

Godre'r Graig School Task Force Meeting – 18th July 2019

Attendees

| Councillors | | |
|--------------------|--------|---|
| R.G Jones | Leader | Leader of Council |
| A.J.Taylor | AJT | Deputy Leader of Council |
| P.A.Rees | PR | Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture |
| E.V.Latham | EVL | Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Engineering |
| L. Jones | LJ | Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Protection |
| Officers | | |
| Steven Phillips | SP | Chief Executive |
| Gareth Nutt | GN | Director of Environment |
| Hywel Jenkins | HJ | Director of Finance and Corporate Services |
| Simon Brennan | SB | Head of Property and Regeneration |
| Nicola Pearce | NP | Head of Planning and Public Protection |
| Craig Griffiths | CG | Head of Legal Services |
| Andrew Thomas | AT | Head of Transformation |
| Dave Griffiths | DG | Head of Engineering and Transport |
| Robin Turner | RT | Corporate Communication Business Partner |
| Neil Evans | NE | Senior Executive Officer |
| Sylvia Griffiths | SG | Strategic Marketing and Communications Advisor |
| Rhiannon Crowhurst | RC | Transformation Project Officer |
| Peter Curnow | PC | Transformation Project Officer |
| Roger Bowen | RB | Programme Management Co-ordinator |

1. 11 July Meeting Action Notes

The Action Notes were approved by all present.

Leader advised that a Freedom of Information Request had been received from a member of the public for sight of the previous meetings action notes and agenda and these would be provided (in accordance

with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004) and published on the Council's webpage for general access.

NE and SG to arrange circulation and publication respectively.

2. Education Options

AT stated that the three options discussed in the previous meeting had been investigated but it should be noted that the possibility of using Pontardawe Bowls club had been discounted due to various issues.

It was also noted that there was not sufficient accommodation within the locality or local schools for temporary access.

In essence the Council was faced with two options:

Option One – Ystalyfera

From the Godre'r Graig Governors perspective this would likely be the preferred option with less travel. However, an additional 150 pupils at the school may further impact upon the school and its surrounding areas in terms of traffic.

DG stated that an additional issue in relation to Ystalyfera is that over the course of the next 18 months highway improvement works will be carried out which would potentially be impacted by additional traffic.

In addition placing an English medium school in a Welsh medium school environment could also be a challenge.

Also by locating the school here temporarily may result in the Band B of the 21st Century Schools programme being delayed.

Option Two – Cwmtawe

Cwmtawe is the secondary that is linked to Godre'r Graig Primary School and is the school where pupils transfer to for their secondary education. A significant issue for consideration relates to school transport and whether the Council should enforce its school transport policy or given the extreme circumstances conclude that we would transport all pupils including nursery children to the temporary accommodation.

An additional issue that was to be noted was the potential lead in time provided by contractors for temporary class rooms which could be between 12 and 14 weeks although negotiations were still underway. Discussions then ensued as to what would happen at the start of next

term. It was agreed tentatively that if it was two weeks into the term then children could potentially be home educated with close liaison from teachers at the School to ensure educational needs did not suffer. If it extends for a period longer a temporary solution was required. Agreed that these were the timings SB should be working to in relation of temporary accommodation. SB to consider whether temporary alternatives could be established.

SP suggested that AT contact Powys Council to establish whether there are any tangible options over the border with Powys at possibly the Maes Y Dderwen site. AT to investigate.

Consideration was given by CG to compliance with legislative obligations in particular elements of the School Organisational Code. Further legal advice would be provided to officers as and when necessary.

LJ asked what would be the proposals for child care should the school not be open in time for the new term. AT stated that these issues would be investigated.

It was noted that the Leader would write to the relevant Minister(s) to establish any emergency funding to assist with the issues.

Agreed that the following be noted:

- NE and SG to arrange circulation and publication respectively of Actions Notes of 11th July 2019;
- Temporary relocation to Cwmtawe is the preferred option;
- SB to liaise with Education in relation to timescales for delivery, construction and connection of the temporary accommodation;
- AT to explore the possibility of making nursery provision all day;
- Security and maintenance of the school to be considered whilst it is closed. This is to ensure that the school is capable of being reused should the surveys identify that it is safe to do so. SB to link with Education;
- Leader to receive ball park figures of costs to allow a letter to be prepared to send to the Minister(s);
- That staff, governors and parents are communicated with regularly during the summer months. It was agreed that all relevant information would be shared with the Headteacher and Governing Body who would disseminate to the parents via text parent;

- Education to take forward the relevant options with the support of all other relevant directorates;
- Education to finalise school transport arrangements for new school location.