



Report of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills

Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 13 February 2020

21st Century Schools Programme Update

Purpose:	To update the scrutiny panel on progress with the 21 st Century Schools Programme
Content:	Information on progress with the 21 st Century Schools Programme
Councillors are being asked to:	Consider the information provided and make their views known to the Cabinet Member via a Conveners Letter
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Jennifer Raynor, Education Improvement, Learning and Skills
Lead Officer & Report Author:	Brian Roles, Head of Education Planning and Resources Tel: 01792 636357 E-mail: brian.roles@swansea.gov.uk

1. Background

- 1.1 A report to the Scrutiny Panel on the 18 October 2017 provided an update on progress with the 21st Century Schools Programme and the Panel agreed to include a further update on the Programme in the work programme for 2019-2020.
- 1.2 This report will provide an overview of progress to date and the Head of Education Planning and Resources will attend and answer any questions the panel may have.

2. 21st Century Schools Programme

- 2.1 The Council's 21st Century Schools Programme continues to focus on:
 - Learning environments for children and young people aged from 3 to 19 that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes

- Greater economy through better use of resources to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the education estate and public service provision
- A sustainable education system with all schools meeting a 21st century schools standard, and reducing the recurrent costs and carbon footprint

2.2 The priority investment schemes were identified through the following range of complementary objective criteria:

Standards (where there were specific concerns), risk, condition, specific suitability issues, landscape, basic need (where very clear shortfall in places such as Welsh medium), sufficiency (surplus places), viability (size), sustainability (future demographic trends) and deliverability (how readily it could be achieved).

2.3 Major priority options identified through the extensive stakeholder engagement process have been delivered through Band A, and the remaining scheme is due for completion by September 2020.

2.4 Band B remains consistent with local policies, priorities and commitments, as well as the priorities and specific criteria set down by the Welsh Government (WG) as follows:

To provide an efficient and effective educational infrastructure that will meet current and future demand for places by 2024

- Ensuring the right size schools in the right location, with enough places to deliver Welsh and English medium education, whilst ensuring effective and efficient use of the educational estate
- Reducing backlog maintenance costs by at least 50% whilst improving any category C or D condition buildings to A or B

To optimise the use of infrastructure and resources to deliver public services for our communities by 2024. This includes:

- Flexibility of assets with the aspiration that all facilities receiving investment commit to making assets available for community use if local demand exists
- Co-located public services on site if local demand exists

2.5 The robust basis of the Council's programme has been repeatedly scrutinised by the WG and subject to their ultimate approval. As with any plan it is not a static document, and indeed, the whole programme has required successive reviews in the light of the changing timescales and financial parameters for the programme. It has also continued to evolve in the light of changing demands (demographic trends and condition and business continuity issues), political priorities, capital resourcing, and fresh opportunities (such as the Local Development Plan).

3. Band B Scoping and Delivery

- 3.1 The programme to transform Swansea's schools' estate continues with access to capital investment through the Council's approved 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Programme (SOP). The approved programme envelope is £149.7 million, since amended to £149.5m, to reflect the reciprocal increase in the Band A programme. This is subject to the approval of individual project business cases. The individual forecast project cost at SOP stage is subject to review as the project intelligence is increased with for example ground investigations, other surveys, and the identification of abnormal costs. This is defined in the strategic and outline business cases and the full business case when approval of final project cost is sought from Cabinet and WG.
- 3.2 Gorseinon Primary is carried over from Band A. This is a new build 1.5 form entry primary school future proofed to 2 form entry to replace the current category C and C- condition buildings which are currently located across split sites. The revised FPR7 and change request to WG for the value of £6.882m were approved in February 2019. Work started on site in June 2019, and the new playground was completed and opened to the public in July 2019. The school building is now watertight and is on schedule to open to pupils in September 2020.
- 3.3 The £9.642m new build, bespoke Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) facility on the Cockett House site is also under construction. The demolition phase was completed in January 2019, the current main contractor appointed in May 2019 and the new facilities are on track to open to pupils in the autumn of 2020.
- 3.4 The proposed new build for the Welsh medium YGG Tan-y-lan at Beaconsview Road, Clase obtained planning permission in May 2019 and it is anticipated that the construction phase will commence in early summer 2020. This new build will enable the capacity to increase from 130 to 420 places plus nursery; an additional 290 places plus nursery. The total estimated cost of the new build for YGG Tan-y-lan is £9.9m. Of that just over £1m is to be 100% funded by WG against the Welsh-medium grant, with the £8.881m remaining cost against the overall Band B programme envelope. It is expected that the new school build will open to pupils in the autumn of 2021, subject to Cabinet and WG approvals.
- 3.5 The proposed new build for another Welsh medium primary; YGG Tirdeunaw obtained planning permission in September 2019 and it is anticipated that construction will start in the spring of 2020 and open to pupils in the autumn of 2021. This new build will enable the capacity to increase from 420 to 525 places plus nursery; an additional 105 places plus nursery. The school is currently situated at the former Daniel James Comprehensive School site. The new build will be on part of the current YGG Bryntawe site in Penlan. The total estimated cost of the new build for YGG Tirdeunaw is £11.551m. Of that £1.270m is to

be 100% funded by WG against the Welsh-medium grant, with the £10.280m remaining cost against the overall Band B programme envelope.

- 3.6 The proposed extension and remodelling to the Welsh medium secondary school YG Gwyr, to increase capacity by 195 to give an overall capacity of 1273, obtained planning approval in May 2019. The total estimated cost of the project for YG Gwyr is £6.718m and it is planned to commence construction in spring 2020 with a phased handover from April to September 2021.
- 3.7 The first stage contract has been awarded for the pre-construction phase works for the remodelling, refurbishment and extension of Bishopston Comprehensive School to address conditional and suitability issues. The total estimated cost of the project for at outline business case stage was £11.866m. At this stage it is anticipated that work will start on site in July 2020, with a phased completion extending to October 2022.
- 3.8 Work will continue to develop detailed business cases for the remaining priority capital schemes, as officer capacity and resources allow, in order to access the remaining available WG capital investment at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.9 The Band B Programme is almost three times the size of Band A and we are seeking to deliver it with less officer capacity and resources across the Council. This reduced capacity and resilience within the Council is exacerbated by the demands of other capital funding initiatives that we are also seeking to deliver in relation to Reducing Infant Class Sizes, Childcare Grant, Flying Start and 21st Century Community Hubs. There is also a lack of capacity and resilience outside the authority as the number of contractors on the current Framework has reduced, and the financial risks for those remaining have increased.
- 3.10 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act underpins the programme to transform Swansea's schools by taking a long term approach to the development, maintenance and improvement in schools in relation to demographic trends and household projections. We work closely with Corporate Building services and other services within the Council to ensure that developments will meet demands in the future and any new and existing buildings are as energy efficient as possible and/or carbon neutral.

Appendices:

None

Background papers:

[Cabinet report 20 July 2017](#) (link to full report) Quality in Education (QEd) - Emerging Proposals and Investment Priorities for the Next Band of the 21st Century Schools Programme.