

# Report

## Leader of the Council

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### Part 1

Date: 20 June 2018

Item No:

**Subject School Reorganisation Proposal – Establishment of a Learning Resource Base at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School**

**Purpose** To move to formal consultation on a school reorganisation proposal “to establish a generic 10-place Learning Resource Base class for pupils aged between 4 years and 11 years with additional learning needs at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School with effect from April 2019”

**Author** Education Service Manager

**Ward** Caerleon

**Summary** This report makes reference to the replacement school build project that is currently underway at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme. The new building will benefit from an additional classroom space which it is proposed is used to create a generic 10-place Learning Resource Base to accommodate pupils with additional learning needs for whom a full-time mainstream placement is not deemed suitable.

This proposal supports the increasing demand for specialist education provision across the city of Newport, a need which has grown significantly over the past 5-10 years. There is currently no such primary Learning Resource Base provision within the Caerleon or St Julian’s cluster areas. This proposal will therefore benefit pupils living locally but is not exclusive to those living within this cluster area. It can be accessed by pupils across the city to support specific education needs in an appropriate and secure environment.

The report recommends moving to a period of formal consultation on this proposal in accordance with the requirements of the statutory School Organisation Code.

**Proposal** To move to a period of formal consultation on a school reorganisation proposal to establish a generic 10-place Learning Resource Base class for pupils aged between 4 years and 11 years with additional learning needs at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School with effect from April 2019

**Action by** Chief Education Officer

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Strategic Director - People
- Education Senior Management Team

- Senior HR Business Partner
- Senior Finance Business Partner
- Schools Resources Manager
- Headteacher, Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School
- Chair of Governors, Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School

**Signed**

## **Background**

The Council is committed to providing Learning Resource Base facilities in all new school builds as this supports a more inclusive approach for pupils with additional learning needs. There is also a desire to move to a position where there is a least one Learning Resource Base class in each cluster of primary schools. There is currently no such provision within the Caerleon cluster, or in the neighbouring St Julian's cluster.

In order to support teaching pupils with additional learning needs where full-time mainstream education is not deemed appropriate, the Local Authority has numerous Learning Resource Bases across the City, hosted by individual schools. These Learning Resource Bases are attached to mainstream schools and provide learning environments that have fewer pupil numbers with enhanced adult ratios. The Learning Resource Bases are generic in nature and meet the needs of pupils with a range of difficulties. The ethos is to provide targeted support to the individual pupils based on their needs with the intention of integrating the pupil back into mainstream classes as appropriate. There is an on-going demand for primary Learning Resource Base placements across Newport.

Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School is a 1.5 form entry school with a published admission number of 45 for the Reception to Year Six groups. There is also a 24 place nursery class which can accommodate a maximum of 48 children over either a morning or afternoon session. The school is currently subject to a re-build project funded through Band A of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme. The Learning Resource Base class space is additional provision available through the design of the new school building.

This proposal will not have any detrimental impact on mainstream education provision at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School, and in fact it is considered that there will be long term benefits for both the school and the wider community. This report therefore requests permission to launch a school reorganisation proposal in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. This proposal will commence with a period of formal consultation.

## **School Organisation**

Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School was established in January 2013 following the amalgamation of the former Caerleon Lodge Hill Infant School and Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary Junior School. The original schools operated from separate school buildings a short distance from each other and each benefitted from its own dedicated facilities. The amalgamated primary school has continued to operate out of the two separate buildings with Foundation Phase classes delivered from the former Infant school and Key Stage 2 classes from the former Junior school. The primary school was established as a 1.5 form entry school with capacity for 315 pupils of statutory school age. There is also an attached nursery class with provision for 48 part-time places delivered over either a morning or afternoon session.

The existing school buildings are in poor condition and when inspected as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools survey in 2010 were judged to be in condition category C overall, on a scale of A (excellent) to D (poor). This survey placed the school as the first worst primary school across the Newport school estate and thus a replacement programme was prioritised under Band A of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme. The re-build project is now underway and will provide a single unified condition category A school, meaning that all pupils and staff will become truly amalgamated by relocating from their existing buildings into a new 21<sup>st</sup> Century school facility. The new learning environment will have a positive impact on learner outcomes and on staff morale. The build programme is due to be completed in October 2018 and pupils will transfer from the existing accommodation following this. All pupils will be attending the new school by January 2019 at the very latest.

## **Quality & Standards**

### **Standards:**

The Council firmly believes that this proposal will not have any detrimental impact on standards at the school. The proposal will have a positive impact on the provision of specialist school places within the Caerleon cluster and across the wider city area. The new school building will be well-equipped to deliver a full curriculum for mainstream pupils and pupils with additional learning needs.

Establishing the Learning Resource Base within the primary school will not have any detrimental impact on mainstream provision, and the advantages of the proposal can be outlined as follows:

- Creation of a primary Learning Resource Base within the Caerleon cluster;
- Increased availability of places to accommodate pupils who require supported mainstream placements;
- Increased opportunities for pupils accessing supported provision to reintegrate into mainstream classes;
- Effective use of space within the new school building;
- Better use of resources;
- Increased opportunities for staff development;
- Improved parental and community engagement.

## **Human Resources Issues**

There may be staffing implications for Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School in terms of appointing any additional teaching and support staff necessary for the Learning Resource Base. This can be managed effectively through existing staff recruitment arrangements.

## **Governance Issues**

There will be no changes to school governance arrangements as a result of this proposal. The governing body will continue in its current form.

## **School Reorganisation Process & Timelines**

All school reorganisation proposals are taken forward through a statutory consultation process in accordance with Welsh Government's statutory School Organisation Code. This entails the following steps and approximate timescales:

Decision to move to Formal Consultation	June 2018
Formal Consultation	July 2018 – September 2018
Decision to move to Statutory Proposal	October 2018
Publication of Statutory Proposal	November 2018
Final Determination of Proposal	December 2018
Implementation of Proposal	April 2019

## **Financial Summary**

The total cost of the re-build project is estimated to be approximately £6,392,000, funded jointly by the Council and Welsh Government through Band A of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme. This can be presented as a cost of approximately £18,315 per full time equivalent pupil place, including the Learning Resource Base.

There will be an increase in whole authority staff costs as additional staff will be required to appropriately support the Learning Resource Base class. The proposal will however provide additional supported placements across the city for pupils with additional educational needs and will potentially enable some pupils to be taught at schools nearer to their home, thus reducing home to school transport costs.

An amount of £64,000 is allocated to host school budgets to meet the costs associated with operating a 10-place Learning Resource Base. In addition, the school will receive the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) costs for each pupil who is allocated a place in the base. This AWPU funding is based on the age of the individual pupils placed at the provision. This additional funding will need to be met via the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) but is likely to be offset by savings that will accrue in relation to the matrix funding that is currently allocated to support mainstream placements. At present, as pupils have yet to be allocated to the new provision, the total value of this anticipated recoupment cannot be quantified.

The funding allocated to the provision, including the AWPU element, will be sufficient to meet the costs of operating the Learning Resource Base, and includes those associated with the employment of a Teacher and two Teaching Assistants (at Level 3 and Level 2 respectively). These costs are estimated to be £82,905 based on staff at the top of their respective pay scales as at September 2018.

## Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Demand for provision diminishes	L	L	This is unlikely, although the school could be adapted to accommodate pupils with other additional learning needs from within the special school sector.	Chief Education Officer
Demand for provision increases	L	L	The Acting Assistant Head of Education (Inclusion) will continue to plan for future provision across the City.	Chief Education Officer

\* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015  
 Council Improvement Plan  
 Education Service Plan

## Options Available and Considered

Option 1: To provide the new school as per the arrangements for the existing school, ie., without a Learning Resource Base class. This option would not however assist in increasing the number of places available across the City to support children with additional educational needs.

Option 2: To establish a generic Learning Resource Base class at the school for pupils aged between 4 years and 11 years with additional learning needs. This will be accessible by pupils across the city and will support pupils with additional educational needs to be accommodated within mainstream environments. The generic nature of the provision means that access to the base will be determined accordingly to need at the time of consideration. There will also be opportunities for re-integration into mainstream classes.

Option 3: To establish a Learning Resource Base class at the school for pupils aged between 4 years and 11 years with specific additional learning needs. Whilst this will be accessible by pupils across the city, it is possible that the specific nature of the base will lead to some places remaining vacant for periods of time.

## Preferred Option and Why

The preferred option is Option 2. This supports the Council's vision for a generic Learning Resource Base class to be established in all clusters across the city and in all new school builds and will increase the opportunities for children with additional learning needs to attend a primary school local to their home address.

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

The financial summary details the pressure on the revenue budget. The funding of £64,000 plus the AWPU for the LRB places is part of the total ISB, however there will be savings year on year as a result of being able to reduce individual classroom support in mainstream which will contribute towards the revenue costs. This will therefore move resources from some existing schools into this one to reflect the additional pupils here. It could therefore require savings to be made in those schools that might lose funding. At a time when all school budgets are under severe strain, the introduction of new LRB's potentially adds to these funding challenges at individual school level.

There is approved capital budget for the project as set out in the financial summary. Early work will need to take place between Norse and the Education service to ensure that the costs of the project are fully costed and within the budget.

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

The proposed action is in accordance with the statutory school reorganisation procedures set out in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code. The proposal to establish a Learning Resource Base at the new Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School is a regulated alteration and, therefore, has to be the subject of formal statutory consultation under the Code. In accordance with the statutory procedures, a detailed consultation document must be prepared setting out the educational reasons for the proposals, and meaningful consultation must be carried out with key stakeholders, including children and young people, who are likely to be affected by the changes. The consultation document must allow at least 42 days for response, with at least 20 of these being school days. At the end of the formal consultation period, and in the light of any representations or objections received, the Council will then consider whether to proceed with the proposal and issue the necessary statutory notices. Because the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is a Local Authority appointed member of the School Governing Body, then she has a "personal interest" in this matter and, therefore, all decisions relating to this school reorganisation proposal will be taken by the Leader.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

The proposed new Learning Resource Base at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary offers multiple sustainable development gains which are identified in the report. These include: *supporting the increasing demand for specialist education provision across the primary school sector and enabling pupils to attend a school more local to their home address*; increased availability of places to accommodate pupils from across the city who require supported mainstream placements; increased opportunities for pupils accessing supported provision to reintegrate into mainstream classes; more effective use of space within the new school building and improved parental and community engagement. *The proposed development supports the "A prosperous Wales", "A more equal Wales" and "A Wales of cohesive communities" Well-being Goals. In addition this proposal supports the Newport City Council Well-being Objective "To improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities".*

There are no human resources implications at this stage.

There would be future staffing implications at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School as a result of this proposal, in terms of appointing the employees required to support the additional pupils. There may also be a requirement for the Governing Body to review the pay ranges of members of the school leadership team during that time, in line with policies and procedures.

## **Local issues**

## **Scrutiny Committees**

None

## Equalities Impact Assessment

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act is not overly prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take to ensure due regard, although it does set out that due regard to advancing equality involves: removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

A Fairness & Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) has been developed to support the decision making of this stage of the proposal. If the proposal is taken forward the FEIA will be updated at each decision stage and published on the web site.

## Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Children and Young People will be consulted as part of the statutory formal consultation process.

## Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Report writers need to indicate how they have considered the five things public bodies need to think about to show they have applied the sustainable development principle put into place by the Act. You will need to demonstrate you have considered the following:

- Long term: the importance of balancing short- term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long – term needs ***by supporting the increasing demand for specialist education provision across the primary school sector and enabling pupils to attend a school more local to their home address.***
- Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help us meet our objectives ***the need for specialist education provision has grown significantly over the past 5-10 years and there is currently no primary Learning Resource Base provision within the Caerleon or St Julian's cluster areas. The proposal will therefore benefit pupils living locally but will not be exclusive to those living in these areas. The new provision will be available to be accessed by pupils living across the city to support specific education needs in an appropriate and secure environment. This will enable children to attend a school more local to their home address.***
- Integration: Consider how the proposals will impact on our wellbeing objectives, our wellbeing goals, other objectives or those of other public bodies ***a formal statutory consultation will be carried out and supported at each stage by a FEIA to consider impact. This proposal supports the "A prosperous Wales", "A more equal Wales" and "A Wales of cohesive communities" Well-being Goals and has no adverse effect on any of the other Well-being Goals. In addition this proposal supports the Newport City Council Well-being Objective "To improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities".***
- Collaboration: have you considered how acting in collaboration with any other person or any other part of our organisation could help meet our wellbeing objectives ***a formal statutory consultation will be carried out with the opportunity for engagement with all stakeholders and supported at each stage by a FEIA to consider impact.***
- Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the City we serve ***a formal statutory***

***consultation will be carried out with the opportunity for engagement with all stakeholders and supported at each stage by a FEIA to consider impact.***

### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

### **Consultation**

None at this stage but this will be facilitated with key stakeholders as part of the school reorganisation proposal.

### **Background Papers**

None

Dated: June 2018