

Learning to Excel

# STANWELL SCHOOL

## Consultation Response

### Report

**Consultation on the proposal to change the category of  
Stanwell School from a Foundation School to a  
Community Maintained School from September 2024**

*This document can be made available in other formats and languages as needed.  
Please contact Stanwell School to arrange this.*

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Background .....  | 1  |
| 1.1 Proposal: To change Stanwell School from a foundation school to a community maintained school from September 2024 .....          | 1  |
| 2. Outline of the consultation process.....  | 1  |
| 2.1 Publication of the consultation .....  | 1  |
| 2.2 Consultation stakeholder engagement .....  | 2  |
| 2.3 Objections to the proposal.....  | 3  |
| 2.4 Consultation meetings .....  | 3  |
| 2.5 Consultation Questions .....   | 3  |
| 3. Consultation responses .....  | 5  |
| 3.1 Summary of responses.....  | 5  |
| 3.2 Responses to Proposal To change stanwell from a Foundation School to a Community Maintained School.....                          | 6  |
| 4. Conclusion.....   | 8  |
| 4.1 Quality and standards in education .....   | 8  |
| 4.2 Community impact.....  | 8  |
| 4.3 Travel arrangements .....  | 9  |
| 5.4 Process following Close of Consultation Period.....  | 9  |
| 1. Annex A - A summary of key issues raised by statutory consultees and the responses by the governing body of Stanwell School ..... | 11 |
| 1.1. Issues raised in relation to the proposal: .....  | 11 |
| Theme 1.....   | 11 |
| Theme 2.....   | 11 |
| Theme 3.....   | 12 |
| 2. Annex B - A summary of comments received in favour of the proposal. ....  | 13 |
| Theme 4.....   | 12 |
| Theme 5.....   | 14 |
| Theme 6.....   | 14 |
| Theme 7.....   | 15 |
| Theme 8.....   | 16 |
| Theme 9.....   | 16 |
| Theme 10.....  | 17 |
| 3. Annex C - Frequently asked questions.....   | 17 |
| 4. Annex D - Consultations undertaken with young people. ....  | 19 |
| Consultation Event with pupils from Stanwell and its Feeder Primary Schools .....  | 19 |
| Methodology with pupils' responses (around 30 pupils from School council at different year groups).....                              | 20 |
| 5. Annex E – Response from Estyn.....  | 23 |
| 6. Annex F – Minutes of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee on the proposal.....   | 25 |

7. Annex G – Inaccurate media coverage of the proposal .....  
..... 26

## 1. BACKGROUND

This report outlines the feedback received during the consultation undertaken from 11 September to 23 October 2023, in response to the Governing Body's proposal to change the category of Stanwell School from a Foundation to Community Maintained School from September 2024. Also included are responses from the Governing Body to the issues raised. This statutory consultation was undertaken to ascertain views from relevant parties on a regulated alteration as defined in "the Code" to change the category of the school.

### 1.1 PROPOSAL TO CHANGE STANWELL SCHOOL FROM A FOUNDATION SCHOOL TO A COMMUNITY MAINTAINED SCHOOL FROM SEPTEMBER 2024.

The Governing Body at Stanwell School decided to proceed with this consultation following some organisational challenges experienced during the academic year 2022/23. We identified that the school would benefit from additional support with financial management, compliance and long-term sustainability. We also identified that the proposal would allow for improved access to funding streams such as community focussed schools grants and s106 funding, for example, via the Councils Capital Maintenance and School Investment Programme.

This report outlines the consultation process, provides an overview of responses to the consultation, and offers further details on the key issues and comments raised by stakeholders.

## 2. OUTLINE OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation process followed Welsh Government guidelines in compliance with the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and was delivered in line with the School Organisation Code 2018. The consultation is designed to ensure that the Governing Body ascertain all views and consider all perspectives when we assess the educational merits of the proposal. The consultation process gave prescribed consultees the opportunity to learn about the proposal and for the Governing Body to hear the views of all those with an interest so that they can be considered before any decisions are made. To ensure that the Governing Body had the resources available to be compliant with the above Act and Code, administrative support was provided by officers of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

### 2.1 PUBLICATION OF THE CONSULTATION

Formal consultation was conducted through a consultation document and response form distributed electronically to prescribed consultees and published on the School and Council website on the 11 September 2023. Hard copies of the consultation document were available upon request.

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 2018. The consultation document outlined the proposal being considered, the rationale for the proposal and the details of the consultation process. The consultation document also incorporated an individual response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version to complete.

## 2.2 CONSULTATION STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Engagement on the proposal was undertaken with prescribed consultees as contained within the School Organisation Code 2018.

The following groups were consulted:

**Table 1: List of groups consulted as part of the consultation process**

| List of groups consulted as part of the consultation process                        |   |
|---|---|
| Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Stanwell School                                | Individual members of Stanwell School Governing Body                |
| Parents/Carers and Guardians of children at Stanwell                                | Penarth Town Council  |
| Parents/Carers and Guardians of children attending Stanwell's linked feeder schools | Vale of Glamorgan Council   |
| Families First/Flying Start Management Board  | Vale of Glamorgan Early Years Development Partnership (EYDCP)       |
| Diocesan Directors of Education   | Further education institutions serving the area of the school       |
| Assembly Members (AM's) / Members of Parliament (MP's) / Regional Assembly Members  | Local Councillors   |
| Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG)   | Welsh Language Commissioner   |
| Estyn   | Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan |
| Welsh Government Ministers  | Central South Consortium Joint Education Service                    |
| Local Police and Crime Commissioner   | Trade Unions  |
| Council's Transportation Department   | Directors of Education –<br>All Neighbouring Authorities            |

Consultees were invited to complete a formal consultation response form which could be completed in hard copy or online at: <https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/schools/Consultations/Changing-Stanwell-School-from-Foundation-School-to-Community-Maintained-School.aspx>

Only responses to the consultation given in writing (either via post or the online survey) have been included in this report.

## 2.3 OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSAL

Any responses received from consultees who are opposed to these proposals, although considered as part of the consultation report, will not be treated as statutory objections. A statutory objection would form part of the statutory notice period if this were approved at the next stage by the School's Governing Body.

It should therefore be noted that if we consider it appropriate to move to the next stage of the statutory consultation, there is a further opportunity for any respondents to object to the proposals as part of the Statutory Notice stage. Objections must be made in writing or by email and sent to the proposer before the end of 28 days beginning with the day on which the notice was published. The statutory notice would be published on the School and Vale of Glamorgan Council website and posted at or near the main entrance to the school. Copies of the notice would be distributed to pupils, parents / carers, guardians and staff members.

## 2.4 CONSULTATION MEETINGS

A series of consultation events were held at Stanwell School. These sessions included staff and governor meetings, parents and community drop in events and pupil engagement sessions. The rationale behind the proposals was highlighted at each event and an explanation of the statutory process and the timescales involved was provided with the opportunity for open dialogue between all in attendance. These sessions were open to all stakeholders in the consultation process. A report on the outcome of the pupil engagement session can be found at Annex D.

## 2.5 CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Consultees were asked for their opinion on a key question to each proposal:

**1) Do you support the proposal to change Stanwell School from foundation status to community status from September 2024?**

Consultees were able to respond to each proposal with Yes, No or No opinion either way. Consultees were invited to respond to both proposals if they so wished.

Consultees were also offered the opportunity to comment further:

**If you would like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposals, please detail these below.**

**Any other comments?**



## 3. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The consultation responses received in writing between 11 September and 23 October 2023 are outlined in this section.

### 3.1 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

106 individual responses were received by the consultation closing date. The breakdown of responses to each proposal are detailed in the tables and charts below.

It has been noted that not all consultees 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. Respondents were asked to indicate their role in relation to the proposal. They were able to tick more than one option.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the school they are connected to (if any) in relation to the proposal, respondents were able to tick more than one option.

**Table 2: Responses in detail**

| <b>Annex</b>   | <b>Description</b>   |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Annex A</b> | A summary of key issues raised by statutory consultees and the Council's response to those issues can be found at Annex A.   |
| <b>Annex B</b> | A summary of the comments received in favour of the proposal can be found at Annex B.  |
| <b>Annex C</b> | The frequently asked questions (FAQs) document has been updated to include the key questions raised during the engagement sessions (Annex C).  |
| <b>Annex D</b> | Consultation sessions were undertaken at Stanwell School. These sessions included parent and community drop-in events, a staff meeting, governor meeting and pupil engagement sessions. These sessions involved all stakeholders in the consultation process. A report on the outcome of the pupil engagement session can be found at Annex D. |
| <b>Annex E</b> | Estyn formally responded to the consultation. Their response can be found at Annex E.  |
| <b>Annex F</b> | The consultation document was referred to the Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee on 12 October 2023. The minutes of this meeting can be found at Annex F, where the Governing Body's proposal was endorsed.   |
| <b>Annex G</b> | Inaccurate media coverage of the proposal  |



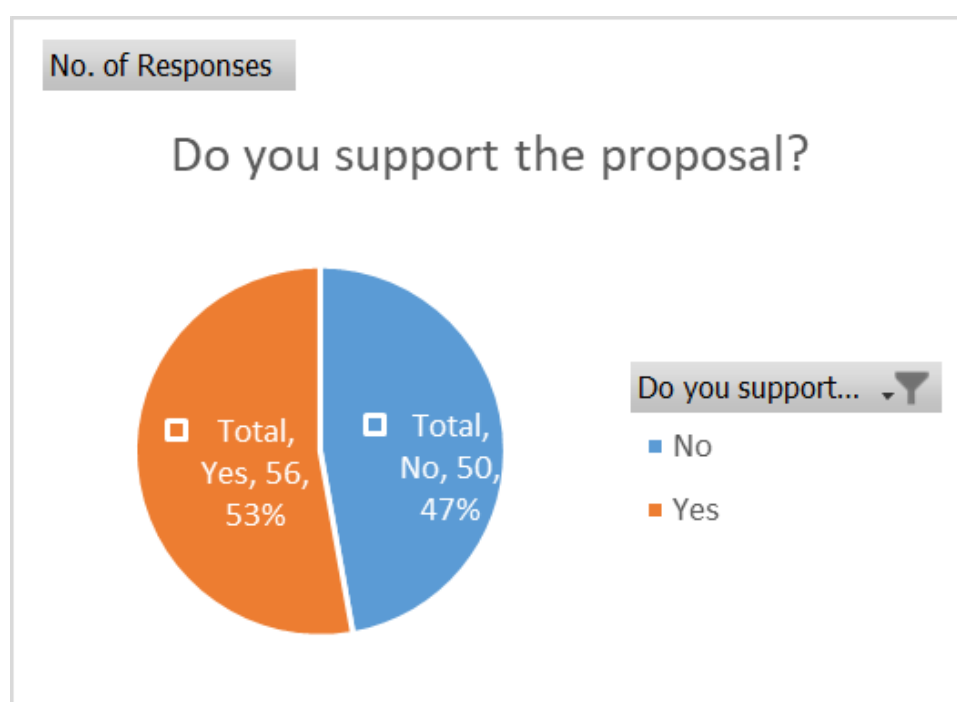
### 3.2 RESPONSES TO PROPOSAL TO CHANGE STANWELL FROM A FOUNDATION SCHOOL TO A COMMUNITY MAINTAINED SCHOOL

During the consultation period, 53% of responders were in favour of the Proposal and 47% opposed to the proposal.

**Table 3: Breakdown of consultation responses (Proposal)**

| Total (individual) responses: | Total in support |     | Total not in support |     |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
|                               | Number           | %   | Number               | %   |
| 106                           | 56               | 53% | 50                   | 47% |

**Chart 1: Split of responses supporting or not supporting the proposal.**



As Table 4 and Chart 2 below show, the majority of the largest group of respondents were parents or guardians, with a total of 45 responses of which 20 (44.4%) were in support of the proposal and 25 (55.6%) were not in support of the proposal.

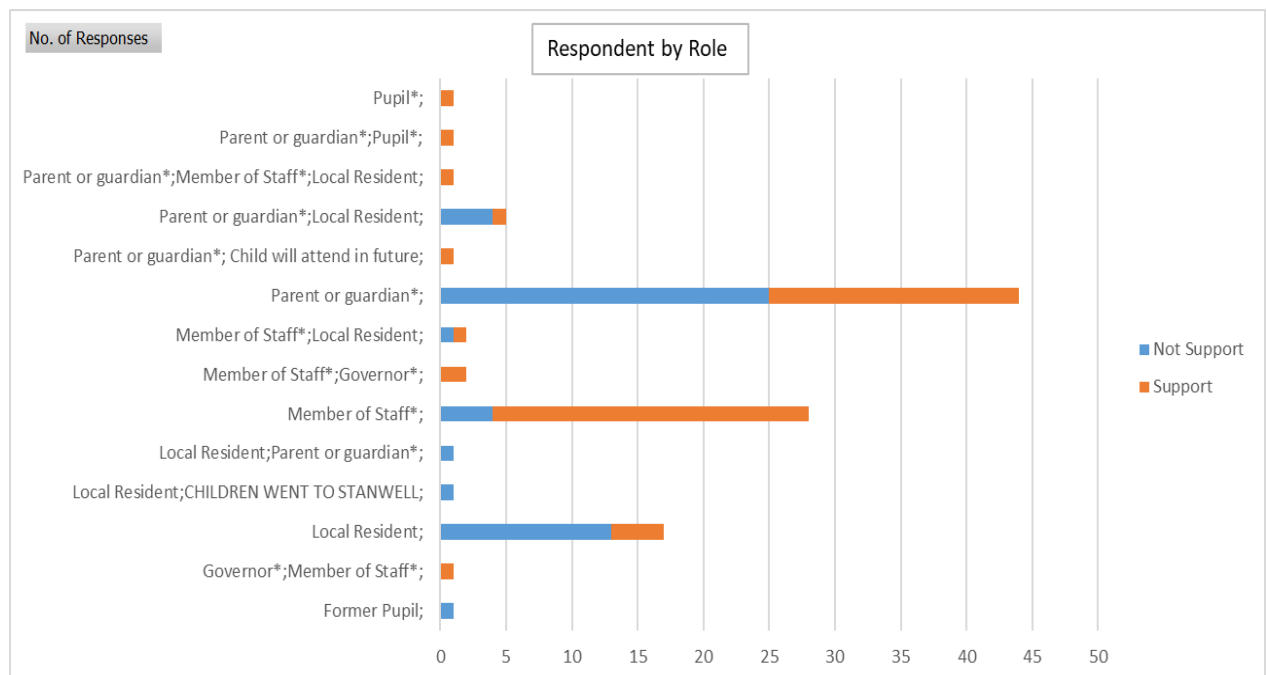
The next largest respondent group related to members of staff with a total of 28 responses, 24 of which were in support of proposal (85.71%) and 4 (14.29%) not in support of the proposal.

It should be noted respondents were able to tick more than one option (e.g. they could be a parent and a member of staff).

**Table 4: Breakdown of consultation responses by role**

| Respondent role                                      | Support    | Not support | % Support     | % Not Support |
|--|------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| Former pupil   | 0          | 1           |               | 100.00%       |
| Governor; member of staff                            | 1          | 0           | 100.00%       |               |
| Local Resident;                                      | 3          | 13          | 18.75%        | 81.25%        |
| Local Resident; Child will attend in future;         | 1          | 0           | 100.00%       |               |
| Local Resident; Children went to Stanwell;           | 0          | 1           |               | 100.00%       |
| Local Resident;Parent or guardian*;                  | 0          | 1           |               | 100.00%       |
| Member of Staff*;                                    | 24         | 4           | 85.71%        | 14.29%        |
| Member of Staff*;Governor*;                          | 2          | 0           | 100.00%       |               |
| Member of Staff*;Local Resident;                     | 1          | 1           | 50.00%        | 50.00%        |
| Parent or guardian*;                                 | 20         | 25          | 44.44%        | 55.56%        |
| Parent or guardian*;Local Resident;                  | 1          | 4           | 20.00%        | 80.00%        |
| Parent or guardian*;Member of Staff*;Local Resident; | 1          | 0           | 100.00%       |               |
| Parent or guardian*;Pupil*;                          | 1          | 0           | 100.00%       |               |
| Pupil*;  | 1          | 0           | 100.00%       |               |
| <b>Total Support and Not supporting</b>              | <b>56</b>  | <b>50</b>   | <b>52.83%</b> | <b>47.17%</b> |
| <b>Total Responses</b>                               | <b>106</b> |             |               |               |

**Chart 2: Split of consultation responses by role**



## 4. CONCLUSION

Following consideration of the responses received throughout the consultation period, the Governing Body has revisited the proposal to determine the likely impact on quality and standards in education, the local community and travel arrangements.

### 4.1 QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

Stanwell School was last inspected in February 2022. The overall inspection was very positive and highlighted significant strengths in teaching and learning, leadership, provision and standards, as well as providing three recommendations as outlined below:

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 Improve teachers' use of questioning to develop pupils' ability to think independently
- R2 Ensure that pupils get enough time during the school day to relax, socialise or pursue their own interests
- R3 Increase the range of opportunities that pupils have to practise their Welsh

In Estyn's response to the consultation (Annex E) they concluded that the proposal for Stanwell School to change from a foundation school to a community-maintained school from September 2024 is likely to maintain the standard of education provision in the area.

They stated that the Governing Body of Stanwell School has provided a clear rationale for the proposal in the consultation document. There is a detailed description and explanation of the proposal, and a projected timetable for the statutory procedures and for implementation of the proposal.

Estyn highlighted that the Governing Body has set out clearly and fairly the expected benefits and disadvantages when compared with the status quo. The main benefit is to secure improved financial sustainability and management for the school by coming back within the oversight of the local authority. There are also potential benefits around earlier certainty of school places, improved joint working with other schools and increased use of school facilities by the community. The main disadvantage will be the possible destabilisation of bringing support staff salaries into the council's single status pay equality arrangements. This is acknowledged as a potential risk by the Governing Body and referenced on page 4 of the [Consultation document](#). The Vale of Glamorgan Council have committed to provide Stanwell School and its staff with the necessary support to address any employment issues.

### 4.2 COMMUNITY IMPACT

A Community Impact Assessment was undertaken and published alongside the consultation document. The impact assessment identifies that the proposal would have a positive impact on the local community across 6 of the 8 measures assessed. The proposal would have a neutral impact on the local community across 2 of the 8 measures assessed. Overall, the proposal would have a positive impact on the local community.

If the school changes to a community-maintained status, it is intended that all existing services for pupils and the wider community would continue to run. The proposal would support improved opportunities via funding and shared initiatives for parents and the local community to access a community focused school, creating a closer community connection.

#### 4.3 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

The Council has a statutory duty to provide free school transport for pupils of statutory school age who reside beyond walking distance to the nearest appropriate school. This is a distance of 3 miles for secondary aged pupils in accordance with 'The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008'.

Under these proposals, there are no plans to change the existing policy on the transport of children to and from schools.

#### 5.4 PROCESS FOLLOWING CLOSE OF CONSULTATION PERIOD

The Consultation Report in the sub-section Key Dates under The Statutory Consultation Process Section (Table 9), listed the indicative dates for the statutory process. An updated table of key dates is detailed below:

**Table 4: Updated Key dates of the process**

| <b>Statutory Process</b>   | <b>Timescale</b>                   |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Issue consultation document  | <b>11 September 2023</b>           |
| Closing date for views on the proposals  | <b>23 October 2023</b>             |
| Consultation report considered by the Governing Body and published on the school and Council's website | <b>23 November 2023</b>            |
| Consultation report published on School and Council website  | <b>27 November 2023</b>            |
| Subject to approval, Statutory notice issued and formal written objections invited                     | <b>9<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b> |

| Statutory Process  | Timescale  |
|--|--|
| End of Statutory Notice Period                           | <b>6<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>  |
| Objection report published where objections are received | <b>February 2024</b>   |
| Decision notification                                    | <p><b>End February 2024</b> If no objections are received the Governing Body will determine the proposal.</p> <p><b>March 2024</b> If objections are received the matter is referred to the Councils Cabinet for determination</p> |
| Introduce change from                                    | <b>September 2024</b>  |

# 1. ANNEX A - A SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES RAISED BY STATUTORY CONSULTEES AND THE RESPONSES BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF STANWELL SCHOOL

The following summarises the key themes raised during the formal consultation period. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim.

## 1.1. ISSUES RAISED IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSAL:

---

### THEME 1

#### **Council determining funding distribution**

Some respondents felt that the proposal would result in the Council deciding the school's budget, which in turn would lead to sharing funding with other schools within the Vale of Glamorgan.

#### **Governing Body's response to the concerns raised**

Stanwell School has been a Local Authority Maintained School since 1998 and the schools' delegated budget is determined by Council's [Mainstream Schools Funding Formula](#). This formula has been developed and is reviewed in consultation with the Schools Budget Forum. This formula applies to all Local Authority maintained schools in the Vale of Glamorgan, including Stanwell School. Any change in the schools category would have no effect on the budget allocation the school receives. The School's budget is and will continue to be delegated to the Headteacher and Governors, as is the same for all schools in Wales. There would be no change to this as a result of the proposed change in category.

The school's budget is currently managed by the Governing Body with very limited oversight from the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Should this proposal come to fruition, Stanwell School would benefit from additional specialist financial support on budget management and procurement by the Vale of Glamorgan Council including shared best practice from other schools. It would also ensure the school is compliant and supported in meeting its fair funding requirements. The school would also benefit from support with cash flow, procurement, and access to Section 106 funds for capital projects.

As a community-maintained school, additional Capital funding streams would be available, subject to prioritisation linked to school condition surveys and other data, including the Council's long term asset renewal and capital investment scheme, capital bidding scheme and S106.

---

### THEME 2

#### **Stanwell School is advantaged by not utilising Council Support**

Respondents felt that the Governing Body of Stanwell School have managed to operate the school successfully without the Council's support and believe that increased involvement will lead to a decrease in efficiency, funding and educational outcomes for pupils.

### **Governing Body's response to the concerns raised**

Management and decision making would remain the responsibility of the headteacher and Governing Body and this would not alter with a change in category. The proposal would support additional resources and expertise being made available to the school, enabling more time to focus on learning and teaching. The proposal to change the school category would not impact on standards and the progress of pupils and staff at Stanwell school. The school senior leadership would maintain the same day to day management with no changes apart from the Vale of Glamorgan managing the school's admissions process. The school already work with the Council on admissions issues and the change would promote closer school to school working. This proposal would not change the school's catchment area, ensuring it remains a local school for local pupils, and transition arrangements would ensure that feeder school parents expectations of a place will not be impacted.

The planned proposal will have no impact on the curriculum. Stanwell School will continue with work to implement and embed the Curriculum for Wales as it sees fit. This curriculum was adopted by the school during the summer term 2022 and implementation started in September 2022.

The school is working closely the Vale of Glamorgan Council in addressing some of the current financial pressures, including those recently identified through its recent audit, alongside the pressures facing education given the current financial climate. From a financial perspective, the proposal seeks to support the school's longer-term financial sustainability.

A change of category to Community school would support Stanwell in working more closely with a number of stakeholders, including the Council, Welsh Government and other schools in order to further improve educational outcomes and mitigate a number of challenging external factors faced by education more generally with greater economies of scale.

---

## THEME 3

### **Parental concern in relation to admissions**

One respondent indicated that they had a child within a feeder primary school and another child due to begin Nursery over the next few years and was concerned that the youngest child would not be able to attend Stanwell School with their elder sibling.

### **Governing Body's response to the concerns raised**

As part of this proposal, the Council commits to establishing transition arrangements for those children currently in attendance at one of Stanwell's designated feeder

primary schools prior to the change of status. The transitional arrangements would cease for the year 6 transfer process to Secondary education in September 2030 when the last child under transitional arrangements leaves their feeder primary school.

The designated feeder schools are Albert, Evenlode, Sully and Victoria. Transition arrangements would form part of the admissions policy and would be subject to approval by the Councils Cabinet.

The Council will therefore retain the feeder primary school link for those children in attendance at a designated feeder primary school during the academic year 2023/2024. All children in the reception to year 6 age group of a designated feeder school during the 2023/2024 academic year would retain their feeder status. There are no catchment area changes proposed as part of this consultation.

In the long term, under the council's policy, residence within a school catchment area would ensure that local children are prioritised for entry to their local school. In most cases under current feeder school arrangements, most children in feeder schools are also resident in Stanwell's school catchment area so this would not have a significant impact on admissions to the school, however it would provide a better approach to admissions for those pupils living within the local community. Therefore a child applying with a sibling connection who also lived within a schools catchment area would have an excellent chance of being admitted to a school.

## 2. ANNEX B - A SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSAL.

This section provides the key themes raised during the formal consultation period by those in favour of the proposal. The following presents an overview of responses and are not exhaustive or intended to be verbatim.

---

### THEME 4

#### **Impact on learning outcomes**

One respondent indicated that research undertaken by a non-profit education organisation found that well-implemented community schools have shown better learning outcomes for schools and students.

#### **Governing Body's response**



We are very proud that Stanwell School has for many years consistently ranked in the top 3 schools in Wales for GCSE results and in the top 10% of all schools in the UK for A Levels. It was last inspected by Estyn in 2022 and achieved an outstanding report, as with all previous inspections. This commitment to excellence will continue on the part of the staff and governors and we look forward to welcoming new students and parents over the coming years who will continue to enjoy the huge range of opportunities presented to the young people in our care.

As the day-to-day operational management of the school would not change as a result of this proposal, the impact of working more closely with the Council, Welsh Government and other community-maintained schools would therefore only be positive. We are aware that the Vale of Glamorgan Council works closely with the governing bodies of its schools to ensure that standards are robust, that teaching and learning is of a high quality, and that leadership and governance is strong.

Both Stanwell and the Council work with Estyn and the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service to monitor the performance of schools and to support school improvement. Working together will also provide us with the support to continue our legacy of delivering great educational outcomes.

Estyn is the office of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales. It is a Crown body, established under the Education Act 1992. Estyn is independent of the National Assembly for Wales but receives its funding from the Welsh Government under section 104 of the Government Wales Act 1998. Estyn inspects quality and standards in education and training providers in Wales.

The Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSCJES) was established in September 2012. The Local Authority works with the Consortium to support and challenge all schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.

---

## THEME 5

### **Stanwell School would improve as a result of Council support**

Respondents suggested that if Stanwell School were to become a community maintained school, it would benefit from the Council's support in a number of areas including funding, greater working relationships and the wellbeing of pupils.

#### **Governing Body's response**

Stanwell school would benefit from working more closely with both the Council and other schools in order to ensure the best learning outcomes for all pupils. An example of this relates to supporting our more vulnerable learners. The school already refer some of our pupils to the Council's Social, Emotional and Mental Health Panel (SEMHP) and the Inclusion Team for support around attendance and exclusions. Our School would benefit from working more closely with other secondary schools and sharing data with the Council, thereby ensuring additional opportunities available to the school are maximised.

---

## THEME 6

## **Financial Management Monitoring and Support**

Respondents noted that if Stanwell School were to become a community-maintained school, that it would benefit from additional support in relation to finances and access to funding in future.

### **Governing Body's response**

Should this proposal come to fruition, Stanwell would benefit from additional specialist financial and procurement support, with greater access to specialist expertise from the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The school would also benefit from support with cash flow, procurement, and access to Section 106 funds for capital projects.

As a foundation school, it is currently the responsibility of Stanwell to ensure the school buildings are maintained and fit for purpose. The school is currently financially liable for any capital works, improvements and investments in the estate, in addition to regular maintenance and repair. As a community school, the responsibility for Stanwell's buildings would transfer to the Council and as a result, capital works identified through condition surveys would be prioritised and maintained from the Council's capital funding and asset renewal programme. This would help alleviate some financial and organisational pressures as the responsibility would lay with the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

---

## THEME 7

### **School will follow WG Procurement/Tendering Guidelines**

Respondents suggested that if the proposal were determined, it would lead to the school having to follow of Welsh Government guidelines more stringently moving forward.

### **Governing Body's response**

As a Governing Body we are already required to follow all Welsh Government guidelines and statutory legislation and are committed to doing so. This obligation would not change as a result of the proposal. Admissions are currently managed by the school and are done so in accordance with the Welsh Government Statutory Admissions Code: Stanwell has always been a non-selective comprehensive school. We are also required to adhere to employment legislation. The Governing Body currently employs the staff and outsources our HR support to a reputable private company. If we become a community school, then the Vale of Glamorgan Council would be available to provide Stanwell School with the necessary support to address any employment issues and would also support the Governing Body and staff with the transfer of contracts of employment for all staff to reflect the Council as the employer in law. We have recently signed up to the Vale of Glamorgan payroll and financial support services to provide some additional assurance in relation to our financial challenges. This change is as a result of Stanwell adopting the service level agreement offered however, rather than a result of any proposed change in categorisation.

---

## THEME 8

### **Providing better admissions policy**

Respondents felt that by Stanwell School becoming a community-maintained school and following the Council's admission policy, would be fairer and ensure the school was more accessible for local pupils.

#### **Governing Body's response**

We always ensure that we adhere to all legislation and statutory codes in place with regard to school admissions. As a foundation school, Stanwell currently determines its own admissions criteria. There are currently no coordinated admissions processes in place between Stanwell and the Council, as is the case with the majority of voluntary aided or controlled schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. This can lead to some unintended disadvantages to applicants when parents of pupils apply for and accept more than one school place and in doing so prevent another child from accessing a place promptly. The school currently operates a feeder school arrangement for entry to the school. It receives applications well in excess of the number of places allocated to pupils at the feeder primary schools during year 6 transfer stage. This could mean that pupils residing outside of the Vale of Glamorgan can access a place in a feeder primary school and have priority for school places over pupils living in the local community who have not accessed a place in one of Stanwell's feeder schools. The Vale of Glamorgan Council have committed to ensure that their schools serve their local community and their [school admission](#) arrangements reflect this commitment. There are no catchment changes proposed as part of this proposal. The schools published admission number for each year group is also higher than current and projected demand within the school's catchment area.

---

## THEME 9

### **Fair approach to feeder schools**

Respondents were supportive of the inclusion of transitional arrangements until 2030 as part of the proposal, which continues to prioritise children on roll at a feeder linked primary school.

#### **Governing Body's response**

Both the Governing Body and the Council are aware that decisions in relation to preferred secondary schools are often made when children are very young. To ensure that the impact of any proposed change to the category of Stanwell School does not impact on plans parents may have already made, transition admission arrangements would be put into place to honour the feeder arrangements currently reflected in Stanwell's admission policy and offer an additional layer of assurance. These transitional arrangements would cease for the year 6 transfer process to

Secondary education in September 2030 when the last child under transitional arrangements leaves their feeder primary school.

There is also no change to Stanwell's catchment area proposed as part of this consultation. The proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on any other schools in the local area as no change to the existing catchment area is proposed as part of this proposal. St Cyres school, which shares its catchment area with Stanwell is also consistently over subscribed for the year 7 transfer process.

In the long term, under the Council's policy, residence within a school catchment area would ensure that local children are prioritised for entry to their local school. In most cases under current feeder school arrangements, most children in feeder schools are also resident in Stanwell's school catchment area so this would not have a significant impact on admissions to the school, however it would provide a better approach to admissions for those pupils living within the local community.

---

## THEME 10

### **Provide better secondary experiences**

Respondents felt that if the proposal were successful, it would lead to greater working relationships and the sharing of best practice between Stanwell School and other schools within the Vale of Glamorgan. This would result in improved experience for pupils in areas such as pupil wellbeing and pastoral support.

### **Governing Body's response to the concerns raised**

Our school already works well with a number of other schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. We would however benefit from working more closely with other secondary schools and sharing data with the Council, thereby ensuring that additional opportunities available to the school are maximised, including leveraging economies of scale in managing challenges within the education system. The school already refer to the Social, Emotional and Mental Health Panel (SEMHP) and the Inclusion Team for support around attendance and exclusions to better support learners to access the full range of support mechanisms available, as outlined in the SEMHP Continuum.

## **3. ANNEX C - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.**

### **Will the school catchment area change?**

There are no current plans to change the school's catchment area. Any future changes to catchment areas would be outlined in a future annual admissions arrangement's consultation by Vale of Glamorgan Council.

### **Will the feeder school arrangements to the school cease from September 2024?**

The Council would establish transitional arrangements for children in attendance at a feeder primary school prior to the change in status. The Council's admission

arrangements will apply from September 2024 for children not eligible for these transition arrangements.

**What are the transitional arrangement for children currently in a feeder school prior to the change?**

The Council would establish transitional arrangements for children in attendance at a linked feeder school prior to the change in status. The feeder schools for Stanwell school are all within the catchment area for Stanwell and there is no proposal to change the catchment area for the school. The Council will therefore retain feeder primary school links for those children in attendance at a designated feeder primary school during the academic year 2023/2024. All children in the reception to year 6 age group of a designated feeder school during the 2023/2024 academic year would retain their feeder school status.

**When would the transitional arrangements cease?**

The transitional arrangements would cease for the year 6 transfer process to Secondary education in September 2030 when the last child under transitional arrangements leaves their feeder primary school. The feeder schools for Stanwell school are all within the catchment area for Stanwell and there is no proposal to change the catchment area for the school. The school would therefore continue to serve its local community.

**Would the year 6 transfer process for the September 2024 intake to the school be managed by the Council?**

The year 6 transfer process for September 2024 commences in September 2023 with offers of places made to parents on the 1 March 2024. Stanwell will therefore manage the year 7 intake to the school for the September 2024 intake.

**When would the Council manage the year 6 transfer process to the school?**

If the proposal is approved, the Council would manage the year 6 transfer process to Stanwell School for the September 2025 intake which commences in September 2024.

**How would in year admission requests/applications be dealt with and who administers admission appeals?**

Parents would need to apply for a [school place](#) via the Council. The Council would make an offer or decline a school place for Stanwell. The Council would also manage the appeal process for parents as they do for all Community maintained schools. All parents of year 6 pupils in Stanwell's feeder schools would be advised of the process they need to follow along with all other year 6 pupils in Vale of Glamorgan schools.

**Will the Council liaise with the school on an admission request/application?**

The Council will liaise with the school on all admission requests for the school, confirming numbers on roll and the availability of places as is the case with all admissions to community-maintained schools.

### **What would be the impact on staff at the school?**

The staff at Stanwell would be employed by the Council under the same terms and conditions of employment as they currently are. The Vale of Glamorgan Council would work with the school to ensure full consultation with staff and recognised Trade Unions takes place throughout the transfer process with regards to any employment related matters relevant to this consultation. Governors and the Council would ensure full compliance with all TUPE requirements that occur as a result of the change of category. The school will benefit from appropriate legal advice and support from the Council as part of the managing the TUPE contractual process.

Council officers in liaison with the school's human resource providers, would work closely with the school and governors to support staff as appropriate and to ensure regular and clear communication always takes place.

## **4. ANNEX D - CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.**

---

### **CONSULTATION EVENT WITH PUPILS FROM STANWELL SCHOOL AND ITS FEEDER PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

- An interactive workshop took place which gave pupils an opportunity to discuss and share ideas together.
- It started with a discussion on the meaning of consultation and why it was important to talk to pupils
- Agreement was reached on what made a good discussion/consultation
- The consultation purpose was then explained to pupils, including the background and the timeline for the activity.
- The pupils were divided into sub-groups to share and note their own ideas. The groups then merged to have further discussion on these ideas, based on the rules of engagement as agreed at the beginning of the session.
- Following receiving pupils' feedback, pupils were given information on the advantages and shortcomings noted in the consultation document; it was explained to them that their comments would be fed into a report on this session and that it would be presented to the council as part of the evidence gathered on this consultation.

Following the feedback pupils were given information on the advantages and shortcomings noted in the consultation document, they were reminded of the timeline, and it was explained to them that their comments would be fed into a report on this session and that it would be presented to the schools Governing Body as part of the evidence gathered on this consultation.

### **Stanwell School - Pupil responses**

#### **Advantages of the proposed plan**

- Helps the school financially; more financial stability/security because of revenue funding; better financial situation.
- 'In case of emergency – we have funding.'
- School does not have to think about budgeting, can focus on teaching curriculum; 'we could put the money we have toward something else;' more money to improve facilities.
- Will not have to take money away from vital spending e.g., repairs
- More money to improve wellbeing and quality of school experience.
- Improve facilities.
- Still being able to employ our own teachers.
- Stanwell can stay the same and not lose morals and status of high-quality education – stable
- No teachers have to be affected.
- Being able to interact with other schools.
- Pupils work closer with the council – more opportunities.
- Less time for staff to [have to] do admissions; frees up teacher resources.
- Increase lesson time.
- School trips
- Run by the council so more community [involvement]
- Networking/communicating with other schools.

#### **Possible disadvantages of the proposed plan**

- Less freedom over what we do now
- Less control? Potentially
- Loss of individuality
- Could be a distraction from SLT's attention to education and matters directly affecting pupils.
- Have to ask the council to change the school.
- Have to make bids; having to wait for bids for money to be approved.
- Increased delay in getting funds.
- Feeder school changes; long-established relationship with feeder schools may be affected
- Admissions system [the proposed change in 2030]
- Building becomes council owned.
- The publicity has caused concern – future students/parents.
- Uncertainty; off-putting
- Less autonomy
- Do foundation schools have more of a status?
- As government changes, will it allocate different sums? Will it be a stable flow of money? Yet, likely Labour government will likely allocate more funds [a concern that a change in government could impact negatively on the school and council's financial situation]

## Questions:

- Will the local authority have any control over how the school is run?
- Will we have less control over how we spend our money?
- Would there be a difference in how the budget is spend?
- Can the council reject bids for maintenance?
- Does the council have the power to override the bids?
- What decisions will not be ours?
- Does Stanwell's autonomy over the curriculum change?
- Does the council have an input in e.g. [learning] projects and how will that affect us?
- What is the day-to day changes for pupils?
- Would the amount of money we receive in our budget change?
- What happens until transition?
- Could there be a transition back in the future? Once you commit can you change back?
- Mr Mansfield says we have a recovery plan, how involved is the local authority in supporting that? (advice to senior leaders or headteachers)
- Will there be any effect on teachers – financially and in school?
- Would the budget change?
- What collaborative opportunities would be available? Why weren't they available before?
- What will the period before the transition look like?
- What would change about the admissions process? Will admissions be the same in terms of catchment area?
- What about emergencies?
- What is in it for the council? What benefits the council in this agreement?
- Will the government [council] have enough time to facilitate every school?
- Do the feeder schools have a voice in this?
- Why are we stopping feeder schools?
- Why didn't we do this before if it is so good?
- Will an effort be made to 'even out the playing field' in the sense of exam results, given the disparity of exam results from different schools?

## **Feeder Primary Schools – Pupil Responses**

### **Advantages of the proposed plan**

- Better financial state
- More financial support
- Support generally
- Maybe more experience with money?
- Will not be in debt so not affecting children's learning.
- Bigger school? And the finance to do it.
- More fundraising ideas
- Renting out facilities
- More resources; freeing up resources.
- More subject and more things to learn?
- They could make it more interesting.
- More support from the council
- More clubs, school trips, more teachers?
- Apply for more money.



- Better security
- More council involved (could be good or bad)

### **Possible disadvantages of the proposed plan**

- 2030 Stanwell trying for more students – more people, less space, more teachers less profit [leading to] possible strikes.
- Worried about transitional arrangements under new plan (worried about getting lost)
- Split up friends in 2030.
- In 2030 only people living in the catchment area [are eligible for admission to the school]
- More council involved (could be good or bad)
- Less freedom to make decisions?
- Will [other] schools miss out if Stanwell gets loads of funding?
- The school may get too big – many pupils arriving and it will get too busy
- The council might make decisions and make the school worse.
- The work might be harder.
- They might fire some teachers.

### **Questions**

- Will the timetable be affected?
- Will the school hours change?
- What happens to siblings in 2030?
- What happens to friends in current school who are outside of catchment area?
- How many other schools are community schools? Because if a lot of schools have become community school that must mean it is a good thing
- Who decides on the staffing?
- Can they go back to a foundation school if they want?
- How much say will the council have? E.g. future expansion, pupil size, equipment, facilities?
- Will it affect the way children learn?
- Who has the final say if they go forward with becoming a community school?
- Will more pupils come?
- Will the work be easier?
- Will pupil voice become less?
- Will the food be as good? Will the food be cheaper? Will the food be worse because it is cheaper?
- Will there be more projects for primary schools [relating to project that feeder schools currently undertake with Stanwell].

### **Observations**

- Stanwell pupils' responses were of a very high standard, they were extremely measured and mature in their whole approach to this consultation.
- The input from both the adults from the Council and the School during the sessions was also of a very high standard; whilst staff were present, they allowed pupils complete freedom to share their opinions in an open and honest manner.

## 5. ANNEX E – RESPONSE FROM ESTYN

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018, a copy of the consultation document was sent to Estyn.

### **Estyn’s response to the proposal by Stanwell School to change from a foundation school to a community-maintained school from September 2024**

#### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by His 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.

#### **Conclusion**

The proposal for Stanwell School to change from a foundation school to a community-maintained school from September 2024 is likely to maintain the standard of education provision in the area.

#### **Description and benefits**

Stanwell School has provided a clear rationale for the proposal in the consultation document. There is a detailed description and explanation of the proposal, and a projected timetable for the statutory procedures and for implementation of the proposal.

They have set out clearly and fairly the expected benefits and disadvantages when compared with the status quo. The main benefit is to secure improved financial sustainability and management for the school by coming back within the oversight of the local authority. There are also potential benefits around earlier certainty of school places, improved joint working with other schools and increased use of school facilities by the community. The main disadvantage will be the possible destabilisation of bringing support staff salaries into the council’s single status pay equality arrangements. However, this risk will be mitigated through the TUPE process and appropriate consultation with staff and trade unions.

The only alternative to becoming a community-maintained school is for Stanwell to continue as a foundation school. The school has recently received a negative audit report and has compliance issues which it is unable to address under the current financial arrangements. Since it already has a budget deficit, there is little option but for a change of status to secure the school’s future.

Since the proposal is simply a change of status from foundation school to community-maintained school, there is no impact on travel arrangements or accessibility of provision. The document details at length how the proposal has no impact on the school's roll or the rolls of other local schools. The school already draws the majority of its pupils from its catchment primary schools. There is no plan to change the catchment area. However, there are some parents living outside of the Stanwell School catchment area who place their children within catchment primary schools in order to ensure that they gain a place at Stanwell. A transitional arrangement has been agreed with the local authority so that any pupils in the Stanwell catchment primaries in September 2024 will be able to secure a place

at Stanwell, if that is what their parents wish, until September 2030 when the last of those pupils will reach Year 7. There is no impact on surplus places in the local authority since there is no change to the school's admission number.

The most important reason for the proposed change of status is financial and, consequently, the consultation document explains the financial situation in detail. It is clear that the school needs money to be spent to rectify compliance issues and improve its facilities and resources, as well as requiring better financial management. Returning to the oversight of the local authority is seen as the way to address all of these issues because, alongside its expertise in managing budgets, the local authority can also access funding streams which foundation schools cannot. However, the consultation document does not go into the details about how much needs to be spent and exactly where this will come from.

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

The proposal is about the governance and financial management of the school and, as such, is unlikely to have either a positive or negative impact on standards of education or provision. The school was last inspected in 2022 and the Governing Body summarises the main findings from each inspection area in the consultation document, explaining how leaders intend to maintain the school's high standards whether the proposal to change status is successful or not. The proposal has no impact on the curriculum or vulnerable pupils, including those with additional learning needs. A change of status would not disrupt learners' education in any way.

There are two ways that the proposal may be of benefit to standards and provision, although these cannot be assured in advance. Firstly, the school expects to work more closely with other local authority schools if the proposal goes ahead and this may benefit staff. Secondly, if the school is on a better financial footing as a result of the proposal, this has potential benefits for facilities and resources, which may in turn impact positively on standards.

## 6. ANNEX F – MINUTES OF THE LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON THE PROPOSAL

LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE Minutes of a remote meeting held on 12th October 2023.

### CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF CATEGORY OF STANWELL SCHOOL–

The report was presented by the Operational Manager for Strategy and Resources, the purpose of the report was to advise the Scrutiny Committee of the consultation on a proposal to change the category of Stanwell School from a Foundation School to a Community School. The report advised the Committee of the proposal presented by the Governing Body of Stanwell School to change its category from a Foundation School to a Community School with effect from September 2024. The decision to progress a proposal to change the category of Stanwell School from a Foundation School to a Community school was a decision to be made by the Governing Body of Stanwell School.

The reasons for the proposal were set out below:

- The change to a community school would improve financial management, ensure compliance and support long-term sustainability as well as impacting positively on the management of admissions within its current catchment area, as well as across the Vale of Glamorgan.
- It would allow for improved access to funding streams such as community focused schools grants and s106 funding, for example, via the Councils Capital Maintenance and School Investment Programme.
- The school would benefit from working more closely with other secondary schools via the Local Authority ensuring that all opportunities were available and leveraged appropriately. The consultation document further outlined the advantages and disadvantages of changing status. Due to the foundation status of this school, the Governing Body would lead on the proposal with support from the Local Authority.

The Governing Body were responsible for the determination of the proposal where no statutory objections were received in response to the publication of a statutory notice but where objections were received, the Local Authority would determine the proposal. The Consultation period ran from 11th September 2023 to 23rd October 2023.

Following the officer's presentation, officers provided the following advice in response to questions from the Committee:

- The consultation document included a Frequently Asked Questions section and contact details for Members to use if they had queries.
- Several engagement sessions had been undertaken as part of the consultation and parents and staff were regularly reminded to respond to the consultation via the Governing Body's newsletter, in addition to the wider community in the Penarth area via local publications.
- Although response levels to the consultation were not currently high, feedback from the school indicated significant engagement activities were being carried out and responses had been balanced and broadly positive.

- The internal audit into the Wellbeing Centre at the school had concluded with an update to the Governance and Audit Committee and a more comprehensive audit was due during the Autumn Term.

Councillor Birch (Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language) with permission to speak, thanked officers for their work supporting the school and advised that learning and facilities at the school should remain of a high standard. Councillors Hodges, Birch and Payne welcomed the proposal as a positive move for the school and the community. Having fully considered the matter, Committee subsequently RECOMMENDED – (1) T H A T the Governing Body's decision to undertake a consultation from 11th September 2023 to 23rd October 2023 on the proposal to change the category of the school from a Foundation School to a Community Maintained School be noted.

(2) T H A T the proposal be endorsed by the Committee.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) Having regard to the contents of the report on the Governing Body's decision to seek feedback through a formal consultation with prescribed stakeholders, prior to any publication of its proposal, as required by the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018.

(2) To ensure that the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee is consulted on the proposal as a prescribed stakeholder.

## 7. ANNEX G – INACCURATE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE PROPOSAL

The Governing Body have been made aware of number of inaccurate and inflammatory media and social media articles published with relation to this proposal. It has been noted that a significant number of negative responses to the proposal occurred immediately after these publications appeared, some of which have referenced the inaccuracies outlined in the publications concerned. These have been addressed in general terms in Annex A of this report and are also outlined briefly below.

### **The Council would interfere with the running of the school**

The Governing Body at our School proposed this consultation following several organisational challenges experienced during the academic year 2022/23. Our school identified that the school would benefit from additional support with financial management, compliance and long-term sustainability as well as working more closely with other secondary schools in the management of admissions. If this proposal is approved by the Governing Body, budget, staffing, curricula and building maintenance would all remain the responsibility of the school as with all other community schools. The Council would not involve itself with the day to day management of the school.

## **Funding currently comes direct from Welsh Government. The Council could reduce funding received by Stanwell.**

Stanwell School has been a Local Authority Maintained School since 1998 and the schools' delegated budgets are determined by Council's [Mainstream Schools Funding Formula](#). This formula was developed and is monitored in consultation with the Schools Budget Formula, and applies to all Local Authority maintained schools, including Stanwell. Any change in the school's category would have no effect on the budget allocation the school receives. The School's budget is and will continue to be delegated to the Headteacher and Governors, as is the same for all schools in Wales. There would be no change to this as a result of the proposed change in category.

We also identified that the proposal would allow for improved access to funding streams such as community focussed schools grants and s106 funding, for example, via the Councils Capital Maintenance and School Investment Programme.

## **Stanwell School received a 'pay out' from Vale of Glamorgan**

This is not the case. As with other schools experiencing deficit budgets for 2023, the School has been given access in advance to the following year's delegated funding which has allowed us the time to establish a three year recovery plan.

## **School redundancies**

In the summer of 2023, the school took action to implement a voluntary redundancy opportunity for full and part time staff, of whom 7 were teachers. The only reduction in the curriculum offer related to the change in staff is from five discrete Design Technology subjects (inclusive of Engineering) to three. Where other courses have not been run, this has been due to lack of student uptake or the ending of a qualification. Schools are required to take actions to balance their budgets and no school has been immune to funding cuts.

## **Parents who made huge financial sacrifices to buy homes within the catchment area of Stanwell School are to be told their right to send their children to Stanwell will end.**

There is no change to Stanwell's catchment area proposed as part of this consultation. Transition arrangements to honour feeder arrangements at Stanwell would be put into place until 2030. In the longer term, under the Council's existing policy, residence within a school catchment area would ensure that local children are prioritised for entry to their local school above those pupils who attend feeder primary schools for Stanwell but do not live within the catchment area. In most cases under current feeder school arrangements, most children in feeder schools are also resident in Stanwell's school catchment area so this would not have a significant impact on admissions to the school, however it would provide a better approach to admissions for those pupils living within the local community who do not attend a feeder primary school. Decisions relating to education provision have and will continue to always be made in the best interests of pupils.

## **Existing admissions process**

Admissions are currently administered by the School in accordance with the Welsh Government Admissions Code: Stanwell has always been a Local Authority non-selective comprehensive school and the current feeder school arrangement will remain in place until 2030 to ensure all pupils currently enrolled in them are guaranteed a place. After this date Stanwell will accept up to 324 pupils into Year 7: currently there are approximately 240 pupils in the Stanwell School Feeder Schools so, as with every year, Stanwell will accept a large number of pupils who are not from the feeder schools.