

Godre'r Graig School Task Force Meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019

## Attendees

Councillors		
R.G Jones	Leader	Leader of Council
P.A.Rees	PR	Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture
L. Jones	LJ	Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Protection
Officers		
Steven Phillips	SP	Chief Executive
Gareth Nutt	GN	Director of Environment
Aled Evans	AE	Director of Education
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
Huw Jones	HJ	Head of Financial Services
Robin Turner	RT	Corporate Communication Business Partner
Neil Evans	NE	Senior Executive Officer
Sylvia Griffiths	SG	Strategic Marketing and Communications Advisor
Clive Barnard	CB	Architectural Design and Project Manager
Peter Curnow	PC	Transformation Project Officer

1. 18<sup>th</sup> July Meeting Action Notes

The Action Notes were approved by all present.

NE and SG to arrange circulation and publication respectively.

## 2. Matters Arising

PR noted that the Minister for Education had published a written statement on the Temporary Closure of Godre'r Graig School and asked whether any discussions had been held in relation to Welsh Government providing any financial assistance.

NE stated that the statement had stemmed from the plenary meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July when a number of statements and questions were raised including a question by Bethan Sayed AM and Dr. Dai Lloyd AM asking

what financial assistance is available directly in this extraordinary situation of a closure of a school so urgently.

NE continued that the question was not answered directly, but the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd stated that she thought a letter to all Members would be more appropriate than just to Members who have raised it in the Chamber that afternoon. What we are unclear on is whether there will be a further letter in addition to the one received from the Minister for Education.

SP stated that before any discussions are held with Welsh Government in relation to financial assistance it is essential that the Council has proper costings.

### Temporary Accommodation

An update was requested in relation to temporary accommodation. CB stated that a number of companies had been approached but only a small number stated that they could meet the requirements. The possible preferred option had provided costs based on 1 and 2 years rental.

HJ asked what the cost would be in purchasing the units. CB stated the price for the units was similar to the two year rent option however, there would be additional costs associated with installation etc. Agreed that CB to contact the company ASAP and establish the costs but to proceed on the basis of the best option that can be delivered and achieved in the required timescales.

CB stated that an additional issue was with Western Power and the fact they were treating this case as a normal quotation for works and not with the urgency required. Leader and SP stated that if a response isn't received by the end of the week they should be informed so this can be escalated as a matter of urgency.

Discussions around the length of the rental agreement took place and it was agreed that the two year option should be accessed as it was understood that that the next lot of survey works would take approximately 9 months to undertake before any information was forthcoming. A two year rental agreement would be the most sensible option to ensure suitable arrangements are in place.

The Leader asked for clarity that any decisions that were going to be made in relation to this issue were covered in respect of procurement

implications. CG stated that there were provisions to use urgency actions and officer delegations.

CB asked for agreement to proceed with a planning application. The Leader asked whether it required Planning Committee approval. NP stated that normally these are delegated panel decisions and this should be no different. CB to progress the application.

AT gave an update in relation to the possibility of making nursery provision all day and stated that this was still being explored. There were issues such as lunchtime catering for the children that had to be considered.

Leader asked whether Powys CC had been contacted in relation to possible use of their Maes Y Dderwen site. AT confirmed that a request had been made but no response as yet. SP requested a reminder be sent to establish whether it was an option.

The next action to be discussed was in relation to the security at the school. GN stated that this will be looked at in due course but other issues around Godre'r Graig had taken precedence. Leader noted that this is an urgent issue to ensure the school and all fixtures, fittings and equipment are able to be used once the outcome of the reviews is known. GN to follow up urgently.

DG stated that the transport section was ready to act once the information had been received in relation to numbers that would require transport. AT stated that early indications suggested one additional bus would be required.

DG continued that the budget set aside for the next set of work to be undertaken by ESP was circa £150k and this would cover a report, slope analysis, vegetation clearance, fencing and geo technical surveys. It was noted that the Council could not pre-empt the results of the survey.

The relevant landowners have now been served notice to assist in achieving this.

The meeting agreed that regular communication was required and SG would link with PC to ensure parents and staff were updated regularly about current and future actions during the temporary relocation of pupils/staff. It was also agreed that the message should be that the Community should be watching the school whilst it is empty to ensure there is no vandalism.

Consideration was given by SP and 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 may be necessary.

AE noted that the following issues need addressing,

- The possible solutions for the possible extra two weeks holiday at the end of the summer;
- Clarification on nursery children;
- Where the school cook where will they be employed in the interim
- Security at the school.

The Leader noted that the majority of these will be contained within the actions and that AE should deal with the staffing issues in consultation with the Unions and should investigate the possible additional two weeks and the nursery provision.

### 3. Any other business

PR asked can further investigations/discussions be undertaken as he was under the impression that the pupils and staff at the school were concerned about a snake in the pond and were keen to know it would be safe.

LJ asked can further options be suggested for working parents should the school not reopen on time. Leader noted that whilst this could be an issue the situation was similar to the school possibly being closed for bad weather, parents would need to look at their own alternatives as well. LJ accepted this point and asked that parents be communicated with at the earliest opportunity if there is a delay.

The meeting agreed that the main focus is to get the children on to the temporary site at the earliest opportunity.

Agreed that the following actions be noted:

- SG and NE to publish/circulate agreed action notes;
- CB to establish costs for rental or permanent purchase of temporary accommodation;
- CB to contact Western Power to establish cost of utilities ASAP;
- CB to progress the planning application in consultation with NP for application to be submitted by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2019;

- AT to contact Powys County Council once more in relation to Maes Y Dderwen;
- Education to continue to investigate the possibility of providing all day nursery;
- SG and PC to ensure consistent communication affected stakeholders;
- AE to consider and deal with any potential staffing issues;
- Further information to be found in relation to the snake in the pond.

Next meeting to be held within one week.