

Scrutiny Learning and
Culture
5th December 2019



3 December 2019

Agenda Item - 4
Supplementary Information
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All-Through School Cowbridge - Consultation Document.

- **Me:-** I have resided in Cowbridge since 1970 and later my two children attended Y Bontfaen Primary School (YBF) as does my grand-daughter currently.
- **Demand:-** The forecasts of future demand for 3-11 year-old places have been heavily criticised. The consequence of this will be that the future capital and recurrent costs of the proposed school will be heavily affected by unused excess capacity.
- **Benefits?:-** The document attempts to identify benefits of an 'all-through' school but those cited are very nebulous and often unquantifiable and no objective evidence is offered to support the points made or the consequences to the standards of education that may be attained by the pupils.
- **Location:-** The document gives no indication as to where the new build will be sited. It is therefore impossible to assess any of the consequences on the various facilities currently enjoyed by Comprehensive School students or the YBF pupils. There may well be important safety aspects affecting both these groups and all members of the local community.
- **Deficiencies at YBF:-** Inspections of YBF have noted high education standards at the school though have cited deficiencies in the condition of the school building and the LA has allowed a maintenance bill to escalate. A new build is long overdue.
- **Guardianship:-** A proposal to discontinue any form of Governor guardianship of the Primary component of an all-through school would render it without any formal line of communication with the financing body and introduce an additional level of management. The recent debacle of the LA to rectifying the damage caused by a burst pipe at YBF is evidence that such a proposal should not be implemented.
- **Other projects:-** A list is cited. Little attention has been given to these to enable meaningful consultation. The document itself is very confused and inconsistent as to which benefits and deficiencies might accrue to each project.
- **Way Forward:-** I conclude that the schools should not be amalgamated but rather that greater attention be given to a project to undertake a new build preferably of a design that would accommodate functional extension when required.

Yours faithfully, G. Harbour (Mr.)

Scrutiny Learning and Culture 5th December 2019

Agenda Item -4 - Supplementary Information - (2)

**Written Representation to Learning and Culture Scrutiny
Meeting on Thursday, 5th December at 5pm**

Agenda Item 4: Proposal to Increase the Number of Primary School Places in Cowbridge to Meet Increased Demand as a Result of Recent and Proposed Housing Developments Through the Amalgamation of Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School – Cabinet: 4th November, 2019.

There is no dispute that Y Bont Faen Primary School (“YBF”) requires a new school building, especially as the Vale of Glamorgan Council (“VOGC”) have allowed £537,100 in backlog maintenance costs to accrue.

However, my areas of concern with the proposal are:

1. No empirical evidence has been provided to support the assertion that an all through school will generate better outcomes in education.
2. The many safety issues associated with the CCS site for primary aged children.
3. The lack of and/or reduction in outside space for the primary children, compared to that currently provided on the YBF school site.
4. The proposed changes in governance of the primary school and the potential re-designation of the Head Teacher’s and other staffs’ roles within the primary phase.
5. The lack of financial evidence to support this proposal over other potential site options.
6. The marked inconsistencies in information being provided by the VOGC Directors and 21st Century Schools team during the Consultation meetings with governors, members of staff and/or parents/community. Information has changed depending on the target audience.

Finally, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg was made up of two federated schools, which shared a federated Head Teacher and federated governing body for many years prior to their amalgamation in 2015. By contrast, this proposal will, in effect, be an “experiment”.

As a governor and parent of YBF, I cannot support the proposal for the reasons given above.

Frances Blomeley
Governor
Y Bont Faen Primary School

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Agenda Item - 4 - Supplementary Information - (3)

Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Thursday 5th December 2019

Agenda item 4. Proposal to Increase the Number of Primary School Places in Cowbridge to Meet Increased Demand as a Result of Recent and Proposed Housing Developments Through the Amalgamation of Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School - Cabinet: 4th November, 2019.

I have many concerns about this proposal and wish to address a particular one at this time.

- Evidence exists of the need for a new building for Y Bont Faen Primary.
- No evidence exists for the **need** of a 3 - 19 school in Cowbridge.
- Pupils at Y Bont Faen Primary will be disadvantaged by not having the same primary school experience as those of other pupils who have been educated in the nurturing and age appropriate environment of a standalone primary.
- Education is measured by much more than just standards of achievement and the time for establishing learning skills and life skills is in the primary phase of education. No evidence is given in this proposal as to how an amalgamation/takeover would improve the high standards that Y Bont Faen puts on educating the whole child.

Submitted by
Carolyn Lyons
Community Governor
Y Bont Faen Primary School

Scrutiny Learning + Culture - 5th December 2019
Davies, Gareth J Supplementary Information - (4) Agenda Item 4

Subject: FW: Proposal to establish a new 2005 place 3-19 all through school, with 96 part-time nursery places, from September 2022 through amalgamating Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School

Switch-MessageId: e1fddb5e018a44fcada3cec3be3c2b72

From: Davies, Andrew RT (Cllr) <artdavies@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>

Sent: 05 December 2019 10:18

To: Rudman, Amy <arudman@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>

Subject: Proposal to establish a new 2005 place 3-19 all through school, with 96 part-time nursery places, from September 2022 through amalgamating Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School

Amy

Hope you're well!

I'm hoping to be at scrutiny this evening, but I've got to be in Carmarthen for 7.00pm so it is looking touch and go at the moment.

I have a number of comments I would like to make on the above, so on the assumption that I am unable to attend, would you be able to make sure the following are placed on the record please?

- While I welcome the Council's work to invest in new school buildings and facilities for primary school pupils in Cowbridge, I have a number of concerns in relation to these proposals.
- I strongly object to the proposed amalgamation of Y Bont Faen Primary School with Cowbridge Comprehensive School. Pupils of primary and secondary school age have vastly different needs and it is therefore imperative both schools retain separate head teachers, governing bodies and management structures.
- I have deep concerns about capacity on the Cowbridge Comprehensive site. If the Council does move forward with plans to move Y Bont Faen here, then a full transport plan must be produced. Currently, 1,400 people access the Comprehensive School each day, and I do not believe at present it can cope with an additional 400 people, especially young children. Measures must be put in place to ensure that these problems are addressed, and that all those accessing the site can enter and leave it in a safe and orderly manner.
- It is vital that any proposed move does not impact on neighbouring primary schools, including Llanfair, Colwinston and Llangan. The Council must therefore provide a long term guarantee that these schools will remain open and will not close as a result of these plans.

Thanks for your help.

All the best,

Andrew