

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**CABINET EXECUTIVE  
3 March 2020**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Phyl Davies  
Portfolio Holder for Property and Education

**REPORT TITLE:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme - Ysgol Cedewain  
Project

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of Cabinet to submit a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) to Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme for capital investment to build a new 108 place special school to replace the existing Ysgol Cedewain building in Newtown.
- 1.2 The project is included within the Council's Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) for Band B, which was approved by Welsh Government and the Cabinet in July 2017.
- 1.3 The estimated required funding, including a 25% early stage risk contingency, is as follows:

Welsh Government contribution 75%	£17,008,650
PCC 25%	£5,669,550
Total	£22,678,200

Appendix 1: Strategic Outline Case which outlines the strategic case, the case for change, the economic, commercial, financial and management case.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Ysgol Cedewain is a special school situated in Newtown which provides specialist education for pupils from 2 and a half years old to 19 years old with a wide range of complex educational, sensory and physical needs. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education health and care plan.

**2.2 The case for change is based on the need to improve facilities for pupils at Ysgol Cedewain. The school is in a very poor condition and has significant site constraints:**

- The current building is in very poor condition, categorised as condition C. Most of the classrooms are ageing portable structures and, in some cases, are in need of urgent maintenance and repair, nearing end of usable lifespan. It is a sprawling site, spread over a large area. The distance and obstacles between classrooms mean that a lot of time and effort is spent safely escorting pupils with complex sensory and physical needs around the school site. This can be particularly challenging during bad weather. The buildings and layout also severely limit the provision of specialist equipment for pupils with significant additional needs. Specialist equipment is not available in all areas of the school therefore limiting access and mobility for some pupils;
- There are significant health and safety and safeguarding issues with the site, including a public right of way that runs across it, difficult access areas and poor parking facilities. The minibus parking area uses up part of the playground, which restricts use at peak times.

**2.3 The requested investment will deliver a brand new, purpose-built school with 108 places in age appropriate environments. The new build will deliver the following:**

- Specialist support and provision to pupils with significant additional learning needs, in a modern and innovative learning environment and will better equip teachers to tailor lessons to meet the specific needs of the learners, improving accessibility to learners across the North of Powys;
- Appropriate learning spaces to deliver the new curriculum;
- Specialist equipment, including IT facilities, to support teaching and learning outcomes which will help to ensure all learners maximise their potential;
- More effective use of the site - the school will no longer be dependent on demountable accommodation which is currently dispersed across the site;
- A holistic integrated multi agency approach, with dedicated physiotherapy and medical rooms, and also a hydrotherapy pool and sensory rooms and garden. The facilities will support the school's well-established relationships with the specialist services and will also further cement the Council's relationship with Powys Teaching Health Board;
- A fully equipped early years class base, with breakout space, calming room, laundry and hygiene facilities, together with an individual outdoor learning area, which will enable the school to increase their early years provision. The facilities would also enable the school to consider providing after school care, holiday play schemes and wrap around childcare and to support the childcare offer for learners with additional needs;

- A flagship community focused school, with community groups being able to access the facilities out of school hours. Safeguarding will be ensured as the school will be able to lock down the teaching areas while enabling community access to the community zone;
- Therapeutic facilities available to hire, - these include a hydrotherapy pool and changing facilities, rebound room, touchtrust room, community kitchen and café, meeting room and hall. The hire of the facilities will be managed by the school and provide additional revenue income. There are very few therapeutic facilities within the locality and it is anticipated that there will be a strong demand.

2.4 The new school will be built on a part of the current site of Ysgol Cedewain and part of the adjoining primary school – Maesyrrhandir CP School. There will be a new grassed sports pitch and Multi Use Games Area for shared usage by Ysgol Cedewain & Maesyrrhandir CP School.

2.5 Following a detailed site selection process, the combined Cedewain/Maesyrrhandir site was deemed to be the most appropriate site for a special school. The reasons for this are that both schools could still operate safely during construction with no decanting of pupils required. There are no issues with topography and the site is also in the Council's ownership. Selecting this site allows the project to progress at pace allowing benefits realisation to happen as early as possible.

2.6 The indicative key milestones for this project are shown below:

- SOC Approved April 2020
- OBC Approved August 2020
- D & B Tender Awarded February 2021
- Design Stage February to October 2021
- FBC Approved November 2021
- Construction Starts December 2021 (12 month)
- School Opens Early 2023

### 3. **Advice**

3.1 The advice of officers is that submission of the SOC to Welsh Government for approval enables the Council to proceed with the project and progress to the next stage of the business case process. The Welsh Government's intervention rate for special schools within the Band B programme is 75%, which represents good value for money for the Council. Cabinet is advised that there is a significant early stage risk contingency of 25% within the estimated project costs, which is appropriate at a SOC stage. Actual costs will be confirmed at Full Business Case stage. The existing school infrastructure is included within the development boundary and will be demolished to make room

for playing and sporting areas. The demolition costs are included within the total estimated costs.

#### 4. **Resource Implications**

##### 4.1 **Capital:**

The project will be funded through the 21<sup>st</sup> C Schools Band B Programme. The total cost associated with the project is **£22,678,200**. The Council is requesting that Welsh Government provide 75% of the total cost of the project, with Powys County Council responsible for the remaining 25%. The project is funded from Powys 21<sup>st</sup> C Schools Band B programme- the overall Band B Programme will need to be adjusted to take account of the cost of this scheme to ensure that the overall funding envelope is not exceeded.

Capital funding from Powys County Council will be profiled provided as follows:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Supported Borrowing</b>			700,000		700,000
<b>Prudential Borrowing</b>	15,666	42,500	1,525,500	3,385,884	4,969,550
<b>Reserves</b>					
<b>Total PCC funding</b>	15,666	42,500	2,225,500	3,385,884	5,669,550

The borrowing detailed above is included in the capital programme and therefore the costs of borrowing are included in the council's capital charges. The following capital from Welsh Government is requested:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Total Welsh Government funding</b>		127,500	6,676,500	10,204,650	17,008,650

##### 4.2 **Revenue:**

Based on the current accommodation schedule, the funding delivered to the school via the Council's schools funding formula will increase by an estimated £23,071, taking into account the increased floor area and other premises factors. This pressure will need to be considered by the Schools Service as it updates its Integrated Business Plan to include provision for 2022/23 budget planning. There are no rates implications for the school as rates are not charged for special schools

due to the exemption category for property used by people with disabilities.

#### 4.3 **Impact on balance sheet**

The new school will remain on the public sector balance sheet.

#### 4.4 **Overall affordability**

The Council sets its Prudential Indicators, under the Prudential Code, based on making prudent and affordable decisions and the 21<sup>st</sup> Schools' project were included in these indicators. The annual cost for the project is £189,930 based on the spend profile above and a 50-year life.

#### 4.5 **Procurement:**

"The project will be procured under the new SEWSCAP3 framework. Appropriate bonds and collateral warranties will be obtained, and contract signed prior to commencement. The contractor will also be required to secure a Project Bank Account as a condition of the contract".

4.6 The Section 151 Officer confirms that the project is included within the Councils Capital Programme and is content that the proposal can be supported from a financial perspective.

#### 4.7 **Corporate Property comments:**

"There are no implications to Corporate Property. The current Ysgol Cedewain estate will be demolished to make room for the new-build and playing areas. No assets will be declared surplus to Schools Service requirements as part of this scheme."

Project delivery will require specialist PCC staff resourcing from various departments, including ICT, Schools Service, Finance and Catering and Cleaning.

### 5. **Legal implications**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

### 6. **Data Protection**

Data Protection Officer comments: "This proposal does not involve the processing of personal data at this stage. However, when the project

progresses to construction and transitioning, then data protection legislation must be complied with.”

**7. Comment from local member(s)**

Councillor Daniel Rowlands: “Educating some of our most vulnerable people in society should be one of our main concerns. Ysgol Cedewain needs a new school so I’m in favour of something happening on this site as soon as possible.”

**8. Integrated Impact Assessment**

An Impact Assessment has not been developed but will be at Outline Business Case stage.

**9. Recommendation**

9.1 To seek Cabinet’s approval to submit the Strategic Outline Case (SOC), as set out in Appendix 1, to Welsh Government’s 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme for capital investment to build a new 108 place school to replace the existing Ysgol Cedewain building in Newtown.

9.2 The note that the estimated cost of the overall project is £22,678,200.00 with Welsh Government funding 75% of the costs, and the Council funding the remaining 25%, and to note that the the current total cost estimate includes an early stage risk contingency of 25%.