medium provision, the local demographic changes or the potential benefits to quality that having larger single-language provision at the two schools could bring. The proposal includes consideration of the risk of disruption to pupils at Hirwaun PS during building works. The proposer notes that these risks will 'be mitigated by the detailed and thorough project management arrangements that will be put in place', although does not give any detail of these arrangements.*

### ***Educational aspects of the proposal***

*The proposal sets out the perceived benefits. They include, for the construction of an English-medium school at Hirwaun: an extended, enhanced environment in a modern, purpose built school, all pupils being taught in same-age-group classes, improvements brought about by increases in scale to pupils' and teachers' opportunities. For Penderyn CPS, the benefits identified include: total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school, the creation of a 'critical mass' of Welsh medium learners, more opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh and improved recruitment and retention of staff.*

*The potential benefits identified by the proposer appear to be a reasonable assessment of the consequences of the proposed changes.*

## **6. Assessment of Consultation**

In view of the responses and comments received during the consultation period, a further assessment of the proposals, which are included within the consultation document, has been undertaken. The proposals have been revisited and the impact of the proposals on the quality and standards of education, the community, and transport arrangements, have been reassessed.

Following this reassessment the proposals are not wholly considered to be the most suitable and as such it is considered appropriate that an amendment to the proposals be tendered. The recommendation is that an element of the consultation proposal is amended so that new English medium admissions **will** be accepted to Penderyn Community Primary School after September 2019.

The recommendation of this report is to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School, change the category of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school from September 2021, and continue to allow new English medium admissions to Penderyn Community Primary School until such time that the change in category of Penderyn Community Primary School, from a dual language school to a Welsh medium school, comes into effect.

## **7. Conclusion**

The recommendation is that this report is published, and at the appropriate time a statutory notice be published with the recommended modification as stated above, in order to progress this proposal.



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT A  
NEW SCHOOL BUILDING FOR HIRWAUN PRIMARY  
SCHOOL AND THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF LANGUAGE  
MEDIUM STATUS OF PENDERYN COMMUNITY  
PRIMARY SCHOOL, FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021**

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## Introduction to the Proposal

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Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School. The change will be achieved by the construction of a new school building on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School, to replace the current building, with Penderyn Community Primary School becoming a completely Welsh medium community primary school. As part of the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School to completely Welsh medium, it is also proposed to extend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to include the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (currently in the Welsh medium catchment for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). It is proposed that this catchment change will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. It is proposed that pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building on 1 September 2021. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, no new pupils wishing to be educated through the medium of English will be admitted to Penderyn Community Primary School.

### Who will we consult with?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The governing bodies of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Pupils of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Parents, carers and staff members of Hirwaun Primary School, Penderyn Community Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium – Joint Education Service
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Communities for Work Plus Employment Support Programme
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Menter Iaith
- Mudiad Meithrin

- Neighbouring local authorities

### **What will the consultation process entail?**

The consultation will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 and will be completed at 5pm on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in January 2019. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on page 5 of this document.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report and will decide, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal a statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the outcome of the statutory notice at the next available Cabinet meeting and determine whether to implement the proposal.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education and Inclusion Services will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their response to them within 7 days of the day of the determination of the proposal. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on page 6 of this document.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal the implementation date is 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 for the Welsh medium catchment change and 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 for the provision of the new school building at Hirwaun.

### **What do you have to consider?**

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed change to primary education provision in Hirwaun and Penderyn. We would like you to consider the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School and its extended catchment area proposal, and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School. The change will be achieved by the construction of a new school building on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School, to replace the building, with Penderyn Community Primary School becoming a completely Welsh medium community primary school with a larger catchment area encompassing the communities of Trenant and Penywaun. It is proposed that pupils attending the English medium stream of

Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building on 1 September 2021.

The proposal is to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School buildings with a newly constructed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standard building, on the existing site of the current school with a capacity of 390 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be English medium, and to amend the language category of Penderyn Community Primary School from its current dual language status to a 3-11 Welsh medium community primary school with a capacity of 231 pupils (plus nursery) all of which will be Welsh medium.

### How do you make your views known?

Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meeting.

School Affected	Group	Date / Time	Venue
Penderyn Community Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Penderyn Community Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 / 3pm-6pm	Hirwaun Primary School

A consultation questionnaire is attached, it will also be available at the drop-in session detailed above and on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Council's Cabinet.

You are also welcome to put your views, comments and any questions you may have in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
 Ty Trevithick  
 Abercynon CF45 4UQ Telephone (01443) 744227 Fax (01443) 744224

E-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

All correspondence should be received **no later than 5pm Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.**

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the statutory notice.

## Background to the proposal

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### Information on the schools – Penderyn Community Primary School

Penderyn Community Primary School is a dual language community primary school situated at Pontprenllwyd, Penderyn, which is a few miles from the town of Aberdare. The school site consists of a new building which was opened in 2006 and the school benefits from a Multi-Use Games Area and woodland area. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Penderyn Community Primary School is graded a B for condition and A for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £165,995.

The school is organised into two language streams. Parents choose for their children to study most of their lessons either through the medium of Welsh or through the medium of English. In recent years the number of pupils (including nursery) in the Welsh language stream has increased to 179, whilst numbers have fallen to just 54 in the English stream. Of the 54 pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School, only 22 pupils actually live within the Penderyn catchment area. The majority of pupils (27 pupils) live within the Hirwaun catchment area. There are 9 classes in the school, 6 of which are taught in Welsh and 3 which are taught in English.

The pupil numbers in Penderyn Community Primary School over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory pupil level annual school census (PLASC) which is undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government's statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately. All data is split between the respective Welsh (W) and English (E) streams of the school:

School	Age Range of whole school	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Penderyn Primary (W)	3 - 11	138	146	150	159	162
Penderyn Primary (E)	3 - 11	58	59	57	56	51

Note: The pupil capacity of the school is 231 (excluding nursery) – this capacity covers the Welsh and English streams.

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending):

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Penderyn Primary (W)	28	23	24	23	17
Penderyn Primary (E)	12	2	4	4	3

Over the next five years the pupil forecasts for Penderyn Community Primary School, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows:

School	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023
Penderyn Primary (W)	167	160	162	152	150
Penderyn Primary (E)	46	47	41	36	38

### Primary School Standards

The following tables set out the performance of the Welsh (W) and English (E) streams of Penderyn Community Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on the numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals.

Foundation Phase Outcomes						
Subjects	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)
Foundation Phase Indicator	92 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (1)	90 (3)	96.4 (1)	100 (1)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Language literacy and communication skills English/Welsh	96 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (2)	90 (3)	96.4 (2)	100 (1)
Mathematical development	96 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Key Stage Two Outcomes						
	2015 %		2016 %		2017 %	
Subjects	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)	Penderyn Primary (W)	Penderyn Primary (E)
English	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.4 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Welsh 1st	88.2 (3)	N/A	94.2 (2)	N/A	95.5 (2)	N/A
Maths	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Science	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (3)	88.9 (4)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.2 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)

*The figures in brackets in the table overleaf, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

The attendance of the pupils of the school over the past three years is set out below:

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2015	2015 Benchmark Quartile	2016	2016 Benchmark Quartile	2017	2017 Benchmark Quartile
Penderyn Primary (whole school)	94.2	4	94.6	3	94.6	4
Penderyn Primary (W)	94.7	3	94.8	3	94.8	4
Penderyn Primary (E)	93	4	94	4	94.5	4

Penderyn Community Primary School was inspected by Estyn in April 2018 and the outcomes were as follows:-

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Estyn also set out that, in order to build upon the current work, the school should:

- R1** Refine monitoring and self-evaluation procedures and ensure that reports identify the school's qualities and areas for development clearly

- R2** Make sure that planning procedures ensure appropriate achievement of the curriculum over time, and that they are useful to teachers in sessions on the classroom floor
- R3** Ensure that the school implements all of the principles of the foundation phase consistently

The Council’s School Improvement Services are provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. Schools are categorised as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red in respect of their standards. The categorisation colour shows the level of support a school needs (with the schools in the green category needing the least support and those in the red category needing the most intensive support). Each school will receive a tailored programme of support, challenge and intervention based on this category. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region and Penderyn Community Primary School has recently been categorised as a ‘Yellow’ school.

### Information on the schools – Hirwaun Primary School

Hirwaun Primary School is an English medium Community School located at Glannant Street, Hirwaun, Aberdare and the school site consists of two separate single storey prefabricated buildings, consisting of concrete sections built around a steel frame with flat felt roof, constructed in 1969. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Hirwaun Primary School is graded a C minus for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £1,931,226.00.

The pupil numbers in Hirwaun Primary School over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory pupil level annual school census (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government’s statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately:

School	Age Range of whole school	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Hirwaun Primary	3 - 11	195	201	201	211	208

Note: The pupil capacity of the school is 265 (excluding nursery).

Nursery numbers (total numbers of pupils attending):

School	Jan 2014	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018
Hirwaun Primary	38	33	32	36	41

Over the next five years the pupil forecasts for Hirwaun Primary School, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows:

School	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023
Hirwaun Primary	214	218	220	222	228

It should also be noted that there are currently 102 'in catchment' children resident in Hirwaun attending schools outside of the Hirwaun Primary catchment area (excluding those attending faith schools). If demand from in catchment children should rise due to the provision of a new school building, the growth in pupil numbers would be able to be accommodated within the new building.

### Primary School Standards

The following tables set out the performance of Hirwaun Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on the numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals.

Foundation Phase Outcomes			
	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
Subjects	Hirwaun Primary	Hirwaun Primary	Hirwaun Primary
Foundation Phase Indicator	86.2 (2)	86.2 (2)	89.3 (1)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	93.1 (3)	100 (1)	96.4 (2)
Language literacy and communication skills English/welsh	86.2 (2)	86.2 (2)	92.9 (1)
Mathematical development	89.7 (2)	93.1 (1)	92.9 (1)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Key Stage Two Outcomes			
Subjects	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %
English	83.3 (3)	90.9 (1)	94.6 (1)
Maths	91.7 (1)	95.5 (1)	97.3 (1)
Science	91.7 (2)	95.5 (1)	94.6 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	83.31 (2)	90.9 (1)	91.9 (1)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

The attendance of the pupils of the school over the past three years is set out below:

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2015	2015 Benchmark Quartile	2016	2016 Benchmark Quartile	2017	2017 Benchmark Quartile
Hirwaun Primary	94.2	2	93	4	93.6	3

Hirwaun Primary School was last inspected by Estyn in February 2018 and the outcomes were as follows:-

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Adequate and needs improvement
Teaching and learning experiences	Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

Estyn also set out several recommendations for the school to implement, namely, that the school should:

- R1** Improve the quality of teaching and feedback to pupils
- R2** Improve standards of pupils' reading, writing and presentation of work
- R3** Improve pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT)
- R4** Ensure that the curriculum meets requirements and develops pupils' skills progressively
- R5** Improve pupils' independent learning skills
- R6** Correctly identify and address important areas of teaching and learning that need to improve and hold all members of staff to account robustly

Following this inspection, a detailed action plan was drawn up to address the recommendations. The school will be fully supported to implement the improvements needed by officers from the local authority's School Improvement Service and the Central South Consortium. Estyn will visit to re-inspect the school in the next academic year, to determine whether the necessary measures to effect the required improvements have been put in place.

As indicated previously, the Council's School Improvement Services are provided by the Central South Consortium. Schools are rated as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red in respect of their standards. Hirwaun Primary School has recently been categorised as a 'Red' school, as a consequence of the outcome of its Estyn inspection, as outlined above.

The Council has commissioned its school improvement service (the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service) to ensure that strong progress is made against each recommendation in the Estyn inspection report and regular feedback is provided to the Director of Education and Inclusion Services, the Senior Challenge Adviser, the Headteacher and the chair of the governing body.

### **What is the basis for this proposal?**

The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.

### **The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**

All local authorities in Wales now have to produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). This document indicates how the local authority intends to promote the teaching of the Welsh Language, how it intends working towards increasing the number of children taught through the medium of Welsh and how it can assist achieving the Welsh Government's target of having one million people in Wales speaking Welsh by 2050. The WESP for RCT can be viewed and downloaded from the Council website via <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

Included among the list of actions and outcomes that the Council will undertake to help achieve the targets set out in the WESP by increasing the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh are the following:

- New and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools

This proposal, to change Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a totally Welsh medium school and in doing so to also increase the number of Welsh medium primary school places will work towards the achievement of these targets in this area of the County Borough.

## **What is the educational case for changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School and increasing pupil capacity at Hirwaun Primary School?**

School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.

It is the Council's view that changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to Welsh medium and constructing a new school building with a larger pupil capacity for the communities of Hirwaun and Penderyn to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School will improve educational outcomes and provision.

A larger, new, purpose built English medium primary school at Hirwaun could offer:

- Greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced educational environment in which to learn and grow;
- Potential for financial savings in terms of services, which accrue to a larger school which can be reinvested for the benefit of all pupils;
- The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the construction of a modern, state of the art purpose built school that meets all the required standards of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment;
- More opportunities for the teaching and support staff which are provided by a larger school;
- Pupils being taught, in the main, with their year group. All classes in the Penderyn English medium stream are currently mixed year groups.

A completely Welsh medium primary school at Penderyn could:

- Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school;
- Enable total immersion in the Welsh language to be offered to a larger number of pupils from the youngest possible age;
- Offer more opportunities for the teaching and support staff which could be provided by a larger wholly Welsh medium school;
- Create a critical mass of Welsh-medium learners;
- Enable the development of increased Welsh-medium provision at secondary level;
- Provide more opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh;
- Improve recruitment and retention of staff

## **What will this proposal mean for the schools' pupils?**

In making the proposed changes, in addition to the points above, there are several further perceived benefits that can be realised:

- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom in a larger school at Hirwaun which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- A larger team of staff at Hirwaun Primary School to share expertise and experience;
- More pupils being taught in a new, state of the art, purpose built school buildings, which will be fit for the purpose of providing education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. have a flying start in life;
2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits the children in these communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

## **Catchment changes**

### **Penderyn Community Primary School**

Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference).

The Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar).

These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough.

In the case of oversubscription at any school, published admissions criteria are applied to all applications received for places, to determine which pupils are successful in obtaining the places available. These criteria, which are outlined in our school admission policy booklet entitled 'Starting School' and listed in priority order are:

- Category 1 – ‘Looked after’ children (children in public care) and previously ‘looked after’ children.
- Category 2 – Children whose home is inside the school’s catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, who will continue to attend that school on the expected date of admission of the younger child.
- Category 3 – Children whose home is inside the school’s catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.
- Category 4 – Children whose home is outside the school’s catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, who will continue to attend that school on the expected date of admission of the younger child.
- Category 5 – Children whose home is outside the school’s catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.

The term ‘home’ in the categories above refers to the actual location of the residential dwelling in which the child lives.

Children will be admitted up to the published Admission Number in the order of priority as outlined above. If within any one of the priority categories listed all of the applicants cannot be offered a place, preference will be given to children living nearest to the school. Distance will be measured using the shortest, safe walking route between the home address and the nearest open school gate. In areas where no safe walking route has been identified, the shortest driving route between the home address and the nearest open school gate will be used. This distance will be measured using the Mapinfo System only, measurements calculated by any other system will not be considered. The home address in instances where parents have shared responsibility for children, will be the address to which Child Benefit is paid.

For the purpose of applying admissions criteria, any child living in the areas to be transferred from the Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar (YGG Aberdar) catchment area, as detailed on the map enclosed in this document and who has an older sibling still attending YGG Aberdar in September 2020 will have their application considered as if they still resided in the YGG Aberdar catchment area, i.e. their application will fall in to Category 2 of the aforementioned criteria and not Category 4. This protection will continue until all older siblings have left the school. This will only cover siblings attending Reception to Year 6 in September 2020, any attending the Nursery class will not be eligible (as this is non-statutory education).

### **Hirwaun Primary School**

The catchment area of the new Hirwaun Primary School will extend to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School. Any pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will simply transfer to the new school building in Hirwaun when it opens in September 2021 (subject to parental preference). They will not need to complete admission applications unless they are applying for Nursery or Reception places.

### **Transport policy**

There is a statutory duty placed upon the local authority (LA) to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe “walking distance” to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh or dual language mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe “walking distance” is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:

- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles as required by the Measure;
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to children who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday) as required by the Measure.
- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles as required by the Measure.
- Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education as required by the Measure. This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner’s home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in accordance with their preferred religious denomination.
- The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate.

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the extended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe “walking distance” from their nearest suitable school.

In catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be ‘unavailable’. This provision will not be available to any English Medium pupils who

currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the schools?**

It is our intention to recommend to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School that they ringfence any additional positions they need to appoint as a result of increased pupil numbers, below senior leadership level, to the existing staff currently employed in the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School in the first instance. This process means that the Penderyn Community Primary School staff will be given the first opportunity to apply for additional posts in the extended Hirwaun Primary School prior to any being advertised externally. If they are successful, they will then simply transfer to the new school when it opens. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.

The creation of a larger primary school at Hirwaun and the provision of additional Welsh medium pupil places at Penderyn Community Primary School would provide staff with the opportunity to specialise in specific areas of the curriculum. Larger schools with more staff allows for such specialism with the ability to share workload more effectively and therefore gives staff more opportunities to progress their careers.

### **What will be the likely impact of the proposal on the communities of Penderyn and Hirwaun?**

Part of the Hirwaun electoral ward is within a Communities for Work area and is also a Flying Start Area.

A community impact assessment, equality impact assessment and Welsh-medium impact assessment have been completed for this proposal. These will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that they include pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The community impact assessment and equality impact assessment will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal. A copy of the community impact assessment, equality impact assessment and Welsh-medium impact assessment are available from the contact details at the start of this document and are also available on the Council website, using the web link provided on page 5. It is considered that the overall impact on the local communities of these proposals, with improved and extended school facilities will be a positive, beneficial one.

### **What are the financial implications of the proposal?**

As this proposal involves the change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School to Welsh medium and the construction of a new, larger English medium building at Hirwaun, there will only be minor financial savings – these are associated with the change of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to solely Welsh

medium school; plus there is potential for future financial savings largely relating to economies of scale achievable by the provision of services in a larger school.

The capital costs of the new Hirwaun Primary School building will be funded as part of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme. The estimated cost of the new building is £10.4m which will be funded from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme, 50% of which will be funded by the Welsh Government and 50% from the Council.

### **What are the disadvantages of this proposal?**

Some parents and pupils may feel that a smaller English medium stream is better for pupils rather than one larger school – in other words there could be a view that smaller schools may be more personal and less daunting, particularly for new entrants. Hirwaun Primary School will be larger, but will be able to offer many advantages over the smaller English medium stream in the dual language school, for example, fewer mixed year groups; and more opportunities to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities as afforded by a larger school.

Some pupils may have further to travel to school, however, as set out at pages 15 and 16, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will to apply to both schools whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport.

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the amended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school.

In catchment pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposal outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for pupils and parents.

### **What alternative options have been considered?**

The current position is that we have a relatively new dual language school at Penderyn with a continually decreasing English medium stream which is becoming unviable, with difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff, and an English medium primary school at Hirwaun which is in a very poor condition. There is demand for Welsh medium education in the wider Aberdare area, further driven by additional housing developments - planning consent has recently been granted for 93 properties immediately adjacent to Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun (Pentwyn Cynon Farm). The opportunity exists to create a purely Welsh medium primary school which, along with associated catchment changes would cater for this demand. There would also be other associated benefits for some pupils,

including total immersion in the Welsh language. The construction of a new, larger replacement school building for Hirwaun could comfortably accommodate demand for English medium places and would provide pupils with 21<sup>st</sup> century schools education facilities. This is therefore the preferred option.

Further, Hirwaun village has been identified as one of the key settlements in the Council's Local Development Plan 2011-2021 and land to the south of Hirwaun (former Tower Colliery site) has been identified as a strategic site for development, thus, the demand for school places (English and Welsh medium) in this immediate area is likely to grow further in the future.

The only other feasible option considered by the Council was for Penderyn Community Primary School to remain as a dual language school and poor condition accommodation at Hirwaun Primary School to be demolished and simply replaced 'like for like', i.e. maintain the status quo in respect of education provision. This option would not address the Welsh medium demand in the area, or provide the benefits associated with a purely Welsh medium school and the issues associated with a continually decreasing English medium stream. In addition, this option would not change the current position of the two schools at all and projections are that the pupil numbers in the English medium stream at Penderyn Community Primary School will continue to fall. It would also not deliver one of the key aims outlined in our WESP to increase the number of places available to learners wishing to be educated in Welsh by making our dual language schools in to full Welsh Medium provision.

## **Governance**

As this proposal does not involve the creation of any new school provisions, the current governing bodies of the schools will remain in place and their membership will not change. There will be opportunities in the future for other parents and community members to apply for positions on the governing bodies as and when posts become vacant.

## **The new proposed school building**

It is being proposed that a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School will be constructed on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School. The school will be a replacement for the existing school building and will cater for children aged between 3 and 11 years of age requiring English-medium education. It will have a proposed admissions number of 55 pupils per year group, and an overall pupil capacity of 390 (plus nursery). In addition it will have 60 nursery places available; there will however be flexibility to increase the number of nursery places, if there is evidenced demand, by utilising spare capacity that will exist within the building. The accommodation will consist of a nursery, 13 general teaching areas and ancillary accommodation that will be appropriate for the numbers of pupils, including a multi-purpose hall, kitchen, offices, resource areas, rooms for use by the local community and of course toilet provision. The new building will be accessible and fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. Admissions to the school will be administered by the local authority and all pupils currently attending the English medium stream at Penderyn Community Primary School will automatically transfer to the new

Hirwaun Primary School building school when it is completed (subject to parental preference).

Any risks that may be associated with these proposals, such as construction delays will be mitigated by the detailed and thorough project management arrangements that will be put in place.

Penderyn Community Primary School will be able to offer Welsh medium provision to 231 pupils (plus nursery), with an admission number of 33 pupils per year group. Admissions to the school will be administered by the local authority.

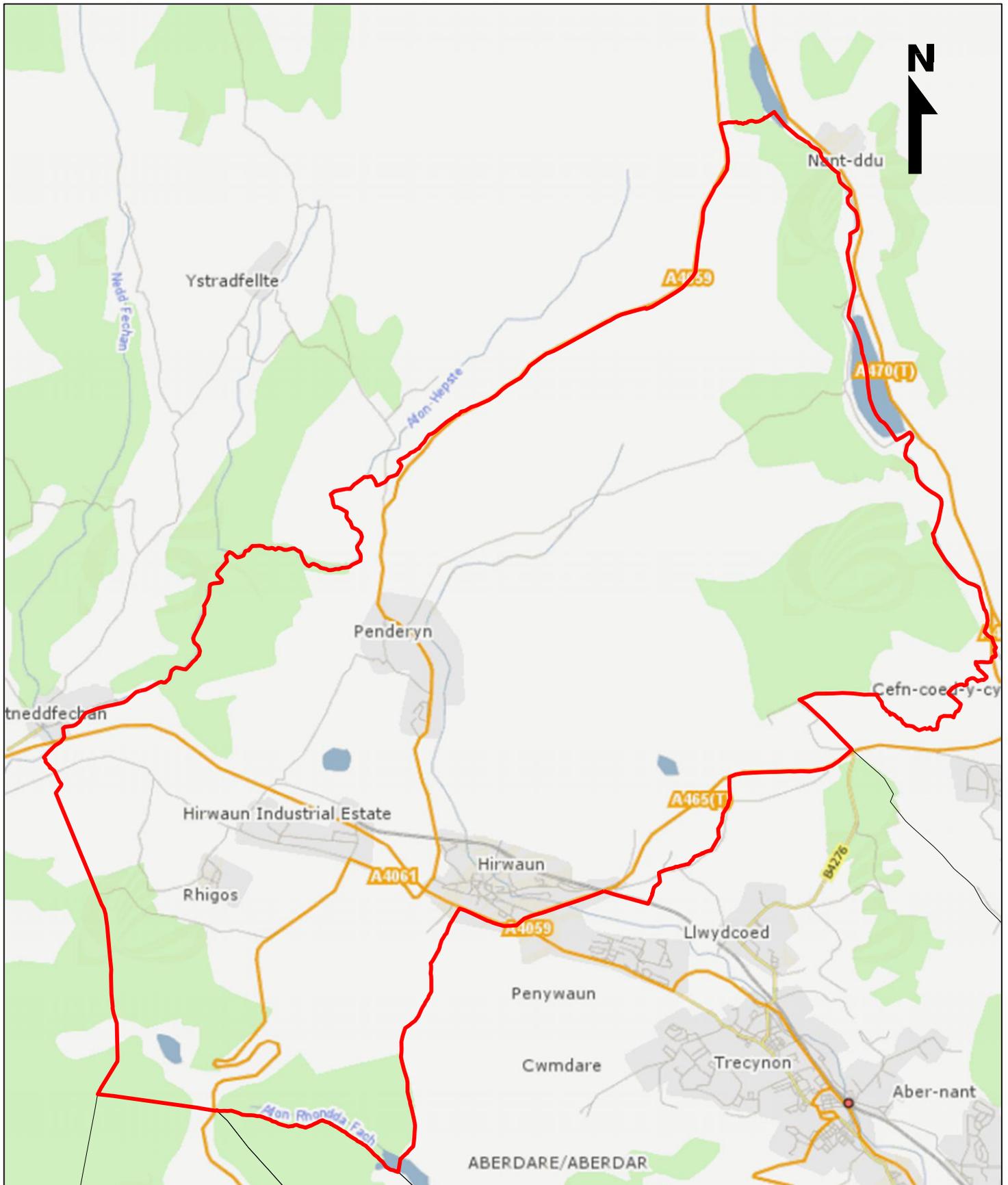
### **What is the statutory process?**

The Code on School Organisation (“The Code”) is made under Sections 38 and 39 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Code came into force on 1 October 2013 and applies in respect of all school proposals published by way of a statutory notice after that date. The current Code is due to be revised on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 and the process we will undertake will follow the guidance contained within this updated document. Proposals to make any regulated alterations to schools have to follow the following process:

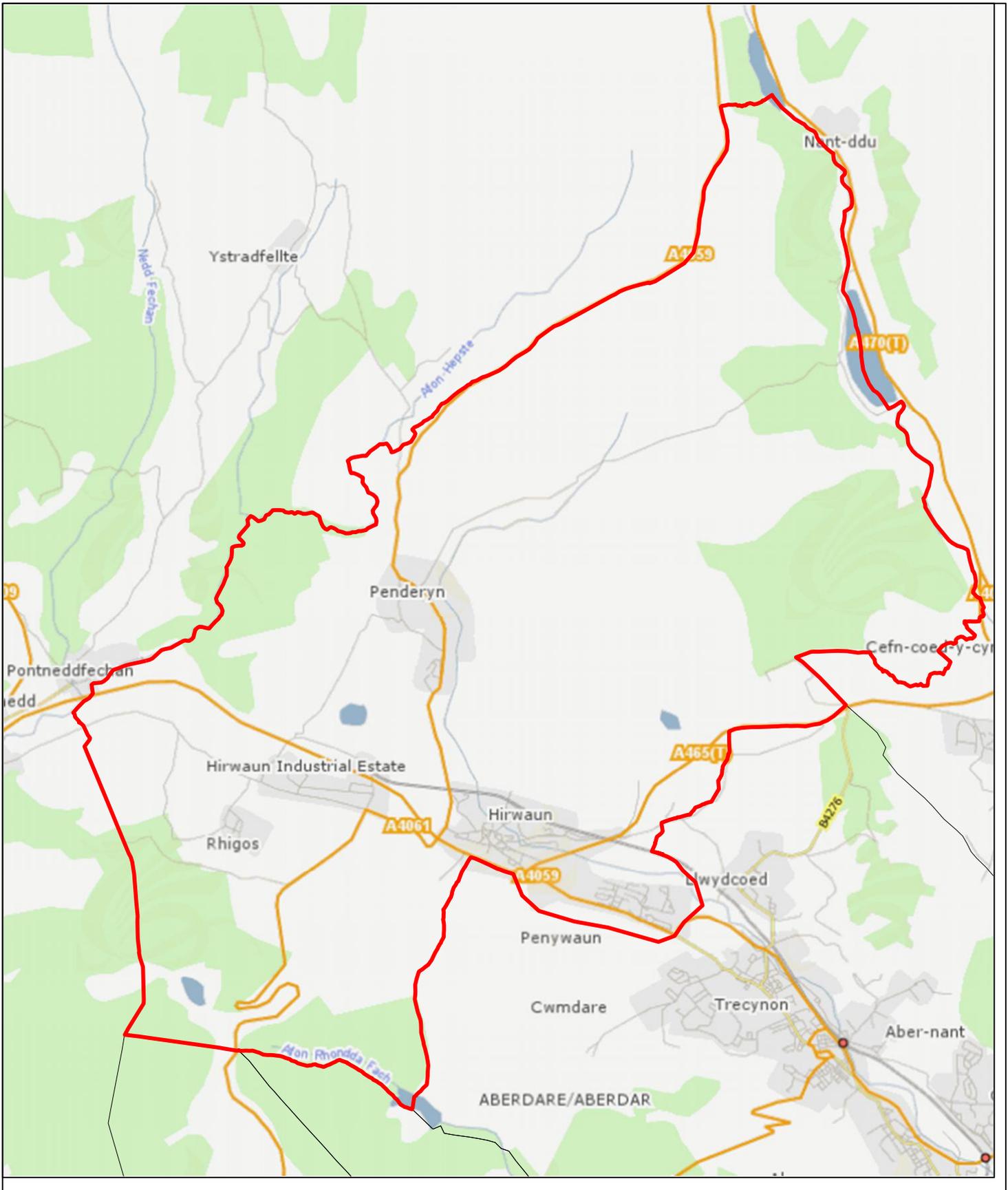
1. The Council’s Cabinet considers the Code and authorises a consultation on the changes to the schools;
2. At the start of the consultation period the Council **must** provide consultees with a consultation document and give them at least 42 days in which to respond, with at least 20 of these days being school days. If the Council considers it appropriate meetings are held with stakeholders during the consultation period;
3. Consultation comments are collated and summarised by the Council. This summary together with the Council’s officers own responses is published in a consultation report within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period and presented to the Council’s Cabinet for consideration;
4. The Council’s Cabinet decide whether to proceed with the changes within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period. If the decision is to proceed, Step 5 is taken. If a new option emerges during the consultation which the Council’s Cabinet wish to consider, then Steps 1-3 are repeated;
5. Statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The notice **must** be published on a school day and with 15 school days (not including the day of publication) in the notice period;
6. If objections are received, the Council **must** publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their responses to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority’s determination as to whether to proceed with the proposals;
7. The Council’s Cabinet must decide to issue its decision on the proposals within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period;
8. If the proposals receive approval they should be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date.



# The existing Penderyn Primary Welsh Medium catchment area



The proposed Penderyn Welsh Medium catchment area



## Consultation Response Pro-forma

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In order to comply with its legal duty under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and help the Council reach a decision on the proposal below, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Please note, any personal information given by you will not be shared and only used to provide you with feedback, should you request it. Any comments that could identify you will be anonymised in the consultation report produced. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

*Director of Education and Inclusion Services*  
*21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team*  
*Ty Trevithick*  
*Abercynon*  
*CF45 4UQ*  
*or by fax to 01443 744224, or e-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)*

### The proposal

The proposal is to change the language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to Welsh medium and extend its catchment area; and to increase the pupil capacity of Hirwaun Primary School, in a new, purpose built school building.

All changes will be implemented by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.

1. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes  No  Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

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3. Please indicate who you are (eg parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school, member of the community etc.)

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4. Name (optional)

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5. Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

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**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

*Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.*

The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice)

and the Council's **data protection** pages here:

[www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection).

## **Community Impact Assessment**

### **Proposal to change the language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, amend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School and increase the pupil capacity of Hirwaun Primary School**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.

This proposal is to be consulted on between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. This Impact Assessment is not included in the consultation document as we are mindful that the document needs to be as concise and informative as possible, whilst at the same time being readable and 'user-friendly'. The free availability of this document is however stressed; in addition, it is available for any person to view or download from the Council website.

#### The proposal

The proposal is to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to wholly Welsh medium, with an amended catchment area encompassing the communities of Trenant and Penywaun; and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School by the construction of a new, larger building on the current Hirwaun Primary School site. Both schools will offer provision for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 years, with Penderyn Community Primary School offering places through the medium of Welsh and Hirwaun Primary School offering places through the medium of English. Penderyn Community Primary School will have Welsh medium capacity for 231 pupils (plus nursery) and Hirwaun Primary School will have English medium capacity for 390 pupils (plus nursery). The Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £10.4m in constructing a new primary building at Hirwaun to ensure pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

#### Community impact

It has to be stressed at this point that the community impact of these proposals is negligible. The proposal does not involve the physical closure of any school buildings or facilities. If anything, community access will actually be improved. Hirwaun Primary School is proposed to be replaced by a new, state of the art purpose built English medium primary school for the villages of Hirwaun and Penderyn. The new building will be built on the site of the existing Hirwaun Primary School and will have brand new community rooms that can be used by existing community groups and will be able to accommodate further community usage. The facilities can be used by groups such as Flying Start parenting groups, parent and toddler groups, health visitors and adult learning. The whole school will be accessible and fully compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Also included in the new facilities at Hirwaun will be external grass playing field provision and

Multi-Use-Games-Area (MUGA) facilities that will be for the exclusive use of the pupils during the school day, but will be available to the community outside of school hours. Penderyn Community Primary School is a new building which was opened in 2006 and already benefits from MUGA facilities, as well as a woodland area.

The existence of other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area, especially as no existing facilities will be lost under these proposals.

Pupils within and outside current catchments

The percentage of pupils attending Penderyn Community Primary School and Hirwaun Primary School that reside within and outside of their current respective catchment areas are as follows:-

School	Pupil numbers – January 2018 (including nursery)	% pupils in current catchment	% pupils from outside current catchment
Penderyn Community Primary School (whole school)	233	72.1%	27.9%
Penderyn Community Primary School (Welsh)	179	81.5%	18.5%
Penderyn Community Primary School (English)	54	40.1%	59.9%
Hirwaun Primary School	249	93.9%	6.1%

It can be noted that of the 54 pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School, only 22 pupils live within the Penderyn catchment area. The majority of pupils (27 pupils) live within the Hirwaun catchment area.

Catchment changes

This proposal seeks to enhance the accommodation and facilities available to pupils from within the catchment areas requiring Welsh-medium and English-medium education. It is proposed to extend the catchment area of Hirwaun Primary School to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School.

Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference). It is also proposed to extend the Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). This adjustment is being made to the Welsh medium catchment areas to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough. Proposals to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar by 60 pupil places and proposals to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun by 162 pupil places also seek to address the Welsh medium demand in this part of the County Borough.

#### Travel implications

Some pupils may have further to travel to school, however, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will apply to both schools whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live one and a half miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport.

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the extended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school.

In catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'. This provision will not be available to any English Medium pupils who currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.

Hirwaun Primary School and Penderyn Community Primary School are 2.6 miles apart and the journey time between both schools by bus is not expected to exceed 15 minutes.

There will be no changes whatsoever to distances travelled by pupils currently attending Penderyn Community Primary School for Welsh-medium education - they will remain in the same school, consequently there will be no changes or any other implications for home to school transport provision for these pupils.

#### Current 'out of school hours' usage

Should these proposals proceed, all current before and after school activities in both schools will continue. The breakfast clubs currently offered by both schools would continue. Also, all after school clubs would continue to be offered. Current after school activities comprise:-

*Penderyn Community Primary School*

Urdd After School Club  
Sports Club

*Hirwaun Primary School*

Athletics  
Netball  
Tennis  
Girls' football  
Cricket

The construction of the new, larger building at Hirwaun will allow for expansion of such activities. Also, the change in language medium at Penderyn Community School from dual language to Welsh medium could also offer further opportunities for the development of further after school activities through the medium of Welsh.

Community and third party use of the schools' facilities will be encouraged. Also, any usage by groups affiliated to the schools, such as the PTA for functions, would continue to be offered by both schools should these proposals proceed.

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL**

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Directorate:** Education & Lifelong Learning

**Service Area:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

**Responsible officer:** Julie Hadley

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project:**

**Change of language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School; amendment to catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School; and extension of capacity of Hirwaun Primary School**

The Project is to:

Change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to wholly Welsh medium, with an amended catchment area encompassing the communities of Trenant and Penywaun; and extend the capacity of Hirwaun Primary School by the construction of a new, larger building on the current Hirwaun Primary School site. Both schools will offer provision for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 years, with Penderyn Community Primary School offering places through the medium of Welsh and Hirwaun Primary School offering places through the medium of English. The Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £10.4m in constructing a new primary building at Hirwaun to ensure pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

**2. Policy Aims**, you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?

How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

**This proposal is fully outlined in a detailed consultation document that has been distributed to all interested parties and stakeholders, it is also available on the Council's website for any person to view or download.**

**This proposal does not involve the physical closure or relocation of any school buildings or facilities; the larger English medium primary school at Hirwaun will utilise the site of the existing school, and the proposed changes will enhance the facility by replacing very poor condition buildings with a brand new school and associated external play facilities fit for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning needs and fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010.**

The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.

**The proposal also addresses the following actions and outcomes identified in the WESP to increase the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh by:**

- Providing new and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's WESP can be viewed and downloaded from the Council's website via this link - <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

**Amending the Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to encompass the communities of Tenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar) will match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough.**

Educational considerations -

**School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.**

**It is the Council's view that changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to Welsh medium and constructing a new school building with a larger pupil capacity for the communities of Hirwaun and Penderyn to replace the current Hirwaun Primary School will improve educational outcomes and provision.**

A larger, new, purpose built English medium primary school at Hirwaun could offer:

- **Greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced educational environment in which to learn and grow;**
- Potential for financial savings in terms of services, which accrue to a larger school which can be reinvested for the benefit of all pupils;
- The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the construction of a modern, state of the art purpose built school that meets all the required standards of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment;
- More opportunities for the teaching and support staff which are provided by a larger school;
- Pupils being taught, in the main, with their year group. All classes in the Penderyn English medium stream are currently mixed year groups.

A completely Welsh medium primary school at Penderyn could:

- Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school;
- Enable total immersion in the Welsh language to be offered to a larger number of pupils from the youngest possible age;
- Offer more opportunities for the teaching and support staff which could be provided by a larger wholly Welsh medium school;
- Create a critical mass of Welsh-medium learners;
- Enable the development of increased Welsh-medium provision at secondary level;
- Provide more opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh.

Implications for staff -

- **The creation of a larger primary school at Hirwaun and the provision of additional Welsh medium pupil places at Penderyn Community Primary School would provide staff with the opportunity to specialise in specific areas of the curriculum. Larger schools with more staff allows for such specialism with the ability to share workload more effectively and therefore gives staff more opportunities to progress their careers.**
- **It is our intention to recommend to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School that they ring-fence any additional positions they need to appoint as a result of increased pupil numbers, below senior leadership level, to the existing staff currently employed in the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School in the first instance. This process means that the Penderyn Community Primary School staff will be given the first opportunity to apply for additional posts in the extended Hirwaun Primary School prior to any being advertised externally. If they are successful, they will then simply transfer to the new school when it opens. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.**

Implications for pupils –

In making the proposed changes, in addition to the points above, there are several further perceived benefits that can be realised:

- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom in a larger school at Hirwaun which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- A larger team of staff at Hirwaun Primary School to share expertise and experience;
- More pupils being taught in a new, state of the art, purpose built school buildings, which will be fit for the purpose of providing education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;

**The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of the educational provision, and this should have a significant impact on educational performance of the pupils. This will bring about improvements for all pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or disability. It should be noted that of the 897 pupils (including nursery) attending Penderyn Community Primary School, Hirwaun Primary School and Ysgol Gynradd Gymrage Aberdar, none are indicated as being Gypsy or Traveller children (per January 2018 PLASC). To reiterate, these proposals are not seen as being detrimental to any particular group of pupils, they are intended to improve educational provision for all.**

**Although some pupils may have further to travel to school, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will to apply whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport.**

Pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the amended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area will receive free transport to Penderyn Primary School for Welsh medium education as they reside more than 1½ miles safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school.

**In catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'. This provision will not be available to English medium pupils who currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.**

**Penderyn Community Primary School and Hirwaun Primary School are 2.6 miles apart and the journey time between both schools by bus is not expected to exceed 15 minutes.**

**The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposal outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for pupils and parents.**

Catchment changes –

**Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference).**

**The Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough. Transport will be provided to pupils living in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun whose home addresses will be within the amended Penderyn Community Primary School catchment area, as outlined above.**

**The catchment area of the new Hirwaun Primary School will extend to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School. Any pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will simply transfer to the new school building in Hirwaun when it opens (subject to parental preference). They will not need to complete admission applications unless they are applying for Nursery or Reception places.**

As outlined earlier, in catchment pupils (resident in the village of Penderyn and Rhondda Cynon Taf) attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School building as the walking route is deemed to be 'unavailable'. This provision will not be available to any English Medium pupils who currently attend Penderyn but do not reside in the designated catchment area, as they are attending this school as a result of parental preference.

Financial implications –

**As this proposal involves the change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School to Welsh medium and the construction of a new, larger English medium building at Hirwaun, there will only be minor financial savings – these are associated with the change of Penderyn Community Primary School from dual language to solely Welsh medium school; plus there is potential for future financial savings largely relating to economies of scale achievable by the provision of services in a larger school.**

**3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate**

Members of the public School Staff Both Other Please state: children aged 3-11 years resident in the catchment areas of Penderyn Community Primary School and Hirwaun Primary School; and children in the communities of Trenant and Penywaun; the parents and carers of these children.

**4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:**

Review and Proposed cessation

**5. Identifying Impacts** – Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager's guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Yes	Yes		<p>Creating a larger English medium primary school in a brand new building offering state of the art accommodation and facilities for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning on the current Hirwaun Primary School site and changing the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School to totally Welsh-medium with an amended catchment area will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide comfortable and attractive learning environments for all children who access the schools;</li> <li>• Offer 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities to enable all pupils in the local communities to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities;</li> <li>• Facilitate delivery of the changing curriculum and enable the further use of ICT to provide the opportunity for all learners to reach their potential;</li> <li>• Enable the demand for additional places in the Welsh Medium Primary sector to be met by the utilisation of existing resources which is both educationally beneficial and financially efficient;</li> <li>• Mean that some pupils may have further to travel to school; however, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will to apply whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to</li> </ul>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				school transport.
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			The new building at Hirwaun will be fully accessible to all persons and will comply with all current legislation in this regard.
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	
Welsh Language	Yes			The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<p>and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.</p> <p><b>The proposal also addresses the following actions and outcomes identified in the WESP to increase the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing new and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;</li> <li>• Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools</li> </ul> <p>This proposal, to change Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a totally Welsh medium school and in doing so to also increase the number of Welsh medium primary school places will work towards the achievement of these targets in this area of the County Borough.</p> <p>The amendment to Penderyn's catchment area to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun will also cater for Welsh medium primary school demand associated with additional housing developments in the area.</p>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Carers			Yes	

#### EVIDENCE

6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Report of the Chief Executive to Cabinet - 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018  
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal

7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

**The only negative impact identified is that some pupils will have longer travel times / distances to school; however, the Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will to apply whereby pupils of compulsory school age attending primary school who live 1½ miles or further safe "walking distance" from their nearest suitable school will be provided with free home to school transport. Further detail regarding transport provision is contained at pages 5 and 6.**

## INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

### 9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

The following consultation meetings/ open events are to be held:

School Affected	Group	Date / Time	Venue
Penderyn Community Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 4pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Penderyn Community Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Penderyn Community Primary School
Hirwaun Primary School	School Council	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 / 2:30pm	Hirwaun Primary School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 / 3pm-6pm	Hirwaun Primary School

Schools are also being offered opportunities for consultation with pupils, via meetings of their School Councils as detailed in the table above.

Interested parties are also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

or by fax to 01443 744224, or e-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

### MONITORING AND REVIEW

**10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?**

The Council's HR teams will be fully engaged in supporting the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School in the appointment of staff to any additional positions they need to appoint as a result of increased pupil numbers. It is the intention of the Council to recommend to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School that such posts, below senior leadership level, be ring-fenced to the existing staff currently employed in the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School in the first instance. This process means that these Penderyn Community Primary School staff will be given the first opportunity to apply for additional posts in the extended Hirwaun Primary School prior to any being advertised externally. If they are successful, they will then simply transfer to the new school when it opens. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.

**ADDRESSING THE IMPACT**

**11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?**

- Continue the Policy

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

**The evidence outlined in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach.**

**12. ACTION PLAN**

**You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.**

Action	Responsible Officers	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
If the proposals proceed, undertake the statutory consultation process to implement the proposals	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team	By March 2019		
If the proposals proceed, finalise the plans for the construction of the new school	David Powell, Service Director, Corporate Design and Maintenance	By September 2019		
If the proposals proceed, provide assistance and support to the governing body of Hirwaun Primary School, as required, regarding the appointment of staff to any additional positions	HR Officers	By September 2019		

13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None.
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Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team  
The Pavilions  
Cambrian Park  
Clydach  
CF40 2XX  
Email: [equality@rhondda-cynon- Taf.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rhondda-cynon- Taf.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies                      Date: 30/09/18  
Job Title: Director of Education and Inclusion Services

## Welsh Language Impact Assessment

### **Proposal to change the language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, amend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School and increase the pupil capacity of Hirwaun Primary School**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.

As part of our proposals in respect of the above, we are planning to undertake some reorganisation of Welsh Medium Primary education provision in this area of Rhondda Cynon Taf, which will increase Welsh Medium pupil capacity.

#### Language category of school

We are proposing that Penderyn Community Primary School, which is currently a dual language school, becomes a wholly Welsh medium school which will be able to offer all of its available capacity of 231 pupils (plus nursery) to pupils requiring a Welsh medium education. It is proposed that pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to Hirwaun Primary School which is to be rebuilt with an extended capacity, should these proposals proceed. The catchment area of the new Hirwaun Primary School will extend to incorporate the current catchment area of the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School.

Penderyn Community Primary School is currently organised into two language streams and parents choose for their children to study most of their lessons either through the medium of Welsh or through the medium of English. In recent years the number of pupils (including nursery) in the Welsh language stream has increased to 179, whilst numbers have fallen to just 54 in the English stream. There are 9 classes in the school, 6 of which are taught in Welsh and 3 which are taught in English. *(Figures from January 2018 PLASC).*

We are also proposing to amend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough and will increase the number of Welsh medium school places available in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough. Admissions to the schools will be administered by the local authority.

#### Performance standards

The following tables set out the performance of the Welsh (W) and English (E) streams of Penderyn Community Primary School for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on the numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals:

<b>Foundation Phase Outcomes</b>						
	<b>2015 %</b>		<b>2016 %</b>		<b>2017 %</b>	
<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (W)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (E)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (W)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (E)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (W)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (E)</b>
Foundation Phase Indicator	92 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (1)	90 (3)	96.4 (1)	100 (1)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (4)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Language literacy and communication skills English/Welsh	96 (2)	100 (1)	95.2 (2)	90 (3)	96.4 (2)	100 (1)
Mathematical development	96 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	90 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)

<b>Key Stage Two Outcomes</b>						
	<b>2015 %</b>		<b>2016 %</b>		<b>2017 %</b>	
<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (W)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (E)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (W)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (E)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (W)</b>	<b>Penderyn Primary (E)</b>
English	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.4 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Welsh 1st	88.2 (3)	N/A	94.2 (2)	N/A	95.5 (2)	N/A
Maths	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)
Science	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	96.8 (3)	88.9 (4)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	88.2 (3)	100 (1)	94.2 (2)	100 (1)	96.8 (2)	88.9 (4)

*The figures in brackets in the tables above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

### Welsh medium growth

If these proposals are agreed Penderyn Community Primary School will become a wholly Welsh medium school and will be able to offer all of its available capacity to pupils requiring a Welsh medium education. The school will be able to offer Welsh medium provision to 231 pupils (plus nursery), with an admission number of 33 pupils per year group. This will increase the number of Welsh medium school places available in this part of the County Borough. Admissions to the school will be administered by the local authority.

Pupils living in Hirwaun who require Welsh medium education will still attend Penderyn Community Primary School (subject to parental preference). The Welsh medium catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (which are currently in the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places with the available supply across the Welsh medium primary school sector in this part of the County Borough. Additional demand for places is also being driven by housing development in this part of the County Borough.

Other proposals within this area of the County Borough seek to further ensure the demand for Welsh medium places is matched with the available supply and will increase the number of Welsh medium school places available in this part of the County Borough, namely:-

- The proposed increase in capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar by 60 pupil places by the construction of a new classroom extension block and improvements to parking and external play facilities;
- The proposed increase in capacity of Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun by 162 pupil places by the construction of a new classroom extension block and a separate sports hall containing classrooms for the PE curriculum.

#### Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020

The change in language medium status to totally Welsh medium and the growth of Welsh medium places at Penderyn Community Primary School supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCT's) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020.

The Council's WESP document indicates how the local authority intends to promote the teaching of the Welsh Language, how it intends working towards increasing the number of children taught through the medium of Welsh and how it can assist achieving the Welsh Government's target of having one million people in Wales speaking Welsh by 2050. The WESP for RCT can be viewed and downloaded from the Council website via <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

Included among the list of actions and outcomes that the Council will undertake to help achieve the targets set out in the WESP by increasing the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh are the following:

- New and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for Welsh medium provision in their catchment areas;
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools into full Welsh medium schools

This proposal, to change Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language school to a totally Welsh medium school and in doing so to also increase the number of Welsh

medium primary school places will work towards the achievement of these targets in this part of the County Borough.

#### Further advantages

A completely Welsh medium primary school at Penderyn could also:

- Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school;
- Enable total immersion in the Welsh language to be offered to a larger number of pupils from the youngest possible age;
- Offer more opportunities for the teaching and support staff which could be provided by a larger wholly Welsh medium school;
- Create a critical mass of Welsh-medium learners;
- Enable the development of increased Welsh-medium provision at secondary level;
- Provide more opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh;
- Improve recruitment and retention of staff.

#### Before and after school activities

At present Penderyn Community Primary School offers a breakfast club each morning before school. After school activities comprise - an Urdd after school club two evenings per week, plus a sports club. These activities will be unaffected by these proposals.

These proposals could provide Penderyn Community Primary School with the possibility of enhancing and extending their extra-curricular provision, particularly through the medium of Welsh.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Hirwaun Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 2:30pm**

#### **Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

#### **Present**

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services

Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

10 members of the School Council of Hirwaun Primary School

1 member of school staff

Introductions from Council officers.

ET explained that the Council was proposing to build a new, bigger school at Hirwaun which would replace the current school. The children taught in English at Penderyn would be taught in the new school so that Penderyn primary School would become Welsh only.

The new school would be brand new and would be bigger than the existing school. It would be able to hold 390 pupils, plus nursery age children.

ET explained that the Council believed that there were many good things that a new school could bring, such as:-

- A brand new, modern building;
- New outdoor play and games areas;
- New ICT;
- A bigger school for more pupils to enjoy and more opportunities to make more friends;
- The opportunity for all children to come to the school and access all parts of the school, including those with extra needs (for example if they use a wheelchair);
- More opportunities and nicer facilities for after-school clubs.

ET also explained that there may be some things which concern some children, for example, the children living in Penderyn may have further to travel to school if they come to Hirwaun Primary School, however, there will be school buses provided for them.

Also, some children may prefer being in a smaller school with less pupils.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

ET explained that the purpose of the meeting with the pupils today was for the Council to hear and record what the pupils think about the proposals, as their views are very important to the Council.

To facilitate the discussion ET asked the pupils some questions:-

#### Question 1

Do you think the proposal is a good idea?

#### Responses

- Overall consensus - yes.

Why do you think that it is a good idea?

#### Responses

- If new people start at the school, they will prefer to be in a new school.
- People can learn more and won't want to move from a new school.
- Better resources for better learning.
- Better outdoor space.
- Less stones and concrete in the yard.
- There would be more security, so little children are safe.
- Higher gates and fences to keep safe and to keep balls in.
- Electric doors would be liked in a new school.
- Less glare from the windows on screens.
- Better ICT in a new school.
- Bigger TVs would be good.
- Would like an outdoor classroom.

#### Question 2

Do you like the idea of a new school building?

#### Responses

- Overall consensus - yes.
- Like the new Aberdare Community School.

#### Question 3

What do you like about your existing school?

#### Responses

- Small so not very loud.
- How nice the teachers are.

- Still a good school, even though it is small.
- Not as many people because it is small.
- Classrooms are a nice size, bit would prefer there to be more desks so that you can sit in different places to do different things / have more choice.
- The displays.

#### Question 4

Is there anything that you don't like about your existing school?

#### Responses

- Stones on yard.
- Toilets are not nice.
- The school is cold / there are not many radiators.
- The dinner hall being used for PE and assemblies.
- Too grassy / boggy.
- Old tables and chairs.
- Ground outside is too hard / stony.

#### Question 5

Is there anything that concerns or worries you about the proposals?

#### Responses

- Worried that there will be less equipment.
- Worried that some pupils might not like a bigger school.
- What the teachers will be like.
- Sad that they will be missing being a new school (Years 4 / 5 / 6), but happy that their brothers / sisters will get to have a new school.
- 

#### Question 6

Would you look forward to welcoming new friends and how would you make them feel welcome?

#### Responses

- Show them around the school.
- Ask them to join in games on the yard.
- Introduce them to teachers.
- Show respect to them.
- Be kind to them.
- Make them feel comfortable.

Group discussions were undertaken and the pupils and they were given post-it notes and asked to write their views. The written responses received are listed below:

- Vinyl floor

- Stained windows
- Better glass
- Sturdy walls
- Better security x6
- More resources x7
- New equipment – pens, pencils, laptops, ipads
- Better toys x2
- Your own folder
- Drawing equipment
- Better music player
- Library and computers x4
- More parking x3
- Upgraded bigger dining hall x5
- Room for performances
- Sports hall
- Netball court x4
- Football yard x2
- Sporting courts
- Outdoor sports area
- More sports and outdoor activities
- Football x2
- More obstacles
- Baseball
- Different events and competitions
- Dinner money on finger
- Friday special for dinner
- More food choice x6
- Snacks and drinks for school classes if they are snackish or thirsty instead of going out of class for a drink
- Electric doors x2
- Climbing frame x6
- Sand pit x2
- Swings
- Garden area and green house
- More grass
- Bigger yard x5
- More outside storage x3
- Better white board
- More/better shelters x4
- Rainbow carpet for nursery
- Colourful classrooms x6
- Colourful toilet cubicles x3 – green for boys and pink for girls
- Bigger classes x3
- Outdoor classroom x3
- Automatic lights and stage lights x2
- Vote for new school uniform for year 6
- Screens on rails so it can go up and down

- Better TV
- Loud speaker and bell for announcements x2
- First aid/doctors room x2
- Rooms for people who need more support x2
- Assembly room
- Elsa Room – for worries you can go chat to someone
- Art room x3
- Fruit room
- Staff room
- Relaxing room
- School Council room
- Attendance room
- 2 floors to the building x4
- More events – pet day
- Signs for rooms
- Welcome sigs x2
- Shed for bikes and scooters x4
- Better pegs/cloakrooms x5
- ICT Room x5
- More water fountains
- Softer seats
- Separate desks
- Better tables x4
- Better furniture x3
- Draws on tables
- More trays for extra work
- Better chairs x2
- Benches
- Leaving wall – you sign it when you leave
- Softer play area for the younger ones x2
- 3 play times
- More displays
- More decoration
- Sleep time for nursery
- Heating
- A fort in the reading corner for nursery and reception
- Support staff and children buddies
- Star of the year

The pupils were thanked for their time and input.

The meeting closed at 3:10pm

**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors of Hirwaun Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 4pm**

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

**Present**

Esther Thomas (ET), Temporary Service Director for Access & Inclusion Services

Nicola Goodman (NG), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer

Paul Hughes (PH), Human Resources Officer

24 members of school staff and the governing body

Introductions from Council officers.

Esther Thomas (ET) welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the proposal, the reasons for the proposal, the purpose of the meeting and the consultation process and timescales relating to the consultation process and the proposals themselves should they be implemented.

Should the proposals be implemented, it is proposed that:-

- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, no new pupils wishing to be educated through the medium of English will be admitted to Penderyn Community Primary School;
- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, the catchment change to extend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to include the communities of Trenant and Penywaun will take effect; and
- On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building.

ET explained how this proposal was part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme and addressed many of the Council's objectives in relation to this, including -

- Addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium education;
- Expansion of schools in areas of increased demand for educational services;
- Addressing the condition of educational assets;

- Making assets available for community use.

ET referred to the detailed information contained within the consultation document which had been circulated and the consultation response pro-forma contained therein (further copies of both were available at the meeting) and referred to page 5 of the consultation document which outlines how people can make comments.

ET explained that the questions / comments / responses would be recorded for inclusion in the consultation report which would be fed back to Cabinet in January 2019, as would the feedback from pupils. ET stressed that this was a period of consultation and should the proposals proceed to the next stage (statutory notice), objections would be received and recorded at that stage.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

The meeting was then opened for questions.

#### Comment

Delighted at the prospect that there is to be a new school. The current school is draughty and full of asbestos. Hirwaun has to have a new school. The current school is in desperate need of replacement. Pleased that it would go ahead even if Penderyn remained as dual language.

#### Response

ET commented that there was also strong evidence for making Penderyn School Welsh only, as there were diminishing numbers of pupils requesting English medium education at Penderyn School.

#### Comment

There are also a lot of new housing developments in the Hirwaun area which are applying for planning permission.

#### Comment

Delighted with the proposals. The children at Hirwaun School deserve a much better building.

#### Response

ET complimented the staff on making the best of the current learning environment and commented that the size of the site meant that there was the space to do exciting things here. Works would be managed to ensure a safe build on the existing live site. The technical team are looking at proposals at present. ET emphasised that no decision has been pre-empted, but certain works are necessary to establish the feasibility and indicative cost of the proposals. Management of space within the existing site will be undertaken in consultation with school staff should the proposals proceed.

Comment

The school is lucky to have lots of space.

Response

LH explained the indoor and outdoor spaces that were provided at the recently constructed Cwmaman Primary School.

Comment

The school was keen to have breakout spaces in any new building.

Response

ET offered the opportunity for staff / governors to view the recently constructed new schools so that they could see what was possible.

Comment

Future proofing and providing flexible spaces was a requirement in light of the Donaldson report / recommendations.

Response

Concepts are shared with school staff at the earliest opportunity and views / inputs sought from all stakeholders.

Question

Would there be any impact on staff?

Response

PH explained that depending upon pupil numbers going forward, there was likely to be an increase in staff numbers at Hirwaun Primary School. The school were just getting a new building. The governing body at Hirwaun School would be encouraged to offer the opportunity for the English medium stream staff of Penderyn Community Primary School to join the team of staff at Hirwaun Primary School.

ET thanked all for their attendance and inputs.

The meeting closed at 4:30pm

**Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Penderyn  
Community Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 2:30pm**

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school  
building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of  
language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

Present:

Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education  
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Non Morgan (NM), School Organisation and Governance Team Leader  
9 members of the School Council of Penderyn Community Primary School  
1 member of school staff

GD made introductions and provided meeting outline to the 9 pupils present (plus teacher).

GD explained that the Council was proposing to build a new, bigger school at Hirwaun which would replace the current school. The children taught in English at Penderyn would be taught in the new school so that Penderyn primary School would become Welsh only.

The reasons for a Welsh Medium Primary in Penderyn were outlined:

- i. Pupils would be totally immersed in Welsh medium
- ii. More after-school activities delivered in Welsh
- iii. Whole year groups to be formed (no longer a need for mixed age groups)
- iv. School transport provided for pupils to attend Hirwaun English Medium school from the Penderyn area.

Questions and answers

Will there be English in the new school?

GD confirmed there would be English lessons.

Are we a good school?

GD advised that Estyn have said it is.

How do the community benefit from this change?

GD advised that Penderyn will remain as a community school but pupil numbers are smaller in English than Welsh.

Why do you want to move us?

GD shared the Welsh Government plans for to increase Welsh speakers in the future therefore the Council have to make sure schools are big enough.

English pupils also need state of the art schools and the new school in Hirwaun will be like this.

Is it more likely that pupils would learn Welsh better being around other Welsh learners?

GD agreed but added language immersion does help.

Would the Welsh Unit be going to English Comprehensive?

That is down to parental choice.

Why turn it into a Welsh School?

GD explained pupil numbers and class structures – so pupils of same age would be in classrooms together.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

GD suggested that any good ideas to be written on the large sheets of paper provided, or post it notes.

GD added - if there are any worries or concerns these should also be written on the large sheets of paper provided, or post it notes.

The School Council showed the officers 'Save our School' posters they had designed.

The School Council gave a presentation – 'Negative things about Penderyn Primary School turning Welsh'.

The written responses received on the large sheets of paper and post-it notes are listed below:-

- Improve new closes
- New sports facilities
- Making new friends
- Lovely opportunities in Hirwaun
- More Welsh speakers in this school
- More Welsh speakers
- I think this is a good idea because the new school is next generation
- New children that have just started our school will not have a change to settle properly in Hirwaun Primary
- Only half of the community can use the new school
- Moving schools ☹
- Leaving our friends

- This is a bad idea because kids got siblings in the Welsh
- Children that have settled in Penderyn Primary School would not be settled so quickly in Hirwaun Primary School
- I think this is a bad idea because children like this school
- Young siblings not being able to experience Penderyn school like it is now
- People might not want to leave
- I think this is a bad idea because half of the community will work here and we need to go to a new school and we like this school
- Less people in the school
- Save our school – let the English stay x5

The pupils were thanked for their time and input.

**Notes of a meeting held with staff and governors of Penderyn  
Community Primary School**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 4pm**

**Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to construct a new school  
building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of  
language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School**

Present:

Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education  
Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Non Morgan (NM), School Organisation and Governance Team Leader  
Ellen Williams (EW), Human Resources Officer  
29 members of school staff and the governing body

GD thanked the School Council for their contribution.

Introductions from Council officers.

Gaynor Davies (GD) welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the proposal, the reasons for the proposal, the purpose of the meeting and the consultation process and timescales relating to the consultation process and the proposals themselves should they be implemented.

Should the proposals be implemented, it is proposed that:-

- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, no new pupils wishing to be educated through the medium of English will be admitted to Penderyn Community Primary School;
- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, the catchment change to extend the catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School to include the communities of Trenant and Penywaun will take effect; and
- On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, pupils attending the English medium stream of Penderyn Community Primary School would (subject to parental preference), transfer to the new Hirwaun Primary School building.

GD explained how this proposal was part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme and addressed many of the Council's objectives in relation to this, including -

- Addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium education;
- Expansion of schools in areas of increased demand for educational services;
- Addressing the condition of educational assets;
- Making assets available for community use.

GD referred to the detailed information contained within the consultation document which had been circulated and the consultation response pro-forma contained therein (further copies of both were available at the meeting) and referred to page 5 of the consultation document which outlines how people can make comments.

GD explained that the questions / comments / responses would be recorded for inclusion in the consultation report which would be fed back to Cabinet in January 2019, as would the feedback from pupils. GD stressed that this was a period of consultation and should the proposals proceed to the next stage (statutory notice), objections would be received and recorded at that stage.

Two short video clips were played showing new schools recently constructed as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme at Cwmaman and Tonyrefail.

AR explained the different type of buildings and future proofing new builds for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

GD opened up the meeting for questions.

GD explained that officers cannot talk to individuals but can arrange for Human Resources to attend separately.

GD referred to page 18 of the consultation document and apologised that the first sentence was not worded correctly and was not meant to offend any staff. This was to explain a reduction in pupil numbers in English – Estyn recognised this.

#### Question

Query regarding the covenant – was it prescriptive Welsh and English?

#### Response

AR to check and the findings will be included in the Consultation Report.

#### Comment

A new build doesn't ensure a high standard of learning. Her son is in St. Johns – Welsh is stronger.

#### Response

GD noted the School Council also acknowledged this. GD further explained that data tells us that the need for Welsh is increasing and English is decreasing. Therefore, the Local Authority have to meet targets in the WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan). Data also tells us pupils would be entitled to free transport.

#### Comment

Parents are not happy with pupils moving to a Red school.

#### Comment

GD advised that a Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) was in place – which means that the school is being given support to help with improvements. The Local Authority work closely with the Central South Consortium to improve standards.

Question

Staff asked is this not a Community School? Is the Local Authority isolating English parents? Penderyn is a healthy school with pupils walking, this won't continue if pupils moved to Hirwaun.

Response

GD explained that all factors needed to be looked at. Penderyn will remain a Community School but a Welsh school.

Comment

The Local Authority changed the catchment area and that's why numbers reduced.

Response

AR explained there is still parental choice.

Comment

Staff feel Welsh and English is being segregated – never been this way.

Response

GD explained that the English stream pupil numbers are very low – can have a negative social effect. Need to prepare pupils for Secondary school and life skills.

Pupil transition is easier in bigger groups.

Comment

Staff didn't agree.

Response

GD explained that you can't focus on a small number, but need to look at big picture. AR added that there is still parental choice.

Comment

Staff feel that the Local Authority are removing that choice.

Response

GD outlined that pupil numbers and demand tells the Local Authority that English numbers are diminishing, therefore we have to look at what is viable.

Comment

Staff feel English pupils don't come here due to catchment changes.

Response

AR emphasised that parental choice is always a factor.

Question

22 pupils in the village surely have the right to be educated in their village?

Response

GD pointed out that Hirwaun is located only 1.5 miles away.

Question

Fundamental message – denial of choice from the community. Pupils in Hirwaun chose to come to Penderyn for English education. What other options have been considered? Proposed that Penderyn catchment change to possibly increase in English Department. Quoted September figures.

Response

GD and AR can only use published figures.

Question

Cut off point in document, September 2019 for nursery admissions – Doesn't a 12 month notice period need to be implemented?

Response

This is a for a catchment change.

Comment

A two year period will exacerbate the pupil number issue.

Response

GD explained forecasting numbers may change but looking at long term plan.

Question

Projections – if the proposal goes ahead then numbers fall how difficult would it be to re-introduce English back/bilingual school.

Response

AR explained that a new statutory proposal would have to be undertaken. Also, WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) target – to review dual language schools was outlined.

Question

Why do so many pupils in Hirwaun chose education out of catchment?

Response

GD commented that building conditions and facilities in Hirwaun may be detrimental.

Question

If the 102 pupils in Hirwaun that chose education outside of catchment and the new 90 houses to be built all went to Hirwaun would there be capacity?

Response

AR replied that there would - this has all been taken into consideration.

Question

If you can put transport for pupils from Penderyn why can't you do it the other way around?

Response

AR explained that English medium pupils currently pay for transport to Penderyn. The Transport Policy is very fair in RCT. Parents from Hirwaun may be putting children into the Welsh Unit in Penderyn due to free transport – reinforced parental choice.

Question

Will capacity be met for English demand?

### Response

GD explained that the Local Authority review surplus places on a regular basis.

AR explained the matrix used to calculate trends for new housing estates.

### Question

Difficult when you take something away - very hard to put it back – still wants the Local Authority to explore English medium education being available at both schools. Response

GD commented that a judgement has to be made on the information / data available which shows that the English stream is not viable.

### Question

Rhigos being left alone with very small numbers – why is that school not included in these proposals? Removing parental choice – detrimental to the community.

### Response

GD explained that there will be a community school but a Welsh medium school – demand isn't there for English medium education.

### Question

Why not Rhigos?

### Response

GD outlined the need for the Local Authority to look at 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools and the WESP and put forward informed proposals – staff need to make comments on the consultation.

### Comment

Catchment area changes – getting pupils numbers for English medium of 19/20 per year – feel that if the changes hadn't been made the school wouldn't be in this position now.

### Question

Ring fencing – will staff be slotted into Hirwaun?

### Response

EW advised that Human Resources (HR) are willing to visit and discuss on an individual basis. There is a need to see how many additional staff Hirwaun would need. HR would work with the staff at both schools. HR will speak to staff individually to see how we can meet their needs. Redeployment would also be an option.

AR added that EW and the HR team have an excellent track record and RCT want to keep excellent staff. Opportunities are available. There are really good staff here – that is not disputed.

### Comment

Staff should be guaranteed jobs in the new Hirwaun School.

### Response

AR stated that no promises can be made as staffing is based on pupil numbers.

Question

If offered another position and a member of staff didn't accept, could they have redundancy?

Response

EW advised that this was dependant on circumstances.

Question

Why are Hirwaun having a parents meeting but not Penderyn – would the Local Authority re-think?

Response

AR advised that this consultation affects Hirwaun in the majority.

Comment

There is no bus service in Penderyn – location affects parents that don't drive.

Question

YGG Aberdar – change of catchment do existing pupils transfer?

Response

No, they stay where they are – admissions criteria will apply when the changes are applied.

Question

There could be an issue if a parent has a pupil in Penderyn but can't admit a sibling into Penderyn in September 2019 – what happens?

Response

Parents need to write in as part of the consultation.

The staff and governors were thanked for their time and input.

**EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, 2018.**

**DRAFT MINUTES.**

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services explained to Members the purpose of the report. He informed Members that the report provides the opportunity for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to engage in the formal consultation process, in respect of 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Programmes – Proposal to Improve Education in the Greater Pontypridd Area and Proposals to Improve Education in Cynon Valley.

On a number of occasions, Members of the committee have sought the opportunity to contribute and comment upon future 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools proposals being considered by the Council as part of Band B Programme.

It was explained that on the 20<sup>th</sup> September and the 3<sup>rd</sup> October Cabinet agreed to initiate a formal consultation process in respect of proposals for improving education in the Cynon Valley and improving education in the Greater Pontypridd Area.

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services explained to Members of the committee the format the meeting would be conducted in order to be consistent with the public meetings being held by the Council. It was explained that consultation would be presented as two separate items starting with the Cynon Valley Consultation first then moving on to the Greater Pontypridd Consultation. It was explained that the Scrutiny's views, alongside the schools and wider stakeholders engagement would be presented to Cabinet as part of the formal consultation process, before Cabinet determine whether to proceed or not with the next stage of the School Organisation Code.

The Director of Communication and Interim Head of Democratic Services invited the Director of Education and Inclusion Services and officers to conduct the consultation.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services thanked the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for participating in the consultation and explained that the views of the Committee are sought in relation to the School Organisation Proposals for Hirwaun/Penderyn.

Members were informed that the reasons for the proposal is that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to:

- Improve and increase education provision in Hirwaun by investing in a new school for Hirwaun Primary School.
- Improve Welsh medium education provision by increasing the supply of places in the Upper Cynon Valley by making Penderyn Community

School, currently a dual language school, a Welsh medium primary school.

The changes will be achieved by the construction of a new school building on the site of the current Hirwaun Primary School. The new school would have a capacity of 390 pupils (plus nursery). The new school would replace the current school buildings on the existing site.

Penderyn Community Primary School would become a Welsh medium community primary school with the capacity for 231 pupils (plus nursery). It was explained that as part of the proposal to change the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School to solely Welsh medium, it is also proposed to amend and extend catchments to encompass the communities of Trenant and Penywaun (currently in the Welsh catchment for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar). These adjustments are being made to the catchment area to match the demand for Welsh medium places in the locality.

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services presented the consultation document in detail. At the end of the presentation, it was explained that the meeting is now open to any person present to inform officers of their views, which as indicated, will be recorded, and because this is a consultation, it may or may not, be possible to respond to all questions raised at this time, but all questions would be logged and formally included in the consultation report to Cabinet.

The Chair thanked the Director of Education and Inclusion Services for the overview of the proposal and explained to Members that the meeting does not have the jurisdiction to make any decisions but it provides an important opportunity to comment on the proposals and for the observations of Members to be reported back to Cabinet when they received the wider consultation feedback.

In respect of the improving education provision in Hirwaun by investing £10.4m in a new, school for Hirwaun Primary School, Members put forward their questions and observations.

A member explained that she had personally acted as a scribe in a recent meeting organised by Councillor Graham Thomas last Friday at Penderyn. This was not a formal Council meeting.

A Member asked in respect of the Hirwaun and Penderyn area and the concept of Welsh Education along with the Welsh Government plan for more Welsh speakers by 2050 had there been any pre-consultation with the community to take into account their views within the area.

It was explained that in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) the Council has included in its plan to increase the number of children being taught through the medium of Welsh and specifically included in the plan is to:

- Provide new and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity.

- Consideration of making dual language schools into full Welsh medium schools.

The School Organisation Code is very prescriptive. The Code clearly states that it is not a requirement to hold any meetings to discuss proposals but we convene this as we deem it good practice. However, to adopt a consistent approach we do not hold pre-consultation meetings.

A Member questioned the maintenance figure of £1.9Million and asked how as a Local Authority we got to that situation. Members were informed of that, the school is a CLASP type construction and was built in the late 1960's. The buildings are difficult to maintain due to the management of asbestos and they have come to the end of their useful life.

A member enquired whether the Council has to pay for demolition costs? It was explained that all costs, including the demolition and asbestos removal costs, are included in the overall project costs.

Another Member complemented the proposal and thought it was a well thought out proposal.

In respect of the Transport issue, a Member asked with regards the provision of transport how much extra pressure would be put on school transport. It was explained that this is unclear at present, in respect of the English medium provisional numbers will fluctuate. In catchment pupils resident in Penderyn attending English medium stream will receive free transport to the new Hirwaun Primary School as the walking route is deemed unavailable.

In respect of Transport provision a Member expressed concerns as to whether there was sufficient public transportation to and from Penderyn. A Member commented that the bus service from Penderyn is an hourly service, which could be a serious issue for parents especially if they do not drive. If parents need to get to the school in an emergency this could be of concern.

Majority of Members felt strongly that the transport situation needed to be looked in greater detail. Officers explained that the Education Department collaborates with the Highways transport team and will raise the issue with the private sector transport company.

The Chair asked how can we make the Penderyn Welsh Medium School Proposal a positive one to the Communities of Hirwaun and Penderyn? The Director of Education and Inclusion Services explained that some parents feel strongly about removing the English stream however parents are already making a choice of choosing Welsh medium with only three pupils registered for English medium provision this year. However, there is positive feedback and the large capital investment in the community is seen as a real opportunity for the wider Cynon Valley schools in the area. We need to focus on equality and ensure all pupils have fair access to good education facilities and opportunities.

The Chair asked if the school would be able to accommodate any future housing development with the area and if this had been taken into consideration when devising the proposal. It was explained that the Council strategically manages its school places and inputs into the Local Development Plan and regularly monitors new and proposed housing development in the area. A Member also explained that there is a proposal for Heads of the Valleys road duelling. There is possible development there and we hope that along that corridor it will bring employment to the area. To have a 21<sup>st</sup> Century school would be very positive for the area.

The Chair thanked the Officers and as there were, no further questions put forward on the Cynon Valley proposal asked Officers to proceed with the next consultation document to consider the Greater Pontypridd Proposal.

Director of Education and Inclusion Services,  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon,  
Rhondda Cynon Taff,  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Rhondda Cynon Taff, Consultation on a proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

Further to your consultation commencing regarding the above. I am a parent of 2 children currently attending Penderyn Community Primary School that would be affected by your proposal.

As a parent of 2 of the 54 children being taught through the medium of English, and 2 of the 22 that live within the "Penderyn catchment" taught via the English medium I would like to comment as follows:

1. Your statistics show that 23% of the children are taught through the medium of English, and 41% of these are from the Penderyn catchment. Your consultation report however does not quantify the percentage of children being taught through the medium of Welsh that live outside the Penderyn Catchment area.

As there are 2 buses that provide transportation to children outside of the Penderyn catchment area I am aware that the vast majority of children being taught through the medium of Welsh live outside the Penderyn catchment. Penderyn school is named "Ysgol Gynradd Gymuned Penderyn" / "Penderyn Community Primary School" for a reason, the school is part of the community and fundamentally provides education to children who live in the Penderyn local community. Children that attend the school from outside is an added extra, fundamentally the school is in the community for the community.

2. My children attend the school in their direct community, your proposal will mean having to move the children to another school outside their community. As a former pupil of the school I am saddened by the fact that 22 children and countless numbers of children in the future will be deprived from going to their

local community school. Whilst your proposal will mean a huge number of children being taught through the medium of Welsh will get taught in a proposed "lack of community school". Your actions will mean that Penderyn school will have less children from the "Penderyn catchment" and will become a school disconnected from the community within which it sits.

In addition, my children will lose part of their identity and affiliation with the local community if your proposals are accepted and executed.

3. As a parent of 2 of the children being taught via the medium of English I would question why they are being positively discriminated against and why they can not be taught via the medium of English in their local school. English is the primary language of 88% of Rhondda Cynon Taff residents (as noted in the R.C.T Welsh Language promotion strategy) and despite this fact my children are being discriminated against to the point where they can no longer attend the school in their village / community. This is wrong and such discrimination should not be allowed in 2018 when the whole world is becoming more accepting of differing cultures, religions, genders and languages. Integration is key to long term success in all walks of life.
4. The recent Estyn report issued in 2018 assesses the current performance of Penderyn Community Primary School as follows:

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

In summary Penderyn Community Primary School is rated good in 4 out of the 5 categories assessed, with an adequate/needs improvement rating in the 5<sup>th</sup> category.

Hirwaun Primary School's inspection in 2018 was as follows:

<u>Inspection area</u>	<u>Judgement</u>
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Adequate and needs improvement
Teaching and learning experiences	Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

In summary Hirwaun Primary School is rated good in 1 out of the 5 categories assessed, with an adequate/needing improvement rating in 3 categories and unsatisfactory / needing urgent improvement in the final category.

Therefore why do Rhondda Cynon Taff believe that it is acceptable to move my children from a school performing well (Penderyn) to a dysfunctional school (Hirwaun) because of the educational language we have decided our children should be taught through. The only logical conclusion that I am drawn to is that Rhondda Cynon Taff do not consider the quality of education of children via the English medium as being important. Your proposal is further discrimination against children being taught through the medium of English and will detrimentally effect their education and future prospects in life.

5. Unfortunately not all children can cope with being taught via the medium of Welsh, and, despite best efforts, some children have to move from the Welsh to English classes. Currently there are 6 out of the 54 children in the English medium side of the school who fall into this category. By separating the schools in the future would mean these children would either continue to struggle (as they do not want to leave the school) or would need to leave their school to find an education route that may suite better. This would create a situation that is unsatisfactory and would create significant upset, stigmatization and upheaval for children. Children who fall into this "transferring of education language medium category" need support and understanding rather than discrimination and becoming outcasts or failures at a young age in their local community.

As a former pupil that still lives in the local Pendeyn community, with 2 children attending the school I am deeply upset by the current proposal and strongly object to the motion of creating a welsh medium only school in Penderyn.

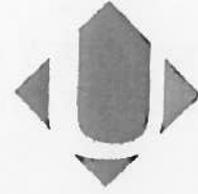
In summary I believe that your proposals will create a disconnect between the school and the local community within which it sits, and are nothing short of discrimination against pupils being taught through the English language. Your proposal will mean that my children and countless in the future will receive a sub-standard education outside of their village because they are taught through the medium of English. Your proposal will also in future ostracize children from their school and community if they get into educational difficulty.

In a country where diversity and inclusion is being encouraged (including Rhondda Cynon Taff as an employer) I can not understand why in the education arena diversity and inclusion is not encouraged. There is a big world out there and our children should be encouraged so see the world through many lenses. Your proposal will drive introverted opinions and objectives which will not help the growth of our children in the future.

Finally as a full paying taxpayer and council tax payer I believe that my children should fundamentally attend their local school and be provided with the best education possible. I received a good education and am now a director of a major infrastructure company in England, I expect the state to provide my children with the same opportunity I was given. I feel that your proposal will unfortunately fall way short of this request.

Yours sincerely

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**UCAC**  
Undeb  
Cenedlaethol  
Athrawon  
Cymru

**Yr ymgynghoriad ar y cynnig i godi  
adeilad ysgol newydd ar gyfer Ysgol  
Gynradd Hirwaun a'r cynllun  
arfaethedig i newid statws cyfrwng iaith  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Penderyn**

Rhagfyr 2018

**UCAC** | yr undeb sy'n diogelu athrawon a darlithwyr Cymru

## **Yr ymgynghoriad ar y cynnig i godi adeilad ysgol newydd ar gyfer Ysgol Gynradd Hirwaun a'r cynllun arfaethedig i newid statws cyfrwng iaith Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Penderyn**

Mae Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC) yn gwerthfawrogi'r cyfle i ymateb i'r ddogfen ymgynghori gan Gyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Mae UCAC yn falch gweld dyhead Cyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf i geisio creu mwy o lefydd addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y sir ac yn cadw at yr hyn a amlinellwyd yn eu Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg drwy *"ystyried troi ysgolion cynradd dwy iaith yn ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg"*.

Rydym yn cytuno gyda'r hyn a nodwyd yn y ddogfen ymgynghorol y bydd cyfle i ddisgyblion ardal Penderyn gael trochi addysg lawn yn y Gymraeg mewn ysgol cyfan gwbl Gymraeg. O ganlyniad bydd rhagor o ddisgyblion yn cael eu haddysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg a bydd hyn yn cynyddu'r cyfloed i ddisgyblion a staff yr ysgol. Bydd cynyddu'r nifer o ddisgyblion cynradd sy'n cael eu haddysgu yn y Gymraeg yn yr ardal hon o ganlyniad yn cynyddu nifer y disgyblion a fydd yn mynd ymlaen a'u haddysg yn y Gymraeg i Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun. Bydd hyn yn cyd-fynd gyda nôd Llywodraeth Cymru o gael miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050.

Cydnabyddir bod ad-drefnu ysgolion fel hyn yn fater cymhleth a bod amrywiaeth barn a theimladau cryfion o du disgyblion, rhieni, staff ysgol a'r gymuned ehangach.

Os bydd y cynllun arfaethedig yn cael ei gymeradwyo gan Gyngor Sir Rhondda Cynon Taf mae UCAC yn gofyn am sicrwydd llawn na fydd unrhyw ddiswyddiadau gorfodol ac y bydd ymgynghoriad llawn gyda staff ac undebau llafur y ddwy ysgol am unrhyw newidiadau staffio. Mae'n rhaid i'r Awdurdod gydweithio'n agos gyda'r ddau gorff llywodraethol er mwyn sicrhau y cyfyd cyn lleied o ansicrwydd ag sy'n ymarferol bosib.

**UCAC**

**Rhagfyr 2018**

**Public Meeting Penderyn School Re-organisation.**  
**14<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**  
**Consultation Response.**

**Notes from meeting at Penderyn Community Centre**

**14/12/18**

**Meeting to discuss with residents, changes in Penderyn Community Primary School**

**Cll Graham Thomas chaired meeting**

**In attendance – Cllr Helen Boggis on behalf of Vikki Howells AM**

**21 residents in attendance.**

Graham outlined proposed changes of School and explained to attendees that this meeting in no way replaces consultation and residents should still make representation via the consultation. Relevant information re contact/email/consultation document left with venue for addition to notice board.

Residents queried why so many children attend English Medium education at Penderyn Primary School from outside the catchment and primarily from the Hirwaun catchment area. It was considered that this was because of poor education provision at Hirwaun Primary as indicated by the last Estyn report placing Hirwaun Primary in red category while Penderyn achieved yellow category resulting in parental choice for Penderyn Primary School.

It was further noted that a total of 102 English Medium pupils from the Hirwaun catchment attended schools outside the Hirwaun catchment and this did not include faith schools. It was considered that this was a direct reflection of the standard of Education at Hirwaun Primary School.

A question was raised "who/why was the decision made to chose Hirwaun and not Rhigos for the site as there would have better match "like for like" at that site.

Reference was made to the education code and the statement that when children are moved there "should be like for like" provision at the alternative

school. Rhondda Cynon Taf are in breach of this code within the current proposals.

When pupil numbers were considered in the original bid for funding were children from Penderyn part of the calculation. If so, this should not have been done as the parents at the meeting stated categorically that "they would not send their children to Hirwaun Primary because of the educational standards at the school and would exercise parental choice to send their children elsewhere".

There was opposition to the Authority stopping the enrolment of English Medium pupils from September 2019.

Comment was made that Penderyn Primary Community School could no longer be called a community school when those living in the community can no longer send their children there for English Medium education.

A complaint was made that a request to meet with Headmaster had been refused.

The meeting was of the opinion that if a 30 name petition was presented for a meeting with the Headmaster and School Governors then this would have to be granted. A 70 name petition was presented to Cllr Graham Thomas together with a letter of response to the consultation. Both were handed to Rhondda Cynon Taf on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

Complaint was made that teachers had been told by the school that they were not allowed to attend this public meeting as it was only for the community. The meeting was informed that no such communication would have come from the organisers of this meeting.

A request was made for Vikki Howells A.M. to contact Welsh Government Minister Kirsty Williams A.M. regarding the proposals. This would be communicated via Vikki Howell's office in attendance.

A comment was made that many Welsh Medium pupils attend Penderyn Primary School because of the availability of a free bus and many continue their education through English Medium when transferred to Secondary Education at 11 years of age.

Further comment from a parent that "their daughter benefited from an education that mixed with children from Welsh Medium education and vice versa". This cross benefit would be lost at Penderyn Primary School  
Another comment indicated "that the smaller classes were actually a benefit at Penderyn Primary School"

Reference was made that when the new school was built that there was a clause or covenant that the school would have to retain both English and Welsh Medium education at the school. The meeting was informed that Cllr Graham Thomas has already pursued this question when raised previously and had been informed by Rhondda Cynon Taf that there was no such clause. This needed re-affirmation as part of the consultation.

A question was raised as to why the catchment for Welsh Medium had been extended to Penywaun when Welsh Medium provision at Cwmdare was much closer to that community.

As stated above parents will not send their children to Hirwaun Primary School for English Medium education and would send their children to other schools using parental choice.

The only other option left to Penderyn residents would be to send their children to Welsh Medium at Penderyn school if education within their community was the prime consideration. Would Penderyn Primary School have the capacity to implement this option given the increase in catchment to include Trenant/Penywaun.

Further comment was made that imposing a red category school when current education is a yellow category is in contravention of regulations/code.

A suggestion was made to change the catchment boundary of English Medium at Penderyn School to provide sufficient English Medium numbers for both Hirwaun and Penderyn Schools. If the boundary can be changed for Welsh Medium education then the boundary can be changed for English Medium education. If part of Hirwaun was included then that would be nearer to Penderyn Primary School than Penywaun is for Welsh Medium education. Within this proposal it was further noted that 102 pupils from within the current English Medium catchment of Hirwaun Primary school do not attend that school

Community view from the meeting is that Penderyn Primary School should continue education through the medium of English.

Public service buses only run at one per hour, parents without their own transport would not be able to collect their children in an emergency.

Penderyn School would lose diversity and inclusion.

Some children move between both mediums currently for additional support, Penderyn will lose this capacity on site.

Pupils with additional needs will suffer within larger class sizes at Hirwaun Primary School.

A question was raised as to whether Rhigos Primary School had the capacity to take the children from Penderyn Primary as parents would not be sending their children to the new Hirwaun Primary School.

One parent asked. " I Have 2 children, one in reception and one due to start in sept 19. How do I collect both at same time? Not prepared to move one child a year early as the other will miss friends etc".

A comment was made that " A health visitor informed residents of this change over 3 yrs ago."

A further observation was made that Hirwaun Primary was already a red school and now more pressure would be placed on teachers at the school by transferring more pupils to the school.

No consultation has taken place to date with children while children are included within the statutory stakeholders listed in the consultation document. Does this contravene regulations?

①

It was only the beginning of September that anyone knew about the change of Penderyn School being turned into a Welsh School. Even the parents were not informed until children came home with letters in their school bags. I think this has been done underhanded as this must have been put in place at least 2 yrs ago.

As a member of the Community I think every household in the village of Penderyn should have had a letter through their door informing them of what was happening, as this is a Community School and we are the Community of Penderyn. Not everyone has a computer to see what is going on. I don't have one so a friend of mine printed this form out for me. It is not acceptable. This is a community school and as always been bilingual.

Why should children of the village be sent outside the community to be taught when we have our own perfect school. Also they are still taking English speaking children in until Sept 2019, which is not fair having to move them to a different school by 2022.

At the moment Welsh speaking children can come up from Hirwaun free but the English have to pay this is discrimination.

Most children who are sent up from Hirwaun are only here because (a) Penderyn is a very good school. (b) if they put them in the Welsh unit they have free transport.

Most children in the Welsh unit their parents

cannot speak or understand Welsh also many have had to take them out of the Welsh and put them in the English because they are struggling and falling behind

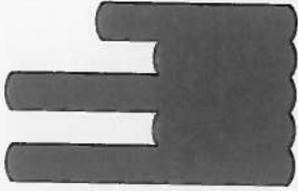
I have spoke to a couple of parents who have gone to put their child in the English only to be told to put them in the Welsh and if they don't cope you can put them into the English. This is only done to keep the number in the Welsh unit up. The headmaster is all for the Welsh. at concerts he speaks mostly in Welsh then afterwards a few words in English. He thinks because there are so many children in the Welsh unit all their parents who attend can understand Welsh. The answer is they cannot and ~~are~~ they do not understand a word he is saying.

If they want a Welsh school build one in Hwlwsin to again the one that's proposed to be built in 2022.

If the shoe was on the other foot I wonder if the Welsh side would be so acceptable.

Why would you want to send your child from Penderyn school that is doing exceptionally well to somewhere that is not. The children that are already being taught English in Penderyn should be able to see their time out here until it is time to go to the senior school it is not acceptable that they have to be moved away with 1 or 2 yrs left.

This is the only school in all of R.C.T that will not be taught through the medium of English. Penderyn school has always been bilingual and should stay that way.



Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
Rhondda Cynon Taff  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2021.

I have 2 children at Penderyn Community Primary School and another child who would be due to start in 2021. These plans will adversely affect them, and the other 20 children in the Penderyn catchment area who are taught through the medium of English. For this reason, I would like to make the following points:

1. Penderyn Community School is a community school, therefore, should provide education primarily to the Penderyn Community, who, according to your statistics (22 children from the Penderyn catchment area attend the English side which is the majority of the children in Penderyn) would like to be taught through the medium of English.

If these plans go ahead, the community of Penderyn will be damaged by this proposal and our children will not be mixing with those few who are taught in the medium of Welsh. The proposal says it “supports the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 ...” but it does not support the needs of the local people actually living within the community of Penderyn. We should not be forced to send our children to a school outside the community just to meet government targets. We are talking about the lives of our children, they are not just a number. The effect on the children being forced out if this goes ahead has clearly not been taken into account.

You say “It is considered that the overall impact on the local communities of these proposals, with improved and extended school facilities will be a positive, beneficial one.” This statement would not be true for my family and the others who have chosen for their children to be taught in English. It will be divisive. The children will no longer all be mixing, the parents/carers will no longer be meeting at the school gates. The village will be divided into Welsh and English instead of being one community. Instead, we will be losing our community school and children from outside of the catchment area will instead be coming into our village for school while our children are sent to a school which is struggling. This brings me on to my next point.

2. Hirwaun Primary School has recently been rated as 'red' when it was inspected by Estyn. Out of the 5 areas that were inspected only 1 was judged as good, and the teaching and learning experiences were judged as 'unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement'. I do not want to move my children from a school which was judged as 'good' in 4 out of the 5 areas, and rated as 'yellow' to a school which is clearly struggling. A new building is not going to improve the teaching at Hirwaun because the staff and pupils make the school, not the building. It is discrimination to force the children who live in Penderyn and who want their children to be taught through the medium of English to go to a school which is not performing well. Our children should be able to attend their local school and be taught in English since it is the first language of the majority of residents.

In the constitution you have the seven core aims and it says "We consider that this proposal benefits the children in these communities in accordance with the seven core aims..." however, I disagree.

The children from Penderyn will have to go to a school which is not within walking distance, therefore, will not "enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation." They will not get the benefits of walking to and from their local school with parents and other children from school, and they are being victimised by being forced to leave their community to go to school.

Dual language supports integration and understanding where they can "...have their race and cultural identity recognised." Segregating pupils promotes ignorance of the culture of others.

Another of the core aims is to "Have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being." which is not being met with this proposal as our children will not have their community meeting their physical or emotional needs because they will be rejected by their own school purely because they learn in English.

The transfer to another school will not be 'simple' as was stated. It will be very stressful for those children and parents involved and parental preference is to keep Penderyn Community Primary School a dual language community school.

The apparent benefits that Hirwaun Primary School would offer are not adequate. A new school building which will take more pupils will not "improve educational outcomes and provision" because children learn best in a smaller place where they feel confident and secure. There is a reason why people pay for their children to pay for private education where the classes are smaller.

It is portrayed as a negative that the children in Penderyn are being taught in mixed year groups, however, it is beneficial to the children as they learn from their peers and can help others learn too. My eldest has benefited from this setup as he was able to learn from the older children and therefore achieve more than he may have done if he was just being taught the curriculum for his age.

3. Penderyn Community Primary School apparently has an "English medium stream which is becoming unviable with difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff ..." however I can not see how this is true. It seems to me that catchment areas have been changed to get the decline and also, if free transport was not just offered to those children learning through the medium of welsh then the decline of those being taught in english would most likely not be happening. This, again, is discrimination; offering free transport if you will send your children to be taught in welsh but not if you send your children to the same school to be taught in english.

In regard to the staff, the teachers who my children have had, are of high quality and have been there for years, proving to me that you are happy to put untrue statements into this proposal to get the result you desire.

If the demand for more places is there, then why not make Hirwaun Primary School a dual language school when it has the new building and leave Penderyn as it is. The demand for english places could increase too, the projections have been cleverly put together to make them say what you want. The catchment for welsh is larger than for english, therefore, why not increase the catchment for those wanting their children to be taught in English.

This proposal would have a long term, negative, impact on families in Penderyn, not just short term, and it is only in terms of the welsh provision that it could be said that there are educational advantages.

If it is so easy to extend catchment areas, why not extend the catchment area for the English stream of Penderyn Community School? This would solve the (alleged) problem of declining numbers.

"numbers have fallen to just 54 in the english stream ... only 22 pupils actually live within the Penderyn catchment area"

22 is a lot for a village, that is the majority of children in Penderyn being taught in English. The catchment area was reduced so why not extend it again. Also, you do not mention how many of those being taught in welsh are from Penderyn and how many are from outside? Playing with numbers again.

4. Free transport is not a suitable option for such young children. It will be traumatic for both parents and children and it is not fair on them. As a parent of very young children, I want face to face contact with the staff who teach them.

The possibility of having to send them to school on a bus is completely unreasonable. I should not need to use free transport for my children when there is a 'community' school in my community within walking distance. How can you expect a 3 year old to go to school on a bus every morning. What if parents don't have a car and for some reason e.g. illness or appointment, a child needs collecting early? How are we expected to get to Hirwaun? We bought our house just before our 5 year old started school, and one of our criteria was for there to be a school in walking distance because I don't always have a car and I need to be able to take my children to and from school. My children should not have to go

through this when there is a brilliant school in the village we live, where I can speak to the teachers if I need to, and can easily do the school run.

On top of this, not everyone will use the 'free transport', resulting in more traffic on the roads with children being driven out of the village to school and children from outside the village being driven in for school. As a resident, I do not want more traffic on that road, it is busy enough as it is.

In summary, I am all for building a new school for Hirwaun, but keep Penderyn dual language. If welsh is needed then make Hirwaun Primary a dual language school. I know my children have benefited from the amount of welsh they are picking up from it being dual language. A dual language school promotes understanding and tolerance.

Segregation promotes intolerance and ignorance. Our children should be experiencing inclusion and this does not encourage it. Until Hirwaun has reached the same standard as Penderyn, I don't think we should even have to consider moving our children as that would mean sending them to a school where they will have less chance of doing well. Penderyn Community Primary School should remain first and foremost, a school for the community where parents can choose for their children to be taught in either English or Welsh.

This proposal will completely disconnect the school from the community. I strongly object to Penderyn Primary School being made a welsh medium only school.

Yours sincerely,

**From:** [REDACTED] Clerk Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council.  
**Sent:** 17 December 2018 14:09  
**To:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** Hirwaun Primary/Penderyn Primary Schools consultation

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Sir/Madam

The consultation for the construction of a new school building for Hirwaun Primary, and the proposed change in language medium status of Penderyn Primary was on the agenda to be discussed at our Community Council meeting last week.

Unfortunately, once our Cllrs who sit as school governors declared a prejudicial interest (four out the eight attending) our meeting was no longer quorate and the consultation could not be discussed. Our legal advisers confirmed that if a Cllr has a prejudicial interest (i.e. is a School Governor not appointed by the Community Council) then they would not be able to take part in any discussions.

Cllrs would like it placed on record the reason as to why we could not respond to the consultation.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]  
Executive Officer to Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council

Hirwaun Village Hall, High Street, Hirwaun, CF44 9SL  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

***For information on our Privacy Policy please refer to [hirwaunandpenderyncc.org.uk](http://hirwaunandpenderyncc.org.uk)***

[REDACTED]

Director of Education and Inclusion Services,  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon,  
Rhondda Cynon Taff,  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Sir / Madam,

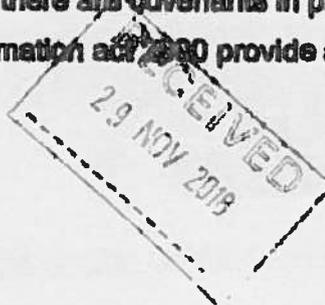
Re: Rhondda Cynon Taff. Consultation on a proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

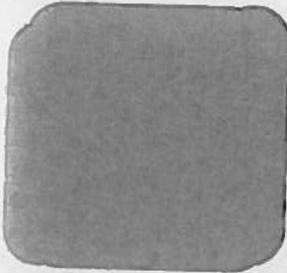
Further to your consultation I am led to believe that Penderyn School is subject to a restrictive covenant that is specific around the education of children through English and Welsh languages.

Please could you provide confirm if there are covenants in place for Penderyn School and if so under the freedom of information act 2000 provide a copy of such documentation.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]





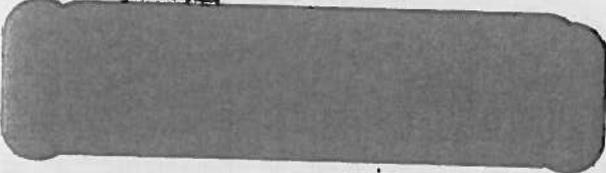
**Amrwyf Cysaili,**

Dw i am ddatgan fy nghefnogaeth lwyr o greu Ysgol Cyfrwng Gymraeg newydd ym Mhenderyn yn y dyfodol agos. Charwydd y twf yn y Gymraeg yng Nghwm Cynon mae eisiam datblygu strategaeth giir i ddiwallu anghenion y boblogaeth.

Credaf hefyd bod eisiam darpariaeth yn ardal Aberpennar - bydd hynny'n lleddfu ar brinder lleoedd yn Ysgol Gymraeg Abercynon ac Ysgol Gymraeg Aberdâr.

Er mwyn cynyddi y posibilrwydd o wneud dim llwyr o sêmau Gymraeg yng Nghymru mae'n rhaid darparu a chynllunio nawr. Dylai'r Gymraeg fod yn drysor y gallwn ni gyd ei rhoi.

**Yn ddiidwyll,**



Dnewch chi gwelwch eu bod  
chi wedi dechreu fy llythyo  
os gwelwch yn dda.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 10 December 2018 13:09  
**To:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** penderyn primary school

**Follow Up Flag:** [REDACTED]  
**Flag Status:** [REDACTED]

I am a parent of a child who attends penderyn school, also live in penderyn and I am very unhappy about the consultation of penderyn school becoming all welsh.

I moved to the area due to such a good report on the school Estyn reports are far better than hirwaun school.

I am very annoyed by the fact we in a small but nice community of penderyn will have to travel to take our children to a school in the next village.

we as a small village are becoming more and more with the younger generation moving to the area , so as for we can only attend our village COMMUNITY school to speak welsh is appalling.

good luck to hirwaun needing a new school as the school is old and run down but please take into consideration that we as parents want our children to speak English not welsh in our local school..

this is discrimination against us and our children and the fact that some children have been taken from welsh to English in the past because they were struggling has to be taken into consideration..

if the intake for English was throughout the year not only September maybe the English department would improve because they can take welsh children on over the year but not English ( another discrimination act..)

so I as a parent would like u to rethink what u are doing to our children in our community that will have nothing in the future no shop, two pubs close by but nothing for our growing community and children .. and now not even an English school..

I know a lot of people younge and older who went to welsh school but no longer use it into there adult life... have u even took this into consideration....

look forward to a reply

[REDACTED]

Adran Addysg,  
Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Amwyf Syr,

Hoffwn i gynnig fy nghefnogaeth i gynllun Rhondda Cynon Taf o newid ysgol  
gymradd Penderyn i fudi yn ysgol gymradd Gymraeg.

Er mwyn sicrhau 1,000,000 o siaradwyr Gymraeg yn y dyfodol mas'n anghorheidiol  
darparu'r gwasanaeth fydd yn galluogi'r llywodraeth gwreidd â'r her yma.

Fel adnaws Gymraeg wedi yn dyddio'r iaith mewn ysgol Saesneg ei chyfrwng, dw i'n  
gallu tystio i ba mor anodd yw hi i lwyddo creu awyrgylch Gymraeg sy'n arwain at  
siaradwyr Gymraeg.

Roedd fy mab wedi mynychu ysgol Gymraeg tan yn 16 oed ond wrth symud i  
Benderyn treuliodd ei flwyddyn olaf yn yr adran Gymraeg yn ysgol gymradd  
Penderyn. Roedd y gwahaniaeth mewn darpariaeth yn amlwg ac roeddwn i'n falch  
bod ei amser yn y fath sefyllfa wedi cwtogi i un flwyddyn yn unig.

Er bod yr athrawon yn gwneud eu gorau glas, dydy ysgolion dwy ffrwd ddim mor  
llwyddiannus.

Mae cynnydd yn y gafwrdd am addysg Gymraeg yn amlwg ac mae Menter yn  
Mhenderyn a dosbarthiadau Gymraeg i oedolion yn cafnogi hyn.

Yn gywir,

\* A wnaech chi gadarnhau eich bod chi wedi  
darbyn y llythyr yma.  
Diolch

**From:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** FW: Addysg Gymraeg ym Mhontypridd

**From:** XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
**Sent:** 11 December 2018 23:20  
**Subject:** Addysg Gymraeg ym Mhontypridd

**Annwyl Gaynor Davies**

**Ysgolion yr Unfed Ganrif ar Hugain**

Yn dilyn darllen y ddogfen uchod, hoffai [REDACTED] noli rhai cwestiynau am eich bwriadau ar gyfer addysg Gymraeg, sef osau ysgolion Pont Siôn Norton a Heol-y-Celyn ac adelladu ysgol newydd sbon ar safle presennol Heol-y-Celyn. Croesewir y buddsoddiad hir ddisgwyliedig hwn mewn addysg Gymraeg ond mae gennym bryderon am yr argymhellion presennol:

Bydd rhaid i blant deithio yn bellach er mwyn cyrru addysg Gymraeg, yn enwedig plant yng nghymunedau Cilfynydd, Coed y Cwm, Ynysybwl a Glyncoch.

Mae galw mawr am addysg Gymraeg yn ardal Glyncoch ac Ynysybwl ond eto bydd yr ysgol newydd wedi ei lleoli saith milltir o'r cymunedau hynny. Tra'n croesawu'r cynnydd mewn capasiti, mae'r un mor bwysig cael mynediad hygyrch a dirwysr at ddarpariaeth newydd.

Mae polisi Llywodraeth Cymru wedi rhoi pwyslais ar gynyddu mynediad at ddarpariaeth blynyddoedd cynnar a chynradd cyfrwng Gymraeg yng nghymuned y plentyn.

Mae clybiau brechwast a chlybiau ôl-ysgol yn elfennau hanfodol o fewn ysgolion modern ac mae rhieni presennol Ysgol Pont Siôn Norton yn poeni am orfod teithio mor bell ar gyfer y cyfleusterau hyn ar ddechrau a diwedd pob dydd. Gallai hyn arwain at fwy o rieni gogledd Pontypridd yn dewis addysg Saesneg.

Hoffem gael ymateb i'r pwyntiau isod:

Gan fod y cynlluniau ar gyfer safle Heol y Celyn yn dal i fod yn rhai ffurfiannol, a yw'n bosib pwysu arnoch i ddwys ystyried y lleoliad mwyaf addas ar gyfer agor ysgol Gymraeg yn yr ardal. A oes unrhyw bosibilrwydd adelladu mewn man mwy canolog i'r holl blant y bydd yr ysgol newydd yn ei gwasanaethu? Neu, a ellid gwario ychydig yn llai ar yr ysgol newydd ac ystyried agor dosbarth meithrin Gymraeg mewn ysgol arall fel bod ysgol Gymraeg arall yn tyfu'n organig mewn ardal arall ym Mhontypridd? Mae Cyngor Caerdydd wedi gwneud hyn yn llwyddiannus ar sawl achlysur. Mae nifer o syniadau yr hoffem gael y cyfle i'w gwyntyllu gyda chi.

Noda Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg y Cyngor fod bwriad i greu 6,054 o siaradwyr Gymraeg ychwanegol o fewn y sir erbyn 2021. Dywedir hefyd fod Llywodraeth Cymru'n nodi pa mor hanfodol yw'r system addysg. Mae hwn yn darged clodwiw iawn ond nid ydym yn gweld sut y mae amddifadu cymunedau pwysig ym Mhontypridd o ysgol Gymraeg yn mynd i helpu gwredu'r targed hwn.

Mae [REDACTED] yn croesawu'ch cyhoeddiad i droi Ysgol Penderyn yn ysgol Gymraeg ac yn teimlo bod y cynlluniau ar gyfer Ysgol Dolau hefyd yn addawol. Fodd bynnag, byddem yn croesawu petaech yn fodlon derbyn dirprwyaeth ar ran [REDACTED] drafod sefyllfa'r ad-drefnu yn ardal Pontypridd.

Edrychaf ymlaen at glywed oddi wrthyich.

Yn gywir

XXXXXXXX

21st December 2018

**Proposal to Construct a New School Building for Hirwaun Primary School and the Proposed Change of Language Medium status of Penderyn Community Primary School, from 1st September 2021**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the above mentioned proposal. My son and his family live in Penderyn, and they have two children in the English stream at Penderyn Community School, with a third due to start there in 2021. This proposal would exclude them from their own community school.

I strongly object to this proposal on several grounds.

1) The proposal begins by pointing out that numbers in the English stream at Penderyn Community School have fallen and are expected to continue declining. I would suggest that this is due to the fact that the catchment area for the English stream is not only much smaller than the Welsh catchment area, but it has been reduced in recent years - presumably in order to provide this misleading statement. It seems it is easy to increase a catchment area, since it is proposed for the Welsh stream, so why not increase the catchment area for the English stream? I notice that only the catchment area for the Welsh stream is shown on a map - where is the catchment area for the English stream? it should certainly be shown for comparison.

The proposal notes that there are only 22 pupils in the English stream from Penderyn village. It does not say how many in the Welsh stream are from Penderyn village, a number which would be necessary in order to make a fair comparison. Perhaps because the majority of pupils in the Welsh stream are bussed in from other areas? The result of the proposal would be that most of the pupils at the school will be brought in from other areas, while the children actually living in the village are bussed out of the village. This is clearly a ridiculous situation and is also discrimination against the English speakers. The

school is called Penderyn Community School, so it should serve Penderyn community. Penderyn community contains both Welsh speakers and English speakers, therefore the school should serve both Welsh speakers and English speakers.

When the document describes admissions criteria, it uses the phrase ***"preference will be given to children living nearest the school."*** The children living in Penderyn village are those living nearest the school, and they should be given preference, not suddenly told they must get on a bus and go elsewhere. Parental preference is mentioned too - but parental preference is for there to be an English stream at Penderyn school. Are parents really expected to put a 3 yr old on a bus every morning - traumatic in itself - when there is an excellent school in walking distance? The fact of the transport being free completely misses the point. For example, what kind of relationship can parents develop with teachers if they never see them? Yet with such young children these relationships are essential. What happens if a child becomes ill at school? What about after school clubs? How do they go and play with the new friends they've made? There is no free transport to deal with these things.

The proposal states that the school ***"has difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff"***. I should like to be provided with details of this claim as it does not seem to be based on evidence. None of the people I have spoken to feel that the English stream is taught by low quality staff who keep changing. The opposite is true, staff are excellent, popular with both children and parents, and have been there for years. It is an extremely damaging and negative statement which should certainly be backed up with facts.

2) The document quotes from the **UN Convention of the Rights of the Child**. I would draw your attention to core aim 3. ***"enjoy the best possible health and be free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation."*** There are two aspects here. Firstly, at present my grandchildren walk to school, it is very good for their health, and I would point out that more exercise and physical activity for children is recommended by the government. This proposal would replace the brisk walk, twice daily, with sitting on a bus - clearly detrimental to their health. Secondly, ***"abuse, victimisation and exploitation"*** are far more likely in a bigger, less personal school such as that proposed in Hirwaun. It is not an

issue in a small, friendly school like Penderyn. Therefore both aspects of core aim 3 are contravened by this proposal.

Core aim 5 states that children should have their *"....cultural identity recognised"*. In a dual language school like Penderyn, the two cultures, Welsh and English, are recognised. The children mix, get to know each other and learn to understand each other's culture. This proposal would take that away from both the English stream that moves to Hirwaun and the Welsh stream left behind. They would no longer mix, and this segregation would promote ignorance and misunderstanding, an "us and them" mentality. Hence this aim too is contravened by the proposal.

Core aim 6 states that children should have *".... a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing."* But the community of Penderyn will be damaged and divided by this proposal, with separate Welsh and English communities instead of one village community. Thus this aim is also contravened by this proposal.

Therefore the proposal is shown to be against the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child as it fails several of the core aims.

3. The proposal claims that the changes will improve educational outcomes including *"the social and emotional development of children."* I strongly disagree with this claim insofar as the children in the English stream are concerned. Children learn best when they feel confident and secure, and this is best achieved in smaller classes in smaller schools. The teachers at Penderyn know all the children in the school and are able to interact with parents who are taking their children to and from school. The document describes the move to Hirwaun as *"a simple transfer"*. There is nothing simple about it. Moving from a small friendly school to a big impersonal school with larger classes will be extremely traumatic and detrimental to their wellbeing.

A constant theme of the document is *"21st century education"* and the benefits that the children will allegedly receive by transferring to Hirwaun. But a *"state of the art"* building is no guarantee of a better school, the atmosphere and learning opportunities have much more to do with the staff and the children than the state of the building. Therefore the children will be transferring into a much worse environment, as Hirwaun school is known to be

struggling. There is a degree of hypocrisy in these statements of benefits for the children who have to move - do not those being educated through the medium of Welsh also require a 21st Century education? Of course they do, and they will receive it at Penderyn Community School! The school was only built twelve years ago (ie. in the 21st century), and if it were not able to provide a 21st century education, it would not be retained as a Welsh medium school either.

4) It is claimed that the demand for school places (Welsh and English) is set to increase due to development in Hirwaun village. Surely the logical answer to that is to make Hirwaun school dual language. Let the children of the different cultures mix and learn to understand each other! The proposal claims that *"the impact on the local communities ... will be positive and beneficial."* I strongly disagree. The effect on the community of Penderyn will be divisive and destructive. The children will no longer be mixing at school, the parents will not be meeting and chatting at the school gate, the teachers will know very little of the children's backgrounds and home situations. The change in language medium status at Penderyn School may support the Government's Welsh Language strategy - but it doesn't support the needs of the local community, which will be damaged and divided by this issue. This proposal is from the department of Education and Inclusion Services, but apparently there is no inclusion for English speakers in Penderyn, they are being excluded from their own school.

In conclusion, I find that this proposal is full of sweeping generalisations which have no basis in fact, and figures which have been manipulated to show what the proposal wants them to show, rather than compared and considered honestly. We are talking about real people and real communities here, and surely this should be more important to the local council than hypothetical numbers of government targets. Hirwaun school seems to need help, by all means build them a new school, and make it dual language. There is no reason to change Penderyn school as it is performing well. A simple change to the English catchment area would be fair, and demolish the (alleged) problem of the decline in numbers.

**In summary, I am completely opposed to this proposal. It would divide the village of Penderyn and severely disadvantage parents who wish their children to be taught through the medium of English.**

**Yours faithfully,**

**[Redacted signature]**

## **Proposals to re-organise school provision in the Hirwaun and Penderyn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf**

### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposer is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, and the proposal relates to the construction of a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School (Hirwaun PS) and a change of language medium status - to Welsh medium only - at Penderyn Community Primary School (Penderyn CPS) from September 2021.

Overall, the proposal is likely to have a beneficial impact on the standard of education provision in the area.

### **Description and benefits**

The proposer has given a clear description of the proposal and arrangements for responding to the consultation.

---

Estyn, Llys Angor/Anchor Court, Heol Keen/Keen Road, Caerdydd/Cardiff, CF24 5JW  
Ffôn/Telephone 02920 446446  
ymholiadau@estyn.llyw.cymru • enquiries@estyn.gov.wales  
www.estyn.llyw.cymru • www.estyn.gov.wales

Mae Estyn yn croesawu goheblaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Bydd goheblaeth a dderbynnir yn y naill iaith neu'r llall yn cael yr un flaenoriaeth.

Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

The proposer has made suitable reference to: the schools' performance data and trends; information about the condition of the estate; current and projected pupil numbers and attendance; recent Estyn reports. Both of the schools affected by the proposal have been inspected within the past year, and the proposal acknowledges the judgements of Adequate and needs improvement, and Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement that were awarded at Hirwaun PS. It notes the relatively poor condition of the school buildings at Hirwaun PS.

The proposer has set out its rationale for changing Penderyn CPS to a Welsh medium-only school, both in terms of a trend of increasing numbers of pupils attending its Welsh medium stream, and in respect of the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

In relation to the change of catchment, the proposal sets out the priorities for allocating pupils a place according to the authority's school admissions policy. Pupils studying in the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS would transfer automatically to provision at Hirwaun PS without any additional application process.

The proposal addresses transport for pupils within the proposed changed school catchments appropriately. Pupils living in Trenant and Penywaun (within the expanded catchment area for Penderyn CPS) who wish to receive Welsh medium education would be eligible for free transport to school at Penderyn CPS. Pupils living in Penderyn (within the expanded catchment area for Hirwaun PS) who wish to receive English medium education would receive free transport to Hirwaun PS.

The proposal addresses potential staff changes as a consequence of closing the English medium stream at Penderyn CPS. Staff below SLT level would have the opportunity to apply for new posts at Hirwaun PS before they are externally advertised, and these posts would initially be 'ring fenced' to former Penderyn CPS teachers.

The proposer has carried out a community impact assessment, an equality impact assessment and a Welsh-medium impact assessment. These impact assessments conclude that the proposed changes would have positive, beneficial impacts on local communities, and would have no significant negative implications for any groups of pupils at the existing schools.

The proposer identifies a few disadvantages to the proposed changes. These include the perceptions by parents that a smaller school may be more appropriate to their child's needs and increased travelling distance for some pupils in some communities. The proposer has mitigated the increased travel for these pupils by providing free transport for those pupils affected.

The proposal includes consideration of demographic changes in the area in the near future, including housing developments and future development at the site of the

former Tower Colliery at Hirwaun. These are likely to lead to an increase in demand in both English- and Welsh-medium provision.

The proposer has considered alternative options, including maintaining the current language status of the two schools, and replacing the old buildings at Hirwaun PS 'like for like'. However, it has concluded that these would not address the increasing demand for Welsh medium provision, the local demographic changes or the potential benefits to quality that having larger single-language provision at the two schools could bring.

The proposal includes consideration of the risk of disruption to pupils at Hirwaun PS during building works. The proposer notes that these risks will 'be mitigated by the detailed and thorough project management arrangements that will be put in place', although does not give any detail of these arrangements.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposal sets out the perceived benefits. They include, for the construction of an English-medium school at Hirwaun: an extended, enhanced environment in a modern, purpose built school, all pupils being taught in same-age-group classes, improvements brought about by increases in scale to pupils' and teachers' opportunities. For Penderyn CPS, the benefits identified include: total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school, the creation of a 'critical mass' of Welsh medium learners, more opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh and improved recruitment and retention of staff.

The potential benefits identified by the proposer appear to be a reasonable assessment of the consequences of the proposed changes.

Director of Education and Inclusion Services.

21st Century schools Team

Ty Trevilthick

Abercynon

P.O.T

CF45 4UQ.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing regarding <sup>the following</sup> ~~information~~ ~~concerning~~

"Rhonda Evans Taff, consultation on a proposal to construct a new school building for Hirwaun Primary School and the proposed change of language medium status of Penderyn Community School from 1st Sept 2021."

I am a parent of a child who is currently attending Penderyn Community School and I have also got a child who will be attending the school as of 2019 both of these children will be ~~aff~~ affected by this proposal.

I am a resident of Hirwaun and choose to travel the school run outside of my village so that my children are taught in a school that ~~could~~ <sup>my child an</sup> provide an education in the language ~~language~~ <sup>medium</sup> I choose (English). There was a considerable <sup>amount of</sup> ~~benefit~~ <sup>benefit</sup> in the run up to my first child attending school as to where we as parents thought our child should be taught. The reasons for choosing Penderyn Community School as our first option was solely down to the <sup>ESFV report</sup> ~~statistics~~ <sup>information</sup> you have included <sup>one</sup> <sup>in</sup> your proposal. Consultation booklet which I received at the meeting on 27th Nov 2018.

I would like to add that this is not something I consider to serve you



anything less for my children in a school I believe <sup>strongly</sup> my children can achieve. I understand that it is well worn. However having a new school and my problems does not lie there at all, but as a parent I am highly disturbed by the proposal of the removal of children that are achieving excellently in a perfectly modernized school to be up and routed for selfish greed goodness.

The children in question (Pondara English department) will be thrown into a class of 38 plus pupils where they are currently in classes of 18 plus pupils and as a result of this they will most definitely be looked over and this is not acceptable in my eyes as a parent.

Notwithstanding to the meeting I attended along with other parents it was explained that the <sup>benefit</sup> ~~benefit~~ would be <sup>only</sup> ~~only~~ that <sup>yes</sup> ~~yes~~ that <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>community</sup> ~~community~~ will have a brand new school place. Consider that to provide for one community <sup>you are</sup> ~~you are~~ <sup>adding</sup> ~~adding~~ another community apart. Pondara has a limited amount of facilities at present and you as a Council <sup>that</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~are <sup>removing</sup> ~~removing~~ yet another thing (English Language School) is acceptable.~~

To conclude this letter I am most definitely <sup>opposing</sup> ~~opposing~~ this proposal to go ahead as I as a parent, my children and their classmates and also <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>community</sup> ~~community~~ will not benefit from this at all.

18.11.27 [REDACTED] Hirwaun school proposal

**From:** XXXXX  
**Sent:** 27 November 2018 16:50  
**To:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** Hirwaun school proposal

Hi I attended your consultation today and spoke with a lady from education and feel that there are still a lot of questions to be answered.

My son is currently in year 2 at penderyn. If the proposal gets through he will be due to move from penderyn school at the start of year 6.

Can you please tell me why the welfare of the children currently in penderyn primary hasn't been considered?

Why can't there be the option of them staying there until all the children move onto comp but not have no intake from now on?

Have you done any research into how moving schools actually effects a child's well being and education?

I look forward to your reply.

XXXXXXXX

**From:** Schoolplanning  
**Subject:** FW: Penderyn Primary school

-----Original Message-----

**From:** XXXXXXXXX  
**Sent:** 02 December 2018 07:42  
**To:** Director, Education & Lifelong Learning <[Director.Education@rctcbr.gov.uk](mailto:Director.Education@rctcbr.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Penderyn Primary school

**To:** director of education

Re proposal to move English children from Penderyn Primary to Hirwaun primary

I would like to express my concerns to you regarding moving children from Penderyn Primary school to Hirwaun primary school. My son is currently in year 2 at penderyn, he is a very happy 7 year old, who absolutely loves going to school. He has friends in both welsh and English departments. Since hearing the news of this being proposed it has caused my son and us a lot of distress and also a lot of other families. My son says on a daily basis, I don't want to move schools, I like my friends and teachers and school. He thrives on routine and familiar surroundings. Can you look at these children bearing in mind they are little human beings that need stability their not just a number or a statistic, please think if this was your child or grandchild before you rip their little world apart. I believe you should never have taken them at penderyn if you thought you'd be shipping them out.

I think someone within rct needs to look into how this will effect these children long term before they make the decision to move them.

Regards  
XXXXXXXXXX

x 18 of this letter  
received.

Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
Ty Treathick  
Abercromby  
CF40 4UQ

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed Plan for Hirwaun Primary School

At a meeting at the school on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2016,

I was appalled when I was informed of the proposed plan for accessing the Primary School at Hirwaun whilst the development was taking place. A process that I was informed would be in place for a matter of twenty months.

The proposal was to close the main entrance to the school and all school traffic would be directed through Glannant Street and Longfield Court with a view to ALL pupils accessing the school through this side gate.

I object very strongly to this proposal, the reasons are:-

1. Glannant Street is very narrow congested road with residents on the Left hand side of the road already having to park on the pavement to allow vehicles to travel through the street. This proposal could result in emergency vehicles being unable to access properties within the vicinity at certain hours during school periods.
2. This road is accessed at present by a percentage of parents delivering and collecting their children from the school. The road is continuously blocked twice a day by these vehicles as there are no parking areas and parents have been known on a regular basis to block the driveways at Longfield Court and refuse to move to allow residents to exit their driveways.
3. There is only one access road to Glannant Street off the main Brecon Road. This road also suffers from parking on both sides of the road resulting in traffic entering Glannant Street in the middle of the road with a poor view of traffic trying to exit the street. This has already resulted in collisions and many near misses.
4. I am also very concerned for the parents and pupils that walk to the school as I believe that increasing the traffic flow on these already congested side streets would put their safety into question.
5. The aforementioned entry off Brecon Road is just meters from the brow of a hill with its inherent limited visibility.
6. This proposal coincides with the expected access and exit difficulties linked to the proposed dualling of the A465 with access to Aberdare on the A4059 being disrupted by the removal of the present roundabout and the installation of a bridge. The junction off Brecon Road to access Glannant Street is just some 150 or so meters from this major junction. I

I therefore request that further investigations be made with a view to look at different options to accessing the school during the build, the residents are already undergoing difficulties with school traffic and this proposal would only exacerbate the present situation.

Yours faithfully

WRITTEN FEEDBACK FOR THE PROPOSAL TO EXTEND HIRWAUN PRIAMRY SCHOOL AND CLOSE ENGLISH MEDIUM STREAM I PENDERYN

No	Agree with proposal	Comments	Additional Views
1	No	My child attends Penderyn Primary. I feel that it will unsettle and upset him to move schools half way through Primary.	
2	Yes	Yes we agree fully with the proposal of creating a purely Welsh Medium school at Penderyn. Figures show that the number of pupils in the Welsh medium stream of Penderyn have increased over the last four years while the numbers in the English stream have decreased. There is no valid reason to keep the English stream open in Penderyn which is stopping the expansion of Welsh Medium education. Making this a purely Welsh medium school will fully immerse the pupils in the Welsh language and would contribute to the Cymraeg 2050 goal.	We would urge RCT Council to do this with all of their dual language schools, as RCT has a huge contribution to make towards the Cymraeg 2050 target.
3	No	<p>do not agree with the proposal to change the dual language status of Penderyn. We do not agree with transferring English medium pupils to Hirwaun. This is because</p> <p>a) it does not support developing Welsh as a core language for all. It creates an enclave of Welsh rather than sharing Welsh language expertise with English stream peers.</p> <p>b) it suggests moving pupils from a school categorised as Yellow to a school categorised as red - how can this be educationally justified?</p> <p>c) it is likely to result in job losses for the English medium staff currently employed at Penderyn . This is not acceptable.</p> <p>d) the proposal implies that pupils will be better accommodated. Pupils at Penderyn are currently in fantastic accommodation - there would be no benefit to them at all.</p> <p>Dual language schools are incredibly important in giving value to both English and Welsh languages in both communities, it increases the opportunity for Welsh to be normalised for all rather than being a separate</p>	<p>The statement in the consultation document that there is difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff at Penderyn in the English medium stream is both insulting and untrue. The English medium staff at Penderyn have been in post for 10 plus years. They are highly qualified and experienced and the implication that they are in some way deficient is unacceptable. There may be an issue at Hirwaun in terms of recruitment and retention but it is not their staff who are under threat in this manner. The view that more parents are choosing Welsh medium education needs to be considered in the wider aspect. Parents in Hirwaun may well be considering Welsh medium as they can get their children in to Penderyn via the Welsh stream and have free transport rather than having to attend Hirwaun or to attend the English stream and provide their own transport as they would be out of catchment area.</p>

		<p>clique. It gives the opportunity for second language welsh learners to improve their Welsh by having excellent Welsh medium skills within the same organisation</p> <p>We have no objection to the building of a new school for Hirwaun as it is very much needed, it is the tacking on of the closure of the English stream at Penderyn that we object to.</p>	
4	No	<p>I think and feel that the upheaval of moving the children from Penderyn to Hirwaun will affect them and unsettle them which can/will lead to health issues. A lot of the children have to travel further.</p>	<p>The loss of jobs for the English side staff which some have been there many years will raise unemployment. The new ALS has proven big community schools don't work.</p>
5	No	<p>Children like routine and familiar surroundings. To totally unsettle them with a change of school and teachers is unacceptable and I feel that their thoughts need to be taken into account and they should be given a choice.</p>	
6	No	<p>I have two children at Penderyn English and I feel that moving them will affect their education as they don't deal well with change of environment and teachers.</p>	<p>I feel that children from the village of Penderyn should have the option to send their child to Penderyn even if they're not Welsh speakers and want their child to learn through English language.</p>
7	No	<p>Community school - all should be able to attend. Poor quality teaching at Hirwaun. Lack of diversity and discrimination against medium of English.</p>	<p>Children taught through medium of Welsh are not all local. No options for children who struggle with Welsh. Community identity will suffer. School in Penderyn will no longer be a local school for all children.</p>
8	No	<p>We do not want Penderyn to close the English department as our children are settled and are happy here. If we wanted to send our children elsewhere we would have.</p>	<p>My child has additional needs and I am not sending him to Hirwaun school.</p>
9	No	<p>Penderyn community school is a small school in which children are looked at and not overlooked by the staff!</p>	<p>I have a child already in Penderyn who is doing really well and a child due to attend in April who I believe should have a chance to attend the same school as sibling!</p>
10	No	<p>As a resident of Penderyn I think my child should attend his local school and shouldn't have to travel some 4 miles to increase the number at Hirwaun.</p>	<p>The pupil to teacher ratio at Penderyn is low but is an advantage to some pupils including my son with additional learning needs. Moving him from his local school is of no benefit to the residents of Penderyn including myself. I fail to understand that there are many pupils attending Penderyn school that are not from the catchment area and I assume that they travel several miles to attend our village school. To make use of the pupil to teacher ratio also having asked</p>

			a number of parents regarding the closure of the English section. If the languages were reversed i.e closing of the welsh section the parents would move their children to the English section. I think that this proves that the language is not important and a sound education is at the top of parents agenda. The English section provides all of this to our community. I think that children should attend their local school, not travelling several miles to receive an education. Penderyn school for Penderyn residents.
11	Yes	New school is well overdue although I will be sorry to see my old school go!	
12	Yes	The new school looks and sounds fab. My concern was disruption to pupils while work was going on and class sizes were going to be 50 children. Glad to hear that there will be no disruption and class size will be max 30.	
13	Yes	The school is well overdue a makeover.	
14	Yes	Think it will be good for the children to have a new building.	
15	Yes	The school needs a refurb and for everything to be under one roof. It desperately needs updating and have newer resources for the pupils.	
16	Yes	Hirwaun school is in a bad state and is beyond its intended lifespan. The children of Hirwaun deserve to be educated in a purpose built 21st Century Building.	
17	Yes	Hirwaun primary has needed to be rebuilt for many years. Our pupils are being taught in a draughty asbestos building. We have waited many years for a new school.	Hirwaun village is growing at a fast rate. New houses are being built, this means that there will be more children of school age to accommodate.
18	No	I am all for an improved school building for Hirwaun, but not for the English medium of Penderyn to be closed - letter attached.	Letter attached – letter was acknowledged and response to be included in consultation report.
19	Yes	Welcome investment into the Hirwaun/Penderyn area and am in full support of WM education in the area.	I urge RCT to continue to expand WM education provision to provide the younger generation with increased skills and to help achieve Cymraeg 2050.
20	No	I do not agree with the proposal to change the dual language status of Penderyn Community Primary School. I do not agree with transferring English medium pupils to Hirwaun. This is because: a) It suggests moving pupils from a	The statement in the consultation document that there is difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff at Penderyn in the English medium stream is both untrue and insulting. Staff within the English medium have been in their current positions for in excess of ten years and are highly

		<p>school categorised as Yellow to a school categorised as Red – How can this be educationally justified?</p> <p>b) Penderyn Community Primary School is as the name states a community primary school built to serve the community of Penderyn how can this be if it becomes a Welsh medium school as not all parents wish for their child to be educated solely through the medium of Welsh?</p> <p>c) It does not support developing Welsh as a core language for all. It creates an enclave of Welsh rather than sharing Welsh language expertise with English stream peers as found to be good practise with Estyn inspectors.</p> <p>d) It is likely to result in job losses for the English medium staff currently employed at Penderyn. This is not acceptable.</p> <p>e) The proposal implies that pupils will be better accommodated. Pupils at Penderyn are currently in fantastic accommodation – there would be no benefit for them at all.</p>	<p>qualified and experienced members of staff and the implication that they are in some way deficient is unacceptable and hurtful.</p> <p>Dual language schools are incredibly important in giving value to both English and Welsh languages in both communities, it increases the opportunity for second language Welsh learners to improve their Welsh by having excellent Welsh medium skills within the same organisation.</p>
21.	No	<p>The proposal is extremely divisive for the village of Penderyn. It is discriminating and damaging in the way it segregates children according to language.</p>	<p>I have attached a 5 page letter [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Penderyn is a small village community containing both Welsh and English speakers. The proposal wishes to remove the English speakers and send them to a failing school at some distance from their homes.</p>
22	No	<p>Understandably Hirwaun School is in much need of investment but I don't feel it is right for residents of the community ie the village of Penderyn to not be able to send their children to the 'community' school for English education.</p>	<p>Appalled that it is assumed parents of English department children will move to Hirwaun when based on the latest Estyn report it's a RED category school and Penderyn is yellow. Who in their right minds accepts this transfer although it's continually stated it is 'parental preference' where you decide to send your child. Surely there should be an automatic transfer to a 'like for like' school, thus a yellow school.</p> <p>A new building and infrastructure is lovely but this doesn't mean the standard of education will thus improve.</p> <p>I believe there has been an encouragement into the downturn in numbers for English medium at Penderyn school. The incentive of 'free transport' for Welsh taught children, but not for English! Furthermore the Head teacher, and this is from personal experience, does try to push the Welsh</p>

			<p>medium side of the school. We however, were certain that it was the English medium that we wanted but it is quite likely that other parents would have been swayed.</p> <p>At the moment my child is in a mixed year group which in total is only 18 from nursery to year 2. We have found that a small class size and mixed ages has only been beneficial to our child. At the meeting at Hirwaun school on the 27.11.18, however, I was reassured that even in a class of 30 pupils for example, but of similar ages my child will receive the same level of teaching as now. I am not a teacher but common sense says the pupil teacher ratio does affect teaching. I don't believe for one moment that my child will have teaching that matches what is received at current, when there are so many pupils in class.</p> <p>My point to end on is this: There is no way that I will be sending my child to Hirwaun school. Furthermore, I believe that having to uproot a child for the last two years of juniors could massively impact their development and their schooling should be allowed to finish at Penderyn 'Community' School. My child said that she wants to stay in Penderyn with her friends and teacher. Doesn't her point count?</p>
23	No	<p>I agree that Hirwaun need a new primary school, but I do not agree that Penderyn school should change to a Welsh only school.</p>	<p>1. "In recent years the number of pupils in the Welsh language stream has increased...while numbers have fallen to 54 in the English". The reason for this is that those pupils attending Welsh have free transport, English don't. A considerable number of pupils attending Welsh from outside Penderyn only do so as they get free transport. If the English had free transport also the numbers would be drastically different. Another reason for this is the change in catchment area back in 2009 which resulted in many pupils not being allocated places in the English unit as they were now 'out of catchment'. This was done very secretly and in an under hand way and will never be acknowledged by yourselves.</p> <p>2. "Provide total immersion in the Welsh language for all pupils at the school". I disagree that this would be an advantage and in fact think it would be a disadvantage. To be in a dual language school is of benefit to all pupils currently in the school. The English unit pupils have an increased knowledge of the Welsh language while the</p>

			<p>Welsh unit pupils still have conversations and socialise with their friends in the English unit, as it would be once they leave school and enter the world of work.</p> <p>3. "The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of educational provision..." I do not agree. Both my children have attended the English unit of Penderyn school and have had an exceptionally high level of educational provision which would not be improved by moving schools.</p> <p>4. Estyn information on schools. Penderyn school is a 'yellow' school with 4 goods and 1 adequate. Hirwaun school is a 'red' school with 1 good, 3 adequate and 1 unsatisfactory. Surely this information speaks for itself. No parent of an English unit pupil is going to choose Hirwaun school!</p> <p>5. "A continually decreasing English medium stream... difficulty recruiting and retaining high quality staff" This is totally FALSE. Please check your facts! The English medium staff are of exceptional high quality and have been at the school for at least the last ten years.</p> <p>Conclusion: As you mention continually throughout the report this is only happening to help the Welsh Government achieve their targets by 2050, even if it is discriminating against those pupils who do not go to Welsh medium education. Closing a 'community school' will have a detrimental effect on the village of Penderyn. Surely a Welsh only school was not considered when the new Penderyn school was built. Would the funding have been received for a Welsh only 'community school'?</p>
24	Yes	No comment	No comment

## **Appendix 4**

### **Hirwaun Consultation Public Event – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

Written feedback by members of the public during consultation event:

- I don't want to move schools
- Will there be a new access gate?
- Will the woodland area near the main entrance still be here? (please!)
- Plans are fantastic and as a school we can't wait.
- Will there be small private spaces/rooms for intervention? Such as ELSA/THRIVE?

