

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Consultation Report

Proposal to transform English medium secondary education in Barry

1. Background Information

1.1. Outline of the consultation

This report presents the feedback received during the consultation period from 5 September 2016 to 17 October 2016 in response to the Council's proposal to transform English medium secondary education in Barry by:

1. Establishing two mixed sex 11-18 English medium comprehensive schools on the current sites of Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools;
2. Establishing a joint sixth form, provided across both schools; and
3. Closing the existing single sex English medium Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools in Barry;

The consultation process followed Welsh Government guidelines, in compliance with the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The consultation process gave local people the opportunity to learn about the proposal and for the Council to hear the views of all those with an interest so that they can be taken into account before any decisions are made.

Formal consultation was conducted through a consultation document and accompanying response form distributed to prescribed consultees and published on the Vale of Glamorgan website on 5 September 2016.

The publication of a consultation document is central to the consultation process for school reorganisation and is prescribed by Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code 2013. The consultation document outlined the changes being considered, the rationale for these and the details of the consultation exercise. The consultation document also incorporated an individual response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version to complete.

2. Consultation

2.1. Publication of the consultation

The bilingual consultation document was published on 5 September 2016 and distributed online, through social media, and on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website.

The Council distributed 5,000 hard copies of the consultation document to parents/carers and guardians of children in Barry Comprehensive and Bryn

Hafren comprehensive schools and to all feeder primary schools of the two comprehensive schools named in the consultation who did not have communications sent to them via email. Other parents/carers and guardians and prescribed consultees were provided with an electronic version of the document and a link to the Vale of Glamorgan website.

2.2. Stakeholder engagement

Consultation on the proposal was undertaken with prescribed consultees as contained within the School Organisation Code 2013.

The Council consulted with the following groups:

Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools	Governing Body and Parents / Carers and Guardians of students attending Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools
Parents/Carers and Guardians of pupils attending feeder primary schools of Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools	Vale of Glamorgan Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)
Vale of Glamorgan Children and Young People's Programme Board	Community/Town Councils
Communities First Partnership	Assembly Members (AM's)/ Members of Parliament (MP's) / Regional Assembly Members
Local Councillors	Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG)
Welsh Language Commissioner	Trade Unions
Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan	Directors of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities
Central South Consortium Joint Education Service	Further and Higher Education Institutions
Estyn	Welsh Government Ministers
Local Police and Crime Commissioner	Diocesan Directors of Education
Council's Transportation Department	Vale of Glamorgan Youth Forum and Youth Cabinet
Management Committee, staff and students of the Pupil Referral Unit, Y Daith	Amelia Farm Trust

Consultees were invited to complete a formal consultation response form which could be completed in hard copy or on line via the Council's website at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/barryschools

2.3. Consultation meetings and drop in session

Meetings were held with the staff and governors at Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools, which were attended by Council officers. The main points of the consultation document were highlighted as well as an explanation of the statutory process.

Two drop in sessions were held for all stakeholders at the two comprehensive schools.

2.4. Consultation with children and young people

A consultation session was undertaken with the School Parliaments of Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive Schools to engage the pupils in the consultation process. A report on the outcome of this session can be found at Annex D. Two further workshops were undertaken with representatives of the Barry primary feeder schools, including: All Saints, Barry Island, Cadoxton, Colcot, Gladstone, Gwenfo, High Street, Holton, Jenner Park, Oakfield, Palmerston, Rhws and Romilly.

Consultation Summary

2.5. Consultation Questions

Consultees were asked for their opinion on a key question:

1. Do you support the proposal to create two new mixed sex comprehensive community schools on the campuses of Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive Schools?

Consultees were also offered the opportunity to comment further:

2. If you would like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposals, please detail these below.
3. Any other comments?

2.6. Results of the feedback from all stakeholders

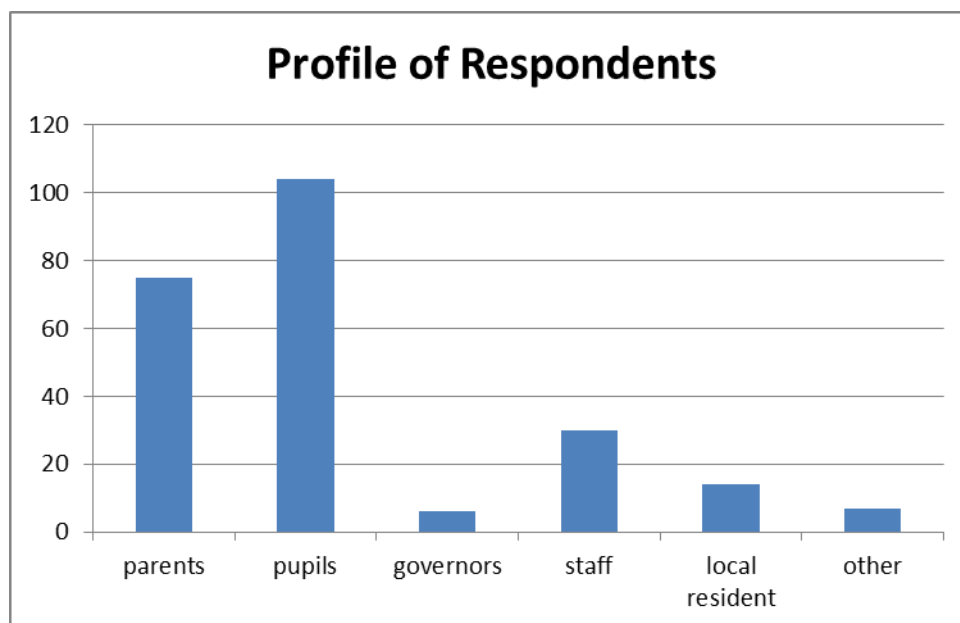
The authority received 236 individual responses by the consultation closing date. Of the 236 individual responses 171 were in favour of the proposal, 59 were opposed, 6 provided no opinion either way. The governing bodies of Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive Schools, Barry Town Council and Estyn formally responded to the consultation.

It has been noted that not all consultees have provided a response to each of the questions and that some forms were not fully completed. In these cases we have accepted the responses to the questions that they have chosen to answer.

Feedback from consultation meetings and drop in sessions are not included in this report as it was stated clearly in the consultation document that the Council

would only accept responses using the official consultation response form. Parents were advised of this at the drop in sessions.

a. Profile of respondents



A summary of key themes and issues raised by statutory consultees and the response to those issues from the Vale of Glamorgan Council can be found at Annex A. A summary of comments received in favour of the proposal can be found at Annex B and other responses to general themes can be found at Annex C.

The consultation undertaken with young people can be found at Annex D.

The response from the governing bodies of Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools can be found at Annex E.

The response from Barry Town Council can be found at Annex F.

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2013, a copy of the consultation document was sent to Estyn. The response from Estyn can be found at Annex G.

Annex A

Consultation with statutory consultees

1. Feedback themes

The following summarises the key issues/concerns raised during the formal consultation period. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim. All written responses have been made available to Cabinet members.

Issue 1

Funding

Respondents expressed concerns that Welsh Government funding is not guaranteed, and felt that an adequate level of funding should be secured before plans are progressed.

A respondent had also expressed concerns as to whether the budget outlined in the proposal is high enough when compared to the levels of funding for the new St Cyres Comprehensive building (£44m) and redevelopment of Cowbridge Comprehensive of (£21.5m).

Council's response to the concerns raised

The estimated cost of the scheme is £44m. This comprises £11.5 million for the scheme on the Bryn Hafren site and £32.5 million for the new school building and behavioural centre on the Barry Comprehensive site. It is anticipated that part-funding would be provided by the Welsh Government under Band B of its 21st Century Schools Programme. The remainder of the capital funding would be contributed by the Council

The Council has already set aside £22m towards the estimated cost of the scheme and will be bidding for match funding through Band B of the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme. The Welsh Government is starting to prepare plans for Band B of the programme.

Welsh Government is actively encouraging local authorities which have schemes scheduled to start in 2019/20 to submit a business case a year in advance. By preparing a clear vision to transform secondary schools in Barry the Council will be best placed to access Band B funding.

The Council has been successful in all of our applications for funding to Welsh Government for Band A of the 21st Century School investment programme. As we provide sound reasoning and strong delivery of all of our school building projects we are confident that we have the same successful outcomes for our Band B school investment projects.

Whilst the Council has a strong track record on securing 21st Century Schools funding from the Welsh Government, it is acknowledged that this cannot be guaranteed. If funding is not available from the Welsh Government, it may not be

possible to provide a new building and extensive refurbishment of the other school building as described in the consultation document. In these circumstances, it would be necessary to review the investment options for delivering improvements to the school buildings. This will not alter the Council's commitment to establishing mixed secondary education in Barry.

A comprehensive cost option appraisal has been undertaken. The Council is confident that the level of investment identified will be sufficient to transform the secondary school buildings. The investment will provide the right number of school places, raise standards of learning and improve buildings that are in a poor condition.

It should be noted that the reference made to the new building for St Cyres costing £44m is not correct. This investment relates to two new school buildings: St Cyres and Ysgol y Deri.

Issue 2

Staffing

Respondents felt that security of tenure for staff members is of the utmost importance, and that staff need assurances that their jobs are safe. It was felt that the Council should guarantee the transfer of staff into vacancies at the proposed new schools and that staff should not be put into the position of having to reapply for their current job. Concerns were also raised that children would be disadvantaged if teachers were unsuccessful in applying for a post in their preferred location, and that mixed education should happen but not at the expense of hard working teachers.

Respondents also referred to the excellent progress made at Barry Comprehensive with regards to pupils results and that there is a need to reward staff and students by securing jobs for the future.

A respondent had a concern about the lengthy period of uncertainty and the impact it is having on staff wellbeing and morale.

Council's response to the concerns raised

The Council will support the governors, headteachers and staff at all schools with any changes that maybe required. With the establishment of two new mixed sex English medium secondary schools the first task for the new governing bodies would be to appoint the Headteachers and develop new staffing structures to be ready for the opening of both schools from September 2018. Changes to staffing would be subject to full consultation with staff and the relevant trade unions.

The Council recognises anxiety that staff may experience as a result of this proposal and the potential impact on their jobs. The Council strongly recommends ring fencing posts and has provided staff of both schools with the following communication;

“Although it is the responsibility of the governing bodies to decide staffing structures and the process for appointing to posts, the Local Authority will strongly advise the governing bodies to adopt the following approach:

Both governing bodies should work together in order to ensure the best mix of staff for each of the new schools. The aim would be to enable some degree of consistency for pupils’ pastoral support, while offering staff the opportunity for mobility, in line with the needs across both schools. We will strongly recommend ring fencing posts (both teaching and non-teaching) to both schools, seeking expressions of interest from current staff. We will not support plans to dismiss and re-engage staff or to advertise externally. The Council would be limited in its ability to support governing bodies should they choose not to follow the recommendation.

How would the process for expressing interest in a post work?

Staff should be encouraged to express an interest in posts at both of the schools and to identify their preference. Wherever possible, staff will be matched to posts which would mean that there is no need for those staff to apply for positions or to be interviewed.

It is possible that there will be competition in some areas as a result of the restructuring, and, for example, there could be fewer Teaching, Learning Responsibility [TLR] posts. In such circumstances interviews would be necessary. In the event of reduction in Senior Management Team [SMT] / TLR posts, salary protection would apply in line with the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document. Support staff will have one year’s salary protection in the event of changes to staffing structures affecting grading.

Staff who take up posts in the new schools will have a letter confirming details of new school reporting lines but service will be counted as continuous and there will be no changes to terms and conditions/pension arrangements.

Will there be redundancies and/or packages made available to staff

It is not anticipated that there will be redundancies as a result of the proposal but if there is a genuine redundancy, provisions of the Schools Redundancy Procedure would apply. There is no intention to offer ‘packages’ to staff who do not want to work in either school – our wish is to retain as many staff as possible.”

The communication has provided a measure of reassurance for staff to allay any fears over jobs in future.

Issue 3

Standards

Respondents expressed concerns that the closure of the schools and the potential loss of key teaching staff would lead to a drop in standards, specifically in relation to hard work undertaken in Barry Comprehensive in achieving its current level of success. Respondents felt that due regard from the Council

needs to be given in light of the above when deciding on the future of the schools. Respondents also commented that both schools already benefit from a successful joint sixth form which has worked well for a number of years.

Council's response to the concerns raised

The Council's clear ambition is that educational outcomes in the Vale of Glamorgan are the best in Wales and match those of the most successful authorities in England with similar socio economic profiles. It is intended that this proposal will help deliver this ambition. The Council's intention is that the two new mixed sex schools will achieve educational outcomes higher than the two current schools and exceed those of other similar schools.

The Council recognises the progress made by both schools and in particular, the recent results of Barry Comprehensive School. The most recent Estyn report for Barry Comprehensive School shows the school has made strong progress since 2013, however there is still capacity for improvement. It is intended that the proposal will:

- Enable further improvements to educational outcomes, including attendance, the performance of pupils entitled to free school meals and GCSE and Post-16 qualifications.
- Support an increase in the proportion of pupils progressing to further and higher education and reduce the proportion who become NEET, with the possible involvement of Cardiff and Vale College in post-16 provision.
- Provide learning environments that support and challenge individual children to succeed, including students with additional learning needs.
- Create learning environments that promote innovation, creativity and can be adapted to respond to curriculum change.
- Build the reputation and popularity of the English medium secondary schools in Barry and reduce the number of young people that travel out of the town to go to school.
- Increase the satisfaction levels of students and staff.

Issue 4

Transition/Impact upon GCSEs

Respondents expressed concerns with the proposed transition arrangements, commenting on the negative impact it may have on pupils, especially with regard to GCSE performance.

A respondent felt that year 10 pupils should not be mixed and should stay the same as for year 11 pupils; integration should only be for years 7 & 8 as many GCSE courses start in year 9.

Respondents highlighted that mixed sex education could be phased in, beginning in September 2018 for year 7 pupils. It was considered that this could limit the disruption for pupils who have begun their education on the current sites.

Council's response to the concerns raised

It is essential that effective plans are in place to ensure the effective transition from the current single-sex secondary schools to two new mixed sex secondary schools in September 2018.

Feedback from stakeholders indicates a desire to move to mixed-sex education as soon as practically possible whilst minimising disruption for pupils, particularly those who are due to sit GCSE's and A levels in the summer of 2019.

Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive Schools already operate a joint 6th form with some mixed sex classes. Pupils starting year 13 in September 2018 would continue their studies in single sex classes where relevant.

Pupils entering year 11 in September 2018 would also continue to be taught in the single sex classes at the school site they attended in year 10 thereby minimising disruption.

All other year groups (year groups 7-10 and year 12) would be mixed from September 2018.

The opening of the new schools with all but two year groups being mixed from the start is considered to have the following benefits:

- enables a sense of a revitalised, fresh beginning for pupils and staff;
- enables the new schools' identities to commence on an agreed date;
- impacts directly on pupil and teacher expectations;
- provides a clear break with the past while recognising the achievements and successes associated with it;
- provides a clear signal to parents and the community;
- provides a strong context for raising standards.

A prolonged phased or staggered start may be less likely to achieve the required outcomes by:

- diminishing the sense of creating new schools;
- failing to deliver new identities and expectations;
- creating little impact upon learners and teachers;
- leaving parents uncertain about the new start; and
- impeding a substantial increase in standards, morale and expectation.

Careful planning will take place during the proposed period of change to reduce any risk of distraction or disruption that could impact on learning during transition and building work. The Council recognise the importance of having a stable educational environment leading up to and during exam periods and will support the schools to minimise disruption during these times.

If the proposal is approved the aim is to open the two new schools in September 2018. Parents of pupils in years 7 to 10 will be asked to express a preference for a

place at one of the new schools. Places will be allocated through the Council's admissions process. To avoid disruption in preparation for GCSE examinations pupils in year 11 will remain in their existing classes and will be registered at the school opening on the site of their existing school. Pupils entering years 12 and 13 will also be registered at the school opening on the site of their current school but will remain in their current classes for 2018-19.

The Council has an excellent track record and vast experience in delivering large scale construction projects for schools. The redevelopment of Cowbridge Comprehensive School, the construction of the Penarth Learning Community and the current construction of the Llantwit Learning Community have all been managed with minimal disruption for pupils. The attainment of pupils attending Cowbridge and St Cyres Comprehensive Schools increased both during and following the construction work. The Council will apply the same principles to the new schools that will result in minimal disruption for pupils.

The construction process provides a unique learning environment and the council has successfully delivered a number of award winning initiatives, such as construction ambassadors. This helps to ensure that teachers and pupils are aware of opportunities that the construction works can give and that through working with the contractors these opportunities are fulfilled.

Issue 5

School closures

Respondents questioned the need to close the schools in order for mixed sex education to happen. Both schools have a deep rooted history in the town.

Council's response to the concerns raised

The Council felt that this was the best way forward for the transformation of secondary education in the Barry area.

As both of these schools will be new schools, each school would have a new governing body. Initially this will be set up as a temporary governing body prior to formal opening of the two new schools on 01 September 2016. The first role of the temporary governing bodies will be to advertise and recruit the headteacher. The appointment of the two Headteachers will be decided upon by the temporary governing bodies of the two new schools.

A rebrand will provide the opportunity to redefine the school and help dissociate any negative historical perceptions which may currently exist, helping improve the learning environment and secure the future of both schools. This will ensure a sustainable balance between the supply and demand for secondary school places across Barry for the long term.

Issue 6

New school for Barry Comprehensive

A respondent commented that there was a belief amongst parents that children will be starting in a “brand new school” in September 2018. The Council would need to market the plans to ensure the community and parents understand the implications for them and their children.

Council’s response to the concerns raised

It is proposed that the two new mixed sex schools would be established in September 2018 but the full investment and new build programme for the schools would not commence until September 2020. It is anticipated that the new school buildings on the existing Barry Comprehensive campus and the modernised buildings on the existing Bryn Hafren campus could be ready by September 2022, subject to funding. Work would commence on the new Barry Comprehensive School and modernisation of Bryn Hafren School in 2020 for completion in 2022.

In order to establish mixed sex secondary schools by September 2018, work will be carried out by the Council prior to the full construction programme. This work will be to ensure that there are separate toilet and changing facilities for both boys and girls at both schools.

Issue 7

School location/Catchment areas

Respondents felt that having two secondary schools in Barry is likely to create a two tier system where one school is perceived to be better than the other, a ‘good’ school and a ‘bad’ school. It was felt that the proposed catchment areas will not provide a good mix of children from different economic backgrounds with pupils from the poorer area in one school and those from more affluent areas in the other. The catchment areas will create a divide in Barry with less chance of integration between the two areas which is vital for the future of Barry town.

Council’s response to the concerns raised

As both schools share the same catchment area at present, two new school catchment areas will need to be established.

It is important to recognise that catchment areas only play a part in determining destination schools as part of the Council’s admissions policy when schools are fully subscribed. Where capacity exists, parental choice will always be the determining factor.

While the proposals do reduce the overall capacities of the schools, this is only to bring the current high levels of surplus capacity to a more reasonable level, and with current levels will not bring either school to full capacity.

The advisory board considered a number of catchment area options for the schools whereupon it was agreed that the Barry Comprehensive school site would largely serve the west of the town and the new school on the site of Bryn Hafren the east.

The preferred option was one which would result in as much parity as possible in relation to the number of pupils residing in each catchment area, relative levels of

deprivation and the distance pupils would have to travel to school. The preferred catchment area option also follows logical geographical boundaries.

The proposed catchment areas follow the majority of existing primary school catchment boundaries with ease of accessibility to each campus within the designated catchment boundaries. The majority of pupils in Barry live within three miles of each campus.

Barry also benefits from a number of regeneration projects and new housing developments which will continue reduce socioeconomic divide within student demographics across both schools.

The establishment of the new schools and associated catchment areas will provide schools with an opportunity to rebrand themselves. A rebranding can change perceptions and image without losing heritage. A rebrand will offer the schools the opportunity to build on what has already been achieved.

Issue 8

Status Quo/Alternatives

A respondent felt that the current schools should be kept as they are and to spend money on improving what is already there. It was suggested that the two schools merge with an upper and lower school. A respondent felt there should be one super school and not two new schools.

Council's response to the concerns raised

The buildings of both schools are generally not of a standard for 21st century teaching and learning and require significant investment. The proposal seeks to address this through significant financial investment by the Vale of Glamorgan Council in partnership with the Welsh Governments 21st Century Schools Investment programme.

The Council has undertaken comprehensive consultation over the past three years on transforming secondary education in Barry and establishing mixed sex schooling. Maintaining the status quo does not reflect the desire for mixed sex education in Barry.

In May 2015 a proposed a programme of transformation for secondary education in Barry that included the establishment of a large single sex school in Barry. The outcome of the consultation was included in a Consultation Report which was reviewed by the Council's Cabinet in October 2015 where it was agreed not to progress this option further. There was considerable opposition to the establishment of a large mixed sex school in Barry.

The establishment of a single school with an upper and lower campus creates additional transition stages for pupils, required to acclimatise to new learning environments and staff partway through their secondary education, which may have a negative impact on learning outcomes.

Issue 9

Impact on other schools

One respondent felt that St Richard Gwyn was excluded from the transformational proposals, and expressed concern that impact to St Richard Gwyn should be considered.

Council's response to the concerns raised

The Council considers that there will be minimal impact to other schools as a result of this proposal. The proposal could result in reduced demand for places at some other secondary schools, however the low levels of surplus places in Vale schools means that any impact on these other schools is unlikely to be significant.

Both Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren schools have high level of surplus capacity at present. This proposal will reduce the capacity of both schools taking account of current demand and trends for schooling in the Barry area. The proposal will reduce the overall number of secondary school places available in the Barry area thus sustaining current levels of demand at other schools.

The new schools on the sites of Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren will ensure that there is a sustainable balance between the supply and demand for school places in Barry, including in the long term.

St Richard Gwyn has been included within the consultation process, and the Council will continue to work and engage with St Richard Gwyn and the archdiocese in future.

Issue 10

School Uniform

A respondent had concerns around school uniform, son starts year 7 at Barry Comprehensive in September 2017, there will be a need to buy another one for September 2018 if he goes to Bryn Hafren.

Council's response to the concerns raised

A uniform for the two schools will be decided by the new governing bodies. Whilst not a decision of the Council it is anticipated that there would be a transitional period to allow parents to buy the new uniform once children have grown out of their existing uniform.

Issue 11

Curriculum

Concerns that parents are being asked to make a decision on applying to schools without information on the curriculum available particularly those who will be making their choices in 2018. Parents need to be kept informed.

Council's response to the concerns raised

The two new schools will provide greater opportunities for curriculum development enabling the provision of a broad and relevant curriculum. Girls and Boys will have access to a very broad range of high quality courses and specialist teachers.

The Council's expectation is that Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive will ensure curriculum alignment across the two schools. The curricula of the two new schools will be aligned once the schools are established; there will be a need for some alignment across the two schools prior to this. This will require careful planning and will be undertaken well before the opening of the new schools, in particular options, curriculum and examination syllabus alignment especially for Yr 10, 11 12 and 13.

Parents will be informed regularly and kept up-to-date with developments for the new schools and encouraged to expect much from the new schools. These will include;

- Communication strategy for all, including forums for giving views as well as hearing about developments;
- Updates on curriculum, appointments etc.; and
- A comprehensive programme of integration, including visits to the schools.

Issue 12

Centre of Behavioural Excellence

Concerned about the proposal to locate a 'Centre of Behavioural Excellence' on the Barry Comprehensive School Site.

Council's response to the concerns raised

The aim of the Council is to develop the capacity of schools individually and collectively, which includes high quality provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN). There are a number of issues with existing provision including the quality of the accommodation and the extent to which it facilitates inclusion back into mainstream education.

The establishment of a 'Centre of Behavioural Excellence' would address this and enable both schools the opportunity for earlier intervention to support their pupils with additional learning needs, while reinforcing aspirational values within a 21st century learning environment specifically designed to support their needs.

The centre would be joined to the school but with separate and controlled access to and from the centre. The centre would also have some separate facilities including general teaching areas and an outdoor area. This arrangement would enable pupils to study a broad curriculum and have access to the full range of facilities such as the gym and science laboratories and to return as soon as appropriate to mainstream provision. The proposal allows flexibility and facilitates inclusion for pupils. The Council is confident this would not have an adverse effect on mainstream schooling at Barry Comprehensive.

Annex B

This section provides comments raised during the formal consultation period for those in favour of the proposal. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim. All written responses have been made available to Cabinet members.

The proposal is Long Overdue

- English medium mixed secondary education in Barry is long overdue.
- Children in Barry should have the right to have co-ed just like children from other vale towns.
- People in the vale have been asking for this for years and the money will help improve the education experience at both schools.
- Single sex schools are old fashioned; children need to learn to interact with the opposite sex in a school environment.
- Single sex schools are an anachronism, current schools are in a poor condition.
- Current schools are badly failing educationally; parents are abandoning the current schools for superior alternatives.

Mixed sex schooling

- Two mixed schools, of a similar size to the existing schools would be the best way to introduce mixed sex education in Barry.
- It is now imperative that children attend a mixed sex environment in their schooling. The current system is archaic and has no merit in this day and age.
- Mixed sex schools have been needed for many years, they go to mixed sex nurseries, infants and juniors and the only mixed sex schools are either out of town or catholic
- Two smaller schools would provide the pastoral care not available in a larger school whilst being of sufficient size to meet curriculum needs.
- Secondary education in Barry is in need of a long overdue overhaul and investment

The Proposal

- The proposal sounds perfect. Excellent idea to start with new structures.
- No longer need to consider schools outside of Barry.
- This seems a much more coherent and less disruptive proposal than the previous one.
- Things have been thought through and not rushed as the initial consultation had been.
- It will be a better learning environment and will hopefully attract excellent teaching staff which will all in tern improve the outcomes for the pupils

Standards

- I appreciate one school maybe favoured, just like Penarth but this will drive results up and should create two good schools with improved standards.

Development/Social Skills

- Mixed sex education improves social skills, develops understanding of the opposite sex which fosters more detailed and compassionate awareness of their peers and aids development.
- Mixed sex classes will aid development of children and their social skills.
- Enable children to have more respect for the opposite sex.
- Mixed education is important for children's social development as well as a benefit to them educationally.

Learning/Subjects

- The proposal will offer a broader range of subjects.
- Learning is better in mixed schools
- Help improve confidence and literacy skills

Centre of excellence

- It is a good thing that that the new proposals acknowledge and make provision for this.

Primary to secondary education

- As a primary school is mixed its only right that they go to a mixed high school.
- Doesn't make sense to have mixed at primary schools then non-mixed at secondary schools

Transition/Phasing

- Pleased that the phasing element has been removed and that students will be supported by other coeducation year groups beginning at the same time at each school.
- The time seems the right time to implement a sensible transition without disadvantaging any children.
- Transition process must be as seamless as possible for pupils

Rebrand and facelift

- Both schools are in desperate need of renovation, investment is needed. A rebrand and facelift would suit the arrival of young learners in September 2018. I work at the John Frost School (formerly Duffryn High) in Newport. It is currently a part building site but have completed a rebrand and facelift for 1-2

years which is already having a positive impact on students, parents and intake numbers. We have 30%+FSM and CSI 52% (2016).

Annex C

This section provides comments to common issues arising from the consultation exercise on the proposal.

When would mixed sex education start in Barry?

If the proposal is supported and approved by the Council's Cabinet the two new mixed sex schools would be established in September 2018. Details on a proposed transition plan can be found on pages 25 and 26. It is anticipated that the new school buildings on the existing Barry Comprehensive campus and the modernised buildings on the existing Bryn Hafren campus should be ready by September 2022, subject to funding.

Why do Barry and Bryn Hafren schools need to be closed?

In order to establish two mixed sex schools the proposal will involve the closure of Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive single sex schools and the opening of two new mixed sex community secondary schools on the existing school sites. There will be no time gap in the closure and the opening of the schools.

As both of these schools will be new schools, each school will have a new governing body. Initially this will be set up as a temporary governing body prior to the formal opening of the two new schools on 01 September 2018. The first role of the temporary governing bodies will be to advertise and recruit the Headteacher. The appointment of the two Headteachers will be decided upon by the temporary governing bodies of the two new schools.

What will happen to the existing governing bodies if the proposal for the new English medium secondary schools were to go ahead?

If the proposal goes ahead, a new governing body would be established at each school.

The existing governing bodies would continue to be responsible for the existing schools until 31 August 2018. They would then cease to operate.

What would the proposals mean for students currently attending Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools? Will my child be offered a place at one of the mixed sex schools?

All students attending Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School at the time of the opening of the two schools will be guaranteed a place at their catchment school. Parents of children in years 7,8,9 and 10 in the school year 2017/18 will be asked to apply for a place at the new school of their preference in September 2017. If there are surplus places at either of the schools, after all learners from the catchment area who have applied have been offered a place, other applicants will be admitted based on the criteria outlined in the Parental Guide to School Admissions. Further information on admission arrangements can be found on page 28 of this document.

Will the new schools have a new name and uniform?

The new schools will each have a new name.

A uniform for the two schools will be decided by the new governing bodies. It would be important for the governing bodies to consider current uniforms of both schools, the affordability of the new uniform and the phasing in of a new uniform.

What will the local catchment areas be for each school?

Currently both schools share the same catchment area. When the two schools change their character to mixed sex schools, then the catchment areas will need to be redrawn. The new school on the Barry Comprehensive School site would largely serve the west of the town and the new school on the campus of Bryn Hafren the east. The new catchment areas can be seen at page 12 of this document.

A list of street names linked to each new catchment area and a post code finder can be found at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/barryschools

How do I apply for admission to the new schools?

Full details on the Council's admissions processes can be found online in the in the Vale of Glamorgan's admission's guidance "A Parental Guide to School Admissions in the Vale". The guide for entry into the 2017/18 school year will be published on 01 October 2016 at:

http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/working/education_and_skills/schools/admissions/school%20admissions.aspx

If a parent chooses to apply for a place in the school which is not designated as their catchment school and the school is oversubscribed, then places will be offered based on the Admissions oversubscription criteria as set out in the document above.

What will happen to my child if they are due to sit their GCSE's in 2019?

Pupils who are in their second year of GCSE (Year 11) at the beginning of the school year in September 2018 will continue in their existing single sex year group based in their current location for their final year of GCSE. These pupils will be in Year 9 in September 2016.

Pupils who are starting their GCSEs at the beginning of Year 10 in September 2018 will start their courses in one of the two new mixed sex schools. GCSE subject offers will be available at their current schools for pupils to choose as part of the GCSE options process in the autumn of 2017 with final choices being made in February 2018. The pupils will be in Year 8 in September 2016.

What will happen to my child if they are due to sit their AS or A2 exams in 2019?

Pupils moving into their A2 year (Year 13) in September 2018 will remain in their current class. Pupils who are starting the first year of A level (Year 12) will join the new joint 6th form. Pupils who are in Year 11 in the spring of 2018 will choose their Post 16 options at this point. As each school will specialise in specific courses,

pupils will attend the school that offers their course from September 2018: they will be able to study combinations of subjects provided at the two schools if they wish to do so.

Will transport continue to be provided for existing eligible students if they become ineligible due to a potential change of distance from home to school?

With the changes to catchment areas there will be a review of pupils' eligibility for school transport. All pupils should live within 3 miles walking distance of their catchment school, with the exception of pupils living within Rhoose and Heol Collen, Parc Y Gwenfo. Only pupils who live further than 3 miles walking distance from their catchment school will be eligible for free school transport. Children who choose to and are accepted to attend any other school apart from their catchment school or nearest school will not be eligible for free school transport.

http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/working/education_and_skills/schools/school_transport/school_transport.aspx

Data/Dyddiad 23rd September 2016
Ask for/Goŷynwch am Paula Ham
Telephone/Rhif ffôn 01446 709161
Fax/Ffacs
e-mail/e-bost pham@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
Your Ref/Eich Cyf
My Ref/Cyf PHJMU

The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Learning and Skills
Provincial House, Kendrick Road, Barry CF62 8BF
Telephone: (01446) 700111
www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Cyngor Bro Morgannwg
Dysgu a Sgiliau
Tŷr Dalaith, Heol Kendrick, Y Barri CF2 8BF
Rhif ffôn: (01446) 700111
www.bromorgannwg.gov.uk

To: Staff of Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive Schools

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposal to transform English medium secondary education by:

Establishing two new mixed sex 11 -18 English medium comprehensive schools on the current sites of Barry and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools

Between 5 September and 17 October, consultation is open regarding the proposal to open two new mixed sex schools on the Barry and Bryn Hafren school sites. The proposal includes a joint sixth form led by a single head of sixth form with courses offered across both sites.

Staff and governing body meetings took place at both schools on 14 and 15 September. We appreciate not all staff were able to attend and a number of important queries were raised which we have summarised for you below.

How long will the consultation process take?

Consultation is open until 17 October 2016. Following the end of the consultation period a report on the outcome of the consultation will be considered by Cabinet on 12th December and it will decide whether or not to publish a statutory notice on the proposal.

If Cabinet decides to progress the proposal, the statutory notice would be published in January 2017 for a period of 28 days during which time objections to the proposal can be submitted to the Council. Following the end of the 28 day period a report will be prepared for Cabinet for consideration on 9th March 2017.

If any objections are submitted they will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when it decides whether or not to implement the proposal.

Should the Cabinet decide to take forward the proposal, the new schools would open in September 2018.

When would temporary governing bodies for the new schools be established?

In the event of the proposal being agreed, the first step will be to appoint 2 new temporary governing bodies who will operate alongside the current governing bodies. Once the new schools open, the current governing bodies will cease to exist. The

Correspondence is welcomed in Welsh or English (Crosawir Gobeblaeth yn y Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg)

temporary governing bodies will continue until the permanent governing bodies for the new schools are established, this must be done by the end of the first term in which the new schools open

The first role of the temporary governing bodies will be to appoint Headteachers; they have the option of ring fencing to the Headteachers in post at the time or advertising externally in accordance with The Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2009.

What will happen to existing teaching and non-teaching jobs

After appointing the Headteachers for the new schools, the governing body will then need to consider the staffing structures at each school. The 2009 regulations stated above also apply to Deputy posts.

Although it is the responsibility of the governing bodies to decide staffing structures and the process for appointing to posts, the Local Authority will strongly advise the governing bodies to adopt the following approach:

Both governing bodies should work together in order to ensure the best mix of staff for each of the new schools. The aim would be to enable some degree of consistency for pupils' pastoral support, while offering staff the opportunity for mobility, in line with the needs across both schools. We will strongly recommend ring fencing posts (both teaching and non-teaching) to both schools, seeking expressions of interest from current staff. We will not support plans to dismiss and re-engage staff or to advertise externally.

How would the process for expressing interest in a post work?

Staff should be encouraged to express an interest in posts at both of the schools and to identify their preference. Wherever possible, staff will be matched to posts which would mean that there is no need for those staff to apply for positions or to be interviewed.

It is possible that there will be competition in some areas as a result of the restructuring, and, for example, there could be fewer TLR posts. In such circumstances interviews would be necessary. In the event of reduction in SMT/TLR posts, salary protection would apply in line with the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document. Support staff will have one year's salary protection in the event of changes to staffing structures affecting grading.

Staff who take up posts in the new schools will have a letter confirming details of new school reporting lines but service will be counted as continuous and there will be no changes to terms and conditions/pension arrangements.

Will there be redundancies and/or packages made available to staff

It is not anticipated that there will be redundancies as a result of the proposal but if there is a genuine redundancy, provisions of the Schools Redundancy Procedure would apply. There is no intention to offer 'packages' to staff who do not want to work in either school – our wish is to retain as many staff as possible.

How will this affect students sitting exams?

In order to minimise disruption and provide continuity for pupils sitting exams in 2018/19, it is proposed that years 11 and 13 will remain in their existing classes with the same teachers. Members of staff affected by this would still need to submit an expression of interest, but would stay in their current position as a temporary arrangement for 2018/19, with any changes taking effect the following academic year.

All matters connected with the staffing arrangements at the new schools would be subject to consultation with staff and unions at the appropriate time.

We recognise that this is a complex process and that transition and integration will need to be carefully planned and managed. Officers from the Council will be working closely with governors, staff and trade unions to ensure the success of the project and to provide best possible outcomes for pupils.

We are committed to keeping staff informed of progress on the proposals. If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please do get in touch with us. Our details are below:

General consultation enquiries:

Phone: 01446 709727

Email: mmatthews@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

HR specific queries:

Phone: 01446 709870

Email: stalderman@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Paula Ham

Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources

Annex D

Consultation with young children

Session: Barry Schools Transformation – Barry Comprehensive School Parliament

Date: 12/09/16

Number of participants: 9

Top 3: What are the 3 most important things about your school life?

- Good facilities 55% - we want the school buildings to be clean, in good condition and more modern
- Progress – 44% - we want to be able to progress in our lives and careers when we leave school, we want the opportunity to develop ourselves as young men, outside of lessons as well as in the classroom.
- Qualifications – 10% - we want to gain good qualifications
- Respect – 44% - we like being treated like adults, we are treated like adults if we behave that way, respect works both ways.
- Friendship/team work – 22% - it's important to have friends at school and be able to work with each other and get on.
- Sport & P.E. lessons – 22% - learnt new skills in PE lessons and joined sports teams
- New ways of thinking – 11% - at school I've met people from different backgrounds and its helped me to look at things in a different way.

Which of these is most important to you?

- Respect – 66%
- Ability to progress – 11%

Do you agree with the proposal to create two new mixed schools in Barry?

Yes – 66%

No – 11%

I don't know – 22%

Questions

- Will the staff stay the same?
- How will it affect our learning?
- How will the school be split up? Lower in one and higher in another?
- Will funding in building work affect the educational budget for the school?
- Will the 6th form be affected?

Session: Barry Schools Transformation – Bryn Hafren School Parliament

Date: 14/09/16

Number of participants: 23

Top 3: What are the 3 most important things about your school life?

- Teachers – 83%
- Good facilities – 48%
- Variety of subjects/ fun lessons – 35%
- Education – 26%
- Opportunities/ getting a good job – 17%
- Good friends – 17%
- Medically trained staff - 7%
- Positive atmosphere - 4%
- Ability to be who I want to be - 4%
- Support 4 %

Which of these is most important to you?

- Good teaching staff – 35%
- Variety of subjects – 35%
- Good facilities – 26%
- Positive atmosphere & friends – 4%

Do you agree with the proposal to create two new mixed schools in Barry

Yes – 4%

No – 74%

I don't know – 4%

Questions

- How will you help the children who wanted to go to a single sex school for personal reasons?
- What will the schools new name be?
- What will happen if it is not accepted?
- Why is co-ed the only option?
- Could the schools be improved without co-ed?
- When the two schools are under construction where will existing students be?
As it would presumably take longer than the summer?
- Will there be separate classes or girls and boys in the same class?
- Even if I stay here would it disrupt my education/classes?

- What new changes will there be?
- Will our education be disrupted during our GCSEs?
- Where would we go when the schools close? Are my GCSEs being effected?
- Are you keeping the beauty room?
- Why do they judge it by where you live?
- Being putt off, distracted or uncomfortable about it because girls would feel more comfortable around girls.
- What will happen to the pool and fitness suite?
- What will happen to drama studio?
- Will we still have the same teachers?
- Will there be a new uniform? Will it be completely different?
- Would we have the same medical help?
- Would we have the same amount of support like L.S.?
- Have you considered how this will disrupt the current year 7 & 8 pupils education?

Two workshops were undertaken with representatives of the Barry feeder primary schools. The consultation report with the feeder primary schools is available at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/barryschools

Annex E Governing Body and Headteacher Responses

Barry Comprehensive School response

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Freepost RTGU-JGBH-YYJZ - Consultation
Corporate and Customer Services
The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices
Holton Road
BARRY
CF63 4RU

This is Barry Comprehensive School Governing Body's response to the current secondary school transformation proposals as set out in the consultation document published on 5th September 2016.

The Governing Body has considered the proposals in detail, having attended several of the consultation events: members of the GB were also involved in the project group's deliberations.

This response was **unanimously** agreed at our meeting of 4th October 2016.

The Governing Body of Barry Comprehensive School **strongly supports** the proposals to transform English medium secondary education in Barry by:

1. Establishing two new mixed sex 11-18 English medium comprehensive schools on the current sites of BCS and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools;
2. Establishing a joint sixth form, provided across both schools; and
3. Closing the existing single sex English medium BCS and BH comprehensive schools in Barry.

Successful implementation of these proposals will entail very close collaborative working between all parties. The Governing Body of Barry Comprehensive School looks forward to being involved in taking forward the detail of the proposals, particularly in the following areas:

- Securing adequate and appropriate resources to support the two *existing* Governing Bodies and the two *new* Governing Bodies in order to progress the proposals. A substantial amount of detail will need to be

worked out by all four bodies, and individual members (who are both lay and voluntary) will require considerable support in order to achieve their goals;

- Identifying, securing and maintaining additional resources to ensure that during the transition period, the rate of improvement at BCS is sustained. You will be aware of the very recent and encouraging Estyn report on our school: this GB is anxious to ensure that the rate of further improvement is not deflected;
- Securing and maintaining these additional resources for the first few years of the new schools. Transition will bring its own challenges, and we are determined to ensure that the legacy of our school provides a well-resourced platform to ensure that the new schools provide the very highest level of educational provision to the children of Barry;
- Ensuring the retention of staff at BCS, who have demonstrated, through the recent Estyn report and the continually improved exams results of the past two years, that they are able to provide a very high quality educational experience to young people;
- Actively promoting the new schools, in order to ensure sustained (and increased) pupils' numbers and hence the financial stability of both new institutions. We need to make the Barry site schools the secondary education venues of choice for all those living in Barry, and to reverse the trend for those who can to access schools outside the town;
- To develop further the ideas, designs and operational strategies for the Centre for Behavioural Excellence. Whilst the detail of this unit can't be finalised until the Welsh Government review of PRUs is completed, potentially the siting of this Centre will have major implications for the management and governance structures of the new school at our site. All GBs have a stake in ensuring that there is clear and effective engagement with the Local Authority in developing the best possible facility.

In conclusion, therefore, we are strongly in favour of the proposals, and look forward with great excitement to playing our part in making a reality the long held dream of this Governing Body for co-education in Barry.

Antonia Forte

Chair of Governors
11th October 2016

Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School response

BRYN HAFREN COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

MERTHYR DYFAN RD,
BARRY CF62 9YQ

TEL: 01446 403500
FAX: 01446 403504

HEADTEACHER:
MR. T. DAVIES BA (HONS) MSc



YSGOL GYFUN BRYN HAFREN

MERTHYR DYFAN RD,
BARRY CF62 9YQ

TEL: 01446 403500
FAX: 01446 403504

PRIF ATHRO:
MR. T. DAVIES BA (HONS) MSc

Freepost RTGU-JGBH-YYJZ - Consultation
Corporate and Customer Services
The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices
Holton Road
BARRY
CF63 4RU

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

This is the Governing Body of Bryn Hafren's response to the current secondary school transformation proposals as set out in the consultation document published on 5th September 2016.

We are generally in support of the proposals in principal to transform English medium secondary education in Barry by:

- Establishing two new mixed sex 11-18 English medium comprehensive schools on the current sites of BCS and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools;
- Establishing a joint sixth form, provided across both schools; and
- Closing the existing single sex English medium BCS and BH comprehensive schools in Barry.

We believe that successful implementation of these proposals will entail very close collaborative working between all parties. In particular:

- Securing adequate and appropriate resources to support the *existing* Governing Body and the *new* Governing Body in order to progress the proposals. A substantial amount of detail will need to be worked out by both bodies and individual members (who are both lay and voluntary) will require considerable support in order to achieve their goals;
- Securing adequate and appropriate resources to support the appointment of 'existing' headteachers or 'new' headteachers of both schools in order to progress the proposals;
- Securing adequate and appropriate resources to support the Senior Leadership Teams of both schools in order to progress the proposals;
- Gathering and using the opinions and experience of the schools' Senior Leadership Teams in successfully making the transformation from what we currently have to what we want;
- Identifying, securing and maintaining additional resources to ensure that during the transition period, the need for improvement at Bryn Hafren is supported;
- Ensuring the retention of staff at Bryn Hafren, who will provide the very highest level of educational provision to our pupils;
- Ensure effective transition communication to support parents through the process;

BRYN HAFREN COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

MERTHYR DYFAN RD,
BARRY CF62 9YQ

TEL: 01446 403500

FAX: 01446 403504

HEADTEACHER:

MR. T. DAVIES BA (HONS) MSc



YSGOL GYFUN BRYN HAFREN

MERTHYR DYFAN RD,
BARRY CF62 9YQ

TEL: 01446 403500

FAX: 01446 403504

PRIF ATHRO:

MR. T. DAVIES BA (HONS) MSc

- Actively promoting the new school, in order to ensure sustained (and increased) pupil numbers and hence the financial stability of the new institution. We need to make the new school site the secondary education venue of choice for all those living in the "eastern half" of Barry, and to reverse the trend for those who can to access schools outside the town;
- Assisting in ensuring the financial commitment promised is used appropriately in order to provide for the ends of the new school and its pupils/staff and in so doing provide equality of opportunity with the new school being developed on the current Barry Boys' site.

In conclusion therefore, we are in favour of the proposals and look forward with great excitement to helping provide something better for the pupils of Barry.

Governing Body, Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School
17th October 2016

Bryn Hafren Headteacher response

Freepost RTGU-JGBH-YYJZ - Consultation
Corporate and Customer Services
The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices
Holton Road
BARRY
CF63 4RU

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

This is the Headteacher of Bryn Hafren's response to the current secondary school transformation proposals as set out in the consultation document published on 5th September 2016.

I have considered the proposals in detail, having attended several of the consultation events as well as being a member of the pre-consultation Advisory Board.

Despite some anxiety about: -

- the greater deprivation of pupils in the east of Barry
- the proposals that the school on the Bryn Hafren site is only being revamped in contrast to the building of a new site for the current Barry Boys' site

as an individual I **generally support** the proposals in principal to transform English medium secondary education in Barry by:

- Establishing two new mixed sex 11-18 English medium comprehensive schools on the current sites of BCS and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools;
- Establishing a joint sixth form, provided across both schools; and
- Closing the existing single sex English medium BCS and BH comprehensive schools in Barry.

I believe that successful implementation of these proposals will entail very close collaborative working between all parties.

As Headteacher of Bryn Hafren I look forward to being involved in taking forward the detail of the proposals, particularly in the following areas: -

- Securing adequate and appropriate resources to support the *existing* Governing Body and the *new* Governing Body in order to progress the proposals. A substantial amount of detail will need to be worked out by both bodies, and individual members (who are both lay and voluntary) will require considerable support in order to achieve their goals;
- Securing adequate and appropriate resources to support the Senior Leadership Team of any school on the Bryn Hafren site in order to progress the proposals;

- Gathering and using the opinions and experience of the school's Senior Leadership Team in successfully making the transformation from what we currently have to what we want;
- Identifying, securing and maintaining additional resources to ensure that during the transition period, the need for improvement at Bryn Hafren is supported;
- Securing and maintaining additional resources for the first few years of the new school. Transition will bring its own challenges, and I am determined to ensure that the legacy of our school provides a well-resourced platform to ensure that the new school provides the very highest level of educational provision to the children of Barry;
- Ensuring the retention of staff at Bryn Hafren, who have demonstrated their loyalty and commitment to the pupils of Barry;
- Actively promoting the new school, in order to ensure sustained (and increased) pupil numbers and hence the financial stability of any new institution. We need to make the Bryn Hafren site school the secondary education venues of choice for all those living in the "eastern half" of Barry, and to reverse the trend for those who can to access schools outside the town;
- Assisting in ensuring the financial commitment promised is used appropriately in order to provide for the ends of the new school and its pupils/staff and in so doing provide equality of opportunity with the new school being developed on the current Barry Boys' site.

In conclusion therefore, I am in favour of the proposals and look forward with great excitement to helping provide something better for the pupils of Barry.

Tyrone Davies

Head Teacher – Bryn Hafren Comprehensive

13th October 2016

Annex F

Response from Barry Town Council

Barry Town Council believe this change needs to happen and that it is long overdue.

The Council is happy to see the PRU being transferred to one of the school sites. Council would have liked to have seen two new builds, one on each site rather than just one rebuild and one refurbishment. Council are concerned that the catchment area split will create two different standards as the divide is being made in such a way it divides the affluent and non-affluent areas of Barry.

Annex G

Estyn Response to consultation

Estyn response to the proposals to transform English-medium secondary education in Barry.

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.

Introduction

The proposal is by the Vale of Glamorgan Council

The proposal is to close the existing single sex English medium Barry Comprehensive and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive schools and establish two new mixed sex, 11-18 English medium comprehensive schools on these schools' current sites from September 2018 and establish a joint sixth form provided across both schools.

Summary/ Conclusion

The proposal has been developed in line with the council's 21st Century Schools programme and the council's commitment to supporting the Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015. The council's objective is to raise overall standards of achievement by modernising education in the Vale.

At present, both schools are in a statutory category and are in need of 'significant improvement' following their inspection by Estyn. The Local authority is clear in its ambition to improve the educational outcomes and state that this proposal will help deliver that ambition.

Improving outcomes is more likely to be achieved when the leadership and management at each school is effective and where the leadership place a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching. While the consultation document refers to a number of aspirations for the new schools, the proposals lack sufficient detail on how the new schools will realise these ambitions.

It is Estyn's view that the proposal lacks sufficient information as to whether it is likely to maintain or improve the present standards of education provision in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposal. This includes addressing the poor quality of the school buildings and ensuring future provision of mixed sex secondary provision in the Barry area. The proposer clearly states that it believes that establishing two new mixed sex schools will strengthen and improve the provision for learners and the wider community. It also states reasonably that the two new schools will provide greater opportunities for curriculum development.

The proposer believes that the proposal is the most cost effective option in order to reduce surplus places and meet the objectives of its 21st Century Schools programme. The proposer has carried out a community impact assessment for each school which concluded that the impact on the wider community would be minimal given that the new schools are to be located on the current sites of Bryn Hafren and Barry Comprehensive. It is envisaged that a wide range of extra-curricular activities will continue to be available on both sites.

The proposer has suitably considered risks associated with the proposal which includes the impact on neighbouring schools in the Vale and has clearly detailed the measures required to manage these.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact of the proposal on learner travel arrangements. It recognises appropriately that there would be no impact on the available safe walking routes for pupils to access the schools. Free transport eligibility would remain unchanged should the proposal go ahead.

The proposer has provided information about school capacities and tables of current and anticipated pupil numbers. It states that the proposal would eventually lead to a reduction in surplus places but with a sufficient capacity for growth.

The proposer has suitably undertaken a Welsh language impact assessment and summarises that overall, the proposal would be neutral in terms of its impact on the Welsh language.

The proposer states clearly what the cost of the investment would be. The proposal includes suitable arrangements for consultation and includes a useful and clearly written 'Frequently asked questions' section within the consultation document.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has appropriately summarised the support category for each school based on the national school categorisation system which takes into account the view of the local authority. It also makes reference to the most recent Estyn inspection reports for each school.

The council states clearly that it is committed to ensuring improved outcomes for Barry Comprehensive pupils and gives details of intervention measures in place. These include the appointment of an accelerated improvement board, Schools Challenge Cymru and additional funding. However the consultation does not provide sufficient detail about how the proposals will improve outcomes at the schools. The proposal does not include a detailed enough analysis of the current performance data of the schools involved. In addition, the proposal does not mention how the new arrangements are likely to impact on improving the effectiveness of the leadership and management and the quality of teaching at each school.

The proposer has outlined well the transitional arrangements to ensure minimal disruption to learners, including learners in years 11 and 13. During the transition period pupils from both schools will be accommodated on the existing school sites whilst the new school is built and improvements are made to Bryn Hafren.

The proposer makes suitable reference to how the proposal impacts on the provision for pupils with special educational needs. It asserts reasonably that establishing two new schools would strengthen the provision for these pupils, in particular pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is no overall summary of the impact of the proposals on other vulnerable groups

Council Responses to Estyn comments “that the proposal lacks sufficient information as to whether it is likely to maintain or improve the present standards of education provision in the area”.

The Welsh Government’s 21st Century Schools Programme is a major, long-term strategic capital investment programme aimed at establishing education communities for the 21st century in Wales. It aims to deliver learning environments enabling the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better education outcomes, enables greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources to create school environments that meet the needs of the community and provide the best learning provision.

The Council is committed to the 21st Century Schools Programme and this proposal contributes to this by provide innovative and creative learning environments which are adaptable to change and support students to reach their full potential ready for higher or further education or the world of work. The proposal will not just address the condition of existing on both site, but also build new facilities across both schools to support high quality learning and teaching and to raise standards in the schools.

A new school building will be provided at the Barry Comprehensive School site, which will also accommodate a Centre for Behaviour Excellence, to enable more effective integration for pupils who require additional support, typically for a limited period away from their home school.

Significant investment would also be required to improve the learning environment at Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School. Such investment would address condition and disability access issues at the school. It would also include refurbishment and improvement work to ensure that the school has first class, flexible facilities that support the delivery of a broad and innovative curriculum and inspire learners to achieve improved outcomes. New facilities such as a sports hall would also be provided.

The two new schools will provide greater opportunities for curriculum development enabling the provision of a broad and relevant curriculum. Girls and boys will have access to a very broad range of high quality courses and specialist teachers.

Enhanced provision for students with special educational needs will be available at both schools with provision including:

- A smaller teaching areas for one to one or small group teaching

- A base room for pupils with learning difficulties
- A modified curriculum for pupils with additional learning needs
- A base room and 'break out' areas for pupils with ASD

A wide range of extra-curricular activities will continue to be available on both sites.

The schools would continue to operate a joint sixth form with each school specialising in specific subject areas. There would be one a single head of 6th form. Each school will specialise in specific subject areas, based on the strengths of existing and new facilities at each school. Staff can continue to teach across the full range of subjects and secure continuing professional development.

The proposal will provide much needed investment in both schools, and will help deliver the transformational change necessary for all students to achieve their full potential.