

# Report

## Cabinet Member for Young People's Services

Part 1

12<sup>th</sup> August 2008

Item No.01

**Subject** **DEVELOPING WELSH MEDIUM SECONDARY EDUCATION  
ACROSS THE SOUTH EAST WALES CONSORTIUM (SEWC)  
AREA**

**Purpose** The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet Member of the commitment by the five Gwent Local Authorities to support the provision of Welsh medium secondary education at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw (YGG).

**Author** Amanda B Davies

**Ward** All

**Summary** The five Directors of Education in Gwent have worked with Officers in the South East Wales Consortium (SEWC), in an attempt to agree proposals of how Welsh Medium Secondary Education could continue to be delivered within a collaborative and shared arrangement. The background to the report identifies the current and forecast demand for Welsh medium secondary education in this area. Followed by three sections identifying;

- an agreed short / medium term solution – Phase One, YGG;
- a proposed short / medium term solution – Phase Two, YGG;
- the need for medium / long term planning.

**Proposal** To note the contents of this report, and

- **approve the short / medium term solution – Phase One, YGG;**
- **approve the proposed short / medium term solution – Phase Two, YGG;**
- **agree to continue joint working and medium / long term planning on the development of Welsh medium secondary education.**

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**Action by** James Harris – Head of Education, Resources & Planning

**Timetable** Immediate

**Signed**

## Background

Officers representing Newport City Council, Torfaen County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council have met as members of the South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) to discuss the provision of Welsh medium secondary education across the SEWC and Greater Gwent area specifically.

Newport pupils currently attend Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw (YGG) for Welsh medium secondary education, which is situated within the Torfaen Local Authority area, and they represent approximately 29% of the pupil population. This figure will inevitably rise in the future following the establishment of a second Welsh medium primary feeder school in Newport. The following table demonstrates the demand in the current and future pupil numbers at both Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw and the Welsh medium secondary school in the neighbouring Caerphilly area – Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni.

### Pupil Projections

	YGCRh - Caerphilly	YGG - Torfaen	Total
2007	1199	833	2032
2008	1240	870	2110
2009	1290	941	2231
2010	1336	1012	2348
2011	1408	1052	2460
2012	1420	1106	2526
2013	1458	1129	2587
2014	1491	1166	2657
2015	1594	1173	2767
2016	1658	1239	2897
2017	1723	1307	3030

An assessment of current and future needs for Welsh medium education identified significant shortfall in capacity for the September 2008 intake, this prompted an Agreement between the five Gwent Directors of Education to find solutions to meet the increasing demand. This Agreement is attached as an Appendix and identifies:

- An agreed short / medium term solution – Phase One, YGG
- Proposed Short / medium term solution – Phase Two, YGG
- The need to continue joint working and medium / long term planning

The three areas have been provided in more detail within the following Sections.

## SECTION ONE

### Agreed Short / Medium Term Solution – Phase One

An immediate review was required to ensure that YGG had sufficient capacity to receive the September 2008 intake. Discussions took place across the Consortium at Director level and the following solution was identified, included as **Phase One** within the Agreement between all Directors.

That Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire provide temporary additional demountable accommodation at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw for 2008/9 to meet the increase in pupil numbers and provide accommodation for Support Services, i.e. office provision. This will involve a 1 year lease arrangement for 2 double demountables and the anticipated costs are as follows (based on actual recent leasing contract):-

a) delivery and erection costs	£54,700.00	(Capital)
b) monthly hire rate	£5,764.00	(Revenue)
c) dismantle and removal	£43,700.00	(Capital)

Finance share on basis of Pupil Population taken from January 2008 (PLASC)

Torfaen	297	36%
Blaenau Gwent	194	24%
Monmouthshire	91	11%
Newport	237	29%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>100%</b>

Borough	%	2008/09			2009/10		
		Siting	Monthly Hire 7/12 (Revenue)	Total	Monthly Hire 5./12 (Revenue)	Remove	Total
Newport	29	15,863	11,700	27,563	8,357	12,673	21,030
Blaenau Gwent	24	13,128	9,683	22,811	6,916	10,488	17,404
Monmouth	11	6,017	4,438	10,455	3,170	4,807	7,977
Torfaen	36	19,692	14,527	34,219	10,377	15,732	26,109
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>54,700</b>	<b>40,348</b>	<b>95,048</b>	<b>28,820</b>	<b>43,700</b>	<b>72,520</b>

This report seeks approval to support the short / medium term solution – Phase One, YGG, a demountable at a cost of £27,563, to support the capacity issues within this school.

## SECTION TWO

### Proposed Short / Medium Term Solution – Phase Two

The attached Agreement reviews the future provision of Welsh medium secondary education and how joint funding may be applied from September 2009 for a proposed short / medium term solution – Phase Two, YGG. The following proposal is to be discussed, developed and negotiated with colleagues across the SEWC area.

That Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire develop a capital scheme for YGG for September 2009 onwards to meet the current projected demand to:-

- 1) Replace the existing demountables with permanent accommodation and provide kitchen and dining facilities to serve all pupils.
- 2) Refurbish and internally remodel the existing built environment to provide adequate support services and link the proposed and existing building.
- 3) Provide a physical link between the new build extension, Lilian Jones building and the existing main school building.
- 4) Remodel the external environment to create appropriate recreation space and adequate coach/car parking arrangements.

This report seeks approval in principle, to engage in further negotiations on proposals for the short / medium term solution – Phase Two, YGG.

## SECTION THREE

### Joint Working and Medium / Long Term Planning

That the Consortium (including Caerphilly and Cardiff) will monitor, plan and provide for the increased pupils wishing Welsh medium secondary education provision on a regional basis.

This report seeks approval to continue joint working and medium / long term planning with colleagues across SEWC.

## **Options considered / available**

### **Option One:**

This report seeks approval to support the short / medium term solution – Phase One, YGG, a demountable at a cost of £27,563, to support the capacity issues within this school;

And to continue joint working and medium / long term planning with colleagues across SEWC, for Welsh medium secondary education in the region.

### **Option Two:**

This report seeks approval to support the short / medium term solution – Phase One, YGG, a demountable at a cost of £27,563, to support the capacity issues within this school;

And subsequently, to engage in further negotiations on proposals for the short / medium term solution – Phase Two, YGG;

And to continue joint working and medium / long term planning with colleagues across SEWC, for Welsh medium secondary education in the region.

### **Option Three:**

None of the above, limiting the ability of this Authority to deliver Welsh medium secondary education.

## **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

Option Two is the preferred choice for the following reasons:

- Immediate provision is necessary to enable pupils to enter YGG in September 2008
- Further negotiation is required to ensure provision for pupils to enter YGG in September 2009
- Demand for Welsh medium secondary education provision is predicted to increase significantly over future years, requiring further collaborative working between South East Wales authorities to meet this demand
- Agreement has been taken by Officers across the South East Wales Consortium to negotiate and develop the service provision.

## **Sustainability and Environmental Issues**

This review of Welsh medium secondary education provision demonstrates an agenda which is collaborative with a basis for joint working to prepare for future service delivery demands.

## **Equalities Impact**

This service provision identifies the way forward for this Authority to further engage with colleagues and negotiate to meet the demands of Welsh medium secondary education.

## **Crime Prevention Impact**

None

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

I would support the proposed action, which is in accordance with the Council's legal powers under the School Standards and Framework Act, the Education Acts and the Local Government Acts. There is clearly an increasing demand for Welsh medium secondary education within Newport and the South East Wales region generally. The proposal to develop and extend the current collaborative arrangements and the existing school facilities at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw is consistent with the shared services agenda and the Council's own education policies. If the short / medium term proposals for

Phase 1 are not agreed, then there will be capacity and admission problems for the school. Therefore, there is no real option other than to agree the short term lease arrangements for the temporary demountable buildings. However, this will only provide a short term solution and, therefore, longer term planning needs to be commenced as soon as possible. This will give rise to other contractual issues that may require further legal input in due course, for example ownership of capital assets and funding commitments.

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

The anticipated spend within the report of £27,563 has arisen through a collaborative approach by 4 authorities to maintain provision of Welsh Medium Secondary Education at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. The expenditure is essential spending if the commitment of this Council to support this provision is to be put in place, and therefore the funding should be found from within existing capital resources allocated to Education.

## **Comments of Head of Human Resources and Policy**

There are no Human Resources implications contained in this report.

## **Consultation with Elected Members**

### **1. Comment Received from Councillor Langsford**

'I agree with the apportionment of the costs on a pupil basis for Newport which is 29%. One of the proposals is to approve the short / medium term solution – Phase One, YGG. Having checked the figures in the paragraphs headed 'Background' my reading of the report is that this is going to cost Newport (29%) £48593 and not £27563 as requested in the report. Admittedly the costs are over an academic year rather than a financial year but I would have thought that approval should be sought for the whole cost rather than until April of next year. If the author of this report is to be believed, the demountable is to be removed at the end of the academic year 2009 in which case, I believe that the demountable could be removed at the end of July which would save one month's rental of £5764. For Newport this would mean £1672.'

'It is noted in the report that the pupil numbers going from Newport will inevitably rise in the future following the establishment of a second Welsh medium primary feeder school and this is borne out by pupil projections at YGG. Whilst I appreciate that the figures contained within that table are not all Newport pupils the percentage of Newport pupils will inevitably rise as well. When considering the capital scheme of £10M over a five year period this needs to be taken into consideration because I have a sneaky feeling Newport's share will increase.'

### **Response by Education Planning Manager**

"The full costs for the demountable are spanning two financial years, and the Authority operates within an annual funding cycle. With this in mind, I have framed this report to seek approval for the costs within the current financial year of £27,563. The Education Capital Programme Report for 2009 / 2010 in March 2009 will seek approval for the second tranche of funding of £21,030 within the next financial year."

The Education Planning Manager has agreed to liaise further with Councillor Langsford regarding his concerns.

### **2. Comment Received from Councillor Poole**

'I am astonished to find there is only one item on the agenda for the biggest portfolio in the authority.'

Although I am not happy with the short term solution - needs be as needs must. It was never the intention of the Gwent Consortium to pass capital around from authority to authority. I know because I set it up and perhaps Torfaen need reminding of that.

The medium to long term solution is for a Welsh medium secondary school for South Gwent. With the growing popularity of Welsh education and Torfaen's attitude I think you should be looking into setting up an institution asap.'

### **Response by Education Planning Manager**

"The short term solution provides Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw with the necessary facilities to support the admission of additional pupils in September 2008. The South East Wales Consortium (including Caerphilly and Cardiff) have agreed to continue the joint working and collaboration on the provision of Welsh medium secondary education in the region. The demand is predicted to increase and the long term planning will incorporate a regular review of forecast numbers and current capacity across all Authority areas in the region. Option Two is the preferred choice within the body of this report supported by reasons for that recommendation, which include reference to the collaborative working and long term planning to support the service provision."

### **3. Comment Received from Councillor Debbie Wilcox**

"I welcome the central premise of the report and as a Welsh speaker myself I declare that I would want Newport to fully contribute to the opportunity for bi-lingual education for all of our young people. The planned opening of Ysgol Ifor Hael clearly demonstrates that Newport has previously shown sound judgement in preparing for Welsh medium education. However there are aspects of this report that concern me and that I would wish to comment upon further.

The provision of demountable classrooms should not be seen as an ideal solution to any teaching and learning environment and I am glad to see that option two talks about this as merely a temporary solution. I would therefore urge the Cabinet Member to ensure that the longer term delivery of a permanent solution alluded to in the report is delivered as soon as possible. The new administration has inherited an Estyn accredited first class Education department from the previous Labour-led administration and I would not want any aspect of their work to be put under pressure or negated by the current decision makers which may lead to a diminution of standards for the young people of Newport.

This brings me to my second point and really exemplifies the above- I note the Head of Finance's comments where she writes:

*The anticipated spend within the report of £27,563 has arisen through a collaborative approach by 4 authorities to maintain provision of Welsh Medium Secondary Education at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. The expenditure is essential spending if the commitment of this Council to support this provision is to be put in place, and therefore **the funding should be found from within existing capital resources allocated to Education.***

If the sum of £27,563 has to be allocated from the **existing** capital resources within the Education budget then what other provision across the city will have to be forgone in order to pay this amount? Will other projects will now have a lower ranking order of priority in order to accommodate this spend? Will there be a political input into this decision if re-ordering of priorities are necessary? Will these decisions come to the OSF for a discussion or will it be determined by officers and/or the Cabinet Member? "

### **Response by Education Planning Manager**

"The provision of demountable classrooms is phase one of the short / medium term solution to support the increased demand for Welsh medium secondary education in September 2008, and this is designed around a temporary lease agreement. Section Two within the body of the Report identifies principles upon which to engage with Consortium colleagues for phase two of the short / medium term solution, one of which is to replace the existing demountables with more permanent accommodation. This report is seeking approval to engage in further negotiations on proposals for the short / medium term solution for phase two at the Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. Discussions at Director level across the Consortium area are on the principles for phase two as part of the joint working and collaboration for future service provision.

"Within the current approved Education Capital Programme there are savings which have arisen as a result of actual costs now being identified. As any savings become available within year, they are re-allocated according to a priority needs assessment at that time.

The Education Capital Programme identified priority listings, which remain in force, for specific subject areas, such as, toilet refurbishments and security fencing, formulated through a comprehensive survey.

This report seeks Cabinet Member approval for that expenditure.

The Cabinet Member has the necessary authority to make decisions on the Education Capital Programme for all projects under £50,000."

## **Background Papers**

**AGREEMENT - DEVELOPING WELSH MEDIUM SECONDARY ACROSS THE SOUTH EAST WALES CONSORTIUM (SEWC) AREA**

On 4 April 2008 colleagues representing Torfaen County Borough Council, Newport County Council, Monmouthshire County Council and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council met at County Hall in Cwmbran to discuss the provision of Welsh medium secondary education across the SEWC and Greater Gwent area specifically. The Director of Education and Leisure for Caerphilly was unable to attend but had already contacted the Corporate Director Lifelong Learning and Leisure for Monmouthshire in advance of the meeting confirming his support to a collaborative approach in the medium/long term. The outcome of the meeting was the following agreement:

**A General Principles**

- 1 That Welsh Medium Secondary Education will be delivered on a collaborative and shared arrangement.
- 2 That Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Newport will monitor carefully the demand for Welsh Medium Secondary Education, plan and provide accordingly in the short/medium term. This will be done through the Consortium (including Caerphilly and Cardiff) in the medium/long term should the demand continue to increase as projected.
- 3 That in developing Welsh Medium Secondary Education the Consortium will give due regard to geographical spread to enable travel times for students to be kept to a minimum.
- 4 That the Consortium will ensure collaborative working between all schools offering Welsh Medium Secondary education to provide appropriate and suitable pathways 14-19.
- 5 That consideration leading to resolution will need to be given to the following areas to support collaboration:
  - 5.1 Admissions policy/and catchment areas
  - 5.2 Ownership of shared facility
  - 5.3 School Governance arrangements
  - 5.4 Welsh Assembly Government capital funding.
  - 5.5 A detailed capital scheme to achieve a 1200 place school at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw (YGG) in the short/medium term.
  - 5.6 To assess the need for additional secondary provision across the consortium area in the medium/long term
- 6 That an Officer Task and Finish Group be established to look at these work streams.
- 7 That revenue costs should fall to the host authority.

**B Funding Principles**

- 1 That capital funding (expansion and fit for purpose) will be proportionate to the number of pupils in any agreed regional facility
- 2 That Torfaen, Newport, Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent's commitment will be along this principle but with a mechanism to review and adjust contribution in line with any changes in pattern of demand. This is working on the assumption that demands for a third school will come "on stream" in the medium/long term and that Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw will be developed as a 1200 place school in the short/medium term.

## C Pupil Projections

1 That the agreed pupil projections are those given below:

	Caerphilly	YGG	Total
2007	1199	833	2032
2008	1240	870	2110
2009	1290	941	2231
2010	1336	1012	2348
2011	1408	1052	2460
2012	1420	1106	2526
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2 That the above pupil projections do not take into account increased demand that will be generated from additional primary provision being established across the Greater Gwent area:

- Monmouthshire doubling of its capacity.
- Newport – new school September 2008 projected numbers on roll included in the above.
- BG – numbers currently constant but scope for possible expansion in new premises.
- Caerphilly – Above projected numbers exclude effects of 2 additional schools in September 2008.
- Torfaen – considering a third Welsh primary school.

## D Current Capacity

That the current capacities of Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw (Torfaen) and Cwm Rhymni (Caerphilly) using new WAG capacity methodology is 857 and 1447 respectively. **Total: 2304**

## E Agreed Short/Medium Term Solution (YGG)

### • Phase 1

That Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire provide temporary additional demountable accommodation at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw for 2008/9 to meet the increase in pupil numbers and provide accommodation for Support Services, i.e. office provision. This will involve a 1 year lease arrangement for 2 double demountables and the anticipated costs are as follows (based on actual recent leasing contract):-

- |                                |            |           |
|--------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| a) delivery and erection costs | £54,700.00 | (Capital) |
| b) monthly hire rate           | £5,764.00  | (Revenue) |
| c) dismantle and removal       | £43,700.00 | (Capital) |

### Pupil Population January 2008 (PLASC)

Torfaen	297	36%
Blaenau Gwent	194	24%
Monmouthshire	91	11%
Newport	237	29%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>100%</b>

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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>54,700</b>	<b>40,348</b>	<b>95,048</b>	<b>28,820</b>	<b>43,700</b>	<b>72,520</b>

- **Phase 2**

That Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire develop a capital scheme for YGG for September 2009 onwards to meet the current projected demand to:-

- 5) Replace the existing demountables with permanent accommodation and provide kitchen and dining facilities to serve all pupils.
- 6) Refurbish and internally remodel the existing built environment to provide adequate support services and link the proposed and existing building.
- 7) Provide a physical link between the new build extension, Lilian Jones building and the existing main school building.
- 8) Remodel the external environment to create appropriate recreation space and adequate coach/car parking arrangements.

An example of a possible capital scheme costing £10m with a development programme of 5 years to minimise the annual capital burden to each authority is given below. However, this will be reviewed and developed by the cross authority task and finish group for appropriateness and cost effectiveness prior to submission for political approval within the agreed timescale.

Borough	%	Total Liability	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
Torfaen	36	3,600,000	720,000	720,000	720,000	720,000	720,000	3,600,000
Newport	29	2,900,000	580,000	580,000	580,000	580,000	580,000	2,900,000
Blaenau Gwent	23	2,300,000	460,000	460,000	460,000	460,000	460,000	2,300,000
Monmouthshire	12	1,200,000	240,000	240,000	240,000	240,000	240,000	1,200,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>

**F Agreed Medium / Long Term Solution**

That the Consortium (including Caerphilly and Cardiff) will monitor, plan and provide for the increased pupils wishing Welsh medium secondary provision on a regional basis in line with the principles above.

**G Next Steps**

- 1 That the Directors of Education for Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire agree to:
  - recommend to their members to support the short/medium term arrangements (i.e. YGG - Phase 1 and 2);
  - recommend to their members to support the medium/long term solution (i.e. SEWC collaboration)
  - identify their representative to join a Task and Finish Group to complete the work streams identified at 5.1 to 5.6. Meetings to commence from April 2008 and organised by Torfaen.

- write to the parents of children attending their Welsh medium feeder primary schools by the end of April 08 clarifying the situation, responsibilities and the agreed way forward.
- seek political approval for this agreement and the short/medium term solution in particular from their new council by the end of June 2008.
- seek political approval to short/medium term capital scheme to develop Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw from their new council by the end of September 2008 with an implementation date of September 2009.

2 Torfaen will cancel the appeals arranged for 14 April 2008 and contact all parents on Thursday 10 April 2008 to inform them that their children will be admitted. If each Director (Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Newport) fax a signed copy of this agreement by the close of play on Wednesday.

3 Torfaen will place an order for a 1 year lease of the necessary temporary accommodation (with the option to extend for a further year if each authority approves a capital scheme to develop YGG) to be paid for according to the split given above on receipt of the three signed agreements.

**I agree to the approach, commitments and timescales laid out in this agreement.**

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Designation: .....

Authority: .....

Date: .....

**TORFAEN POSITION**

If agreement for the short/medium term solution to develop YGG is not approved by each Authority in June or September 2008, Torfaen will not participate in any further collaboration with regard to secondary Welsh medium provision. The current admission arrangements and over subscription policy will continue and the accommodation capacity fixed at 857 (PAN 145) less any adjustment due to the removal of demountable accommodation on structural and health and safety grounds.

Date: 7 April 2008