

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Date of meeting: **2 April 2019**
Cabinet Member: **Councillor Gareth Thomas**
Contact Officer: **Garem Jackson / Debbie Anne Williams Jones**
Contact Telephone Number: **01286 679489**
Title of Item: **Restructuring of Gwynedd Language Centres**

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. To decide how to address the need to reduce the Language Centres' budget by £96,000 based on the current staffing structure**

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Historically, the Language Centres were funded by a grant from the Welsh Language Board, with the Council providing match funding. When the Welsh Language Board was abolished, the Language Centres were funded in the same way through the Welsh in Education Grant (Welsh Government) with the Council continuing to provide the match funding.
- 2.2 In 2015, Welsh Government brought 11 education grants together under the heading of the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) and this included the Welsh in Education Grant. Currently, the Welsh Government funds the EIG through the regional consortia (GwE), and every authority contributes match funding to the region, before the EIG is then transferred from the regional consortia back to the authorities.

CONTEXT

- 2.3 In taking inflation and the annual reduction in the EIG since 2014/15 into account, the real terms cut to the EIG as a whole is 34% - however, the Language Centres have been completely protected through all of these cuts.
- 2.4 In 2018/19, the Welsh Government cut the Education Improvement Grant by 10%. This resulted in a shortfall of £61,000 in the Gwynedd Language Centres budget from 2018/19 onwards. This year, it was possible to bridge this shortfall, although cuts have been made under other headings within the EIG, such as the Foundation Phase.
- 2.5 Between 2014/15 and 2019/20, the Foundation Phase (devolved from the EIG), has seen a reduction of 32%. The 32% cut in real terms equates to £1.2 million, or approximately 70 classroom assistants. Of course, the Language Centres are not the only ones responsible for immersing children in the Welsh Language, as, in accordance with the Gwynedd Language Policy, immersion also occurs in the Foundation Phase.

- 2.6 For 2019/20, better news was received from Welsh Government regarding the Education Improvement Grant, i.e. a confirmation of a neutral settlement for the EIG. However, due to inflation to teacher salaries and pensions, this means a further shortfall in the budget, based on the Language Centres' current staffing structure, of approximately £35,000 from September 2019 onwards. We understand that a lack of clarity remains regarding how the Welsh Government will fund the increase in teacher pension costs, and currently, there is no sign that grant-funded posts, such as those of the Language Centres' teachers, have been included in the likely additional funding that will be received to address this increase in costs. In addition, there is a lack of clarity as to whether the funding received will cover all costs. We know that the EIG already allocated by Welsh Government for 2019/20 results in a neutral settlement, therefore, addressing any increase in costs by means of the EIG would equate to another cut.
- 2.7 At the same time, the GwE Management Board has decided to carry out a regional review of the Welsh Language heading in the EIG, which could affect the future financial allocations given to individual authorities for the Welsh Language.
- 2.8 In order to maintain the existing staffing situation of the Language Centres from September 2019 onwards, the Education Department would need to identify an alternative budget to address the financial deficit. The Education Department has not identified a financial source to enable this to happen. Similarly, it has not managed to identify an alternative budget to address the financial deficit as a result of cuts to the value of £1.2 million in the EIG in the Foundation Phase.
- 2.9 In order to address the deficit of £61,000 in the budget of the Language Centres as a result of a cut in the EIG in 2018/19 and an increase in costs of £35,000 from September 2019 onwards based on the current staffing structure, the Education Department has identified the need to restructure the service in order for the same service to be provided for latecomers in the county in a more cost effective way.

3. INTRODUCTION AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

THE CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The staffing structure of the Language Centres is currently as follows:

LANGUAGE CENTRE	STAFFING STRUCTURE	MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PUPILS
Dolgellau	Leader Assistant	8
Penrhyneddraeth	Leader Teacher	16
Llangybi	Leader Teacher	16
Maesincla	Leader Teacher	16
Secondary Eifionydd	Leader Teacher	16
	After-care Teacher	

- 3.2 The leaders are employed at a leadership level, which equates to an assistant headteacher at a school, and in addition, the teachers receive a TLR allowance.
- 3.3 The pattern of learner numbers attending the Primary Language Centres over the past 5 years is as follows:

Pupil numbers at the Gwynedd Primary Language Centres per term 2013 – 2018					
TERM	Dolgellau	Llangybi	Maesincla	Penrhyn	Total
CAPACITY	8	16	16	16	
Spring 2013	6	7	13	11	37
Summer 2013	8	7	13	15	43
Autumn 2013	9	13	15	13	50
Total 2013	23	27	41	39	130
Spring 2014	8	8	14	15	45
Summer 2014	26*	4*	16	10**	64
Autumn 2014	8	10	14	14	46
Total 2014	42	22	44	47	155
Spring 2015	8	11*	11	14	44
Summer 2015	9	4*	15	15*	43
Autumn 2015	7	12	9	17	45
Total 2015	24	27	35	46	132
Spring 2016	8	10	13	16	47
Summer 2015	11	6	16	19	52
Autumn 2016	9	14	16	18	56
Total 2016	27	30	45	53	155
Spring 2017	10	13	13	15	51
Summer 2017	7**	10	17	17	51
Autumn 2017	8	13	17	16	54
Total 2017	25	36	47	48	156
Spring 2018	6 + 1*	14	15	11	47
Summer 2018	5 ** / 7 *	8	16	14	45
Autumn 2018	8	11	15	16	50
Total 2018	22	33	46	41	142

* after-care **pre Language Centre

The pupil numbers at the Eifionydd Secondary Language Centres per term 2013 – 2018:

TERM	Eifionydd
Spring 2013	16
Summer 2013	17
Autumn 2013	13
Total 2013	46
Spring 2014	13
Summer 2014	6
Autumn 2014	21
Total 2014	40
Spring 2015	8
Summer 2015	13
Autumn 2015	13
Total	34

TERM	Eifionydd
Spring 2016	9
Summer 2016	10
Autumn 2016	14
Total	33
Spring 2017	18
Summer 2017	8
Autumn 2017	16
Total	40
Spring 2018	14
Summer 2018	15
Autumn 2018	17
Total	46

THE PROCESS IMPLEMENTED

- 3.4 Despite the substantial and wide interest expressed for some months on this issue, this is not a public consultation process, rather an internal process of only consulting with the staff and unions because of the possibility of a change to their terms of employment.
- 3.5 The first step in the process was to hold a meeting with the staff in September 2018 to inform them of the financial situation of the Language Centres from 2019/20 onwards. During the meeting, staff were invited to come together to consider how the service could be restructured in future to meet the budget shortfall.
- 3.6 Following this meeting, we were notified that the Language Centre staff did not wish to create their own options for the service's structure in future. Rather, their wish was for the Education Department to consider and create options, with an opportunity for them to express their opinion and present comments on those options.
- 3.7 On 24 October 2018, a meeting was held between the Education Department, Human Resources, Language Centre staff, along with their Union representatives to present options for their consideration for a formal consultation period until 30 November 2018 (the formal consultation period was extended until 10 December 2018 at the request of a Union).

THE OPTIONS CONSULTED UPON

- 3.8 As a basis for the options on restructuring the Language Centres in future, the Education Department formed the following criteria:

PRINCIPLES	
1.	The restructuring will not affect the availability of the provision for latecomers (i.e. that the same number or more learners access the service)
2.	Minimum staffing level of 2 FTE at every Language Centre

3.9 It was also noted that none of the following options include any change to the after-care provision, and after-care would be considered moving forward.

3.10 Here are the four options formally consulted upon with the staff and the unions:

Option 1

- Close one Primary Language Centre.
- Increase the capacity of every Language Centre to 19 learners.
- A staffing structure of a Leader and a Teacher at every Language Centre.

Option 2

- Every Language Centre to remain open.
- The capacity of the Dolgellau Language Centre increased to 16. The capacity of every other Language Centre to remain the same.
- A staffing structure of a Leader and a Teacher at every Language Centre.

Option 3

- Every Language Centre to remain open.
- The capacity of the Dolgellau Language Centre increased to 16. The capacity of every other Language Centre to remain the same.
- One Leader for all Primary Language Centres, a staffing structure of a Teacher and an Assistant at every Language Centre (where the Leader is not based).
- A staffing structure of a Leader and an Assistant at the Secondary Language Centre.

Option 4

- Every Language Centre to remain open.
- The capacity of the Dolgellau Language Centre increased to 16. The capacity of every other Language Centre to remain the same.
- One Leader for all Primary and Secondary Language Centres, a staffing structure of a Teacher and an Assistant at every Language Centre (where the Leader is not based).

3.11 As a result of the formal consultation held on the four options noted above, and as a result of considering the observations received during the consultation, another consultation was held following the Human Resources process with the staff of the Language Centres and their union representatives on the option under consideration. This consultation ended on 8 March 2019.

3.12. Here are the details of the option under consideration that was formally consulted upon:

Option under Consideration

- Every Language Centre to remain open.
- One non-contact Leader for all Language Centres, with the ability to teach at any of the Language Centres as required.
- A staffing structure of a Teacher and Level 4 Assistant at every Language Centre.
- After-care provision to become a part of the core provision of every Language Centre.

4. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

THE OBSERVATIONS FROM THE FORMAL CONSULTATION HELD ON THE FOUR OPTIONS

4.1 A Human Resources process for restructuring the Language Centres was followed, consulting with the staff and the Unions on options for restructuring the service in future.

4.2 The following is a summary of the Unions' observations:

UCAC

General observations:

Keep staffing levels at two teachers

The teachers must be:

- specialist for effective 'language immersion'
- enthusiastic and ambitious
- able to speak Welsh to a good standard
- able to plan lively lessons that are carefully structured to conform to the course
- able to identify and respond to learners' needs (ALN, emotional and behavioural problems)
- training and support for teachers and school assistants
- knowledgeable of the latest developments in the field of education
- able to lead a centre in each other's absence

The Centres' Locations: Equal Opportunity - ensure that every school is within reasonable reach of the Language Centre.

In addition, correspondence was received from the Union requesting clarity on some points in the context of the restructuring, suggesting the need to trial the teacher : assistant ratio for 16 children first, before making any decision. It was also questioned whether there was any evidence or national example that proves the fact that the ratio of teacher : assistant to 16 pupils is an effective model to produce Welsh speakers.

In response to the correspondence, it was noted that the shortfall in the budget needed to be addressed and implemented by September 2019 and that a trial period would not allow for the required saving to be realised on time.

The following is a summary of UCAC's observations on the individual options:

Option 1

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 specialist teachers• The success of the course and service is secured• A centre to remain in every area of Gwynedd	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centre Ch closing will have an impact on the area (where the centre is based).• Increasing journeys from schools to the nearest Language Centre• 1 area without a Language Centre• Losing specialist teaching jobs

Option 2

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centres' Locations - 1 in every area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Losing specialist teaching jobs Increases the teacher : pupil ratio The Leader's absence will cause disorder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - course structure - responsibility for the learner - transport - parents A supply teacher cannot step in as a stranger Losing opportunities to share good practice Weakens the support for individual learners The aftercare strategy will be less effective

Option 3

In addition to the observations for Option 2:

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre A (The Leader's Centre) will be ineffective in light of the responsibility for all the Language Centres.

Option 4

In addition to the observations for Options 2 and 3:

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre A (The Leader's Centre) will be ineffective in light of the responsibility for all the primary and secondary Language Centres. 1 Leader responsible for the primary and secondary without an understanding of one sector

4.3 NEU

The following is a summary of NEU's observations:

- It is crucial to avoid excessive travel for pupils and this important principle cannot be kept should one of the centres close. (Oppose Option 1).
- The Leader's absence will cause disorder without a second teacher in terms of the course structure.
- A supply teacher cannot step in as a stranger.
- Object to any action on the increase in costs of £35,000 until there is clarity on the need to do so.

In addition, NEU asked:

- How does restructuring tie in with the Council's strategic objectives of promoting the Welsh language and the Welsh language policy?
- What discussions have been held with the primary and secondary headteachers?

4.4 Dolgellau Language Centre

Observations were received the Leader and Assistant at Dolgellau Language Centres as part of the consultation.

Here are their observations on Option 2 - Leader and Assistant:

- We at the Dolgellau Language Centre have been operating Option 2, namely a teacher and an assistant since 2002, for 16 years, and it has been very successful.
- We are full with 100% of our capacity full each term, and at times we have more than the capacity of children (up to 10).
- We deliver the course requirements with a Teacher and Assistant. We are cost effective and cheaper than the other options under consideration.
- The Teacher presents the language learning work and the Assistant supports the learning. Both of us work together in the classroom.
- The Dolgarrog Language Centre works as a 'Leader and Senior Assistant', and they accept up to 12 children and no more.

THE OBSERVATIONS FROM THE FORMAL CONSULTATION HELD ON THE FOUR OPTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION

4.5 The following is a summary of the observations made by the UCAC and NEU unions on behalf of the Language Centres' staff on the option under consideration.

Specific observations were received on some educational matters, including the need to consider the arrangements relating to the number of children that would be taught in a class. UCAC suggest that the increase in the teacher : pupil ratio could be trialled, but that this should be done following a full professional study to ensure that the impact is not negative. The union also notes the importance of ensuring that any change to the current procedure is implemented by identifying evidence of good practice in the field.

Comments also referred to the importance of having clarity on some practical matters relating to the day-to-day work of level 4 assistants, including the need to undertake the tasks to teach the children successfully. Consequently, concern was noted regarding the proposed timetable to implement the option under consideration by September 2019. Objection was also expressed to the principle of introducing an assistant, rather than a teacher, to the Language Centres.

The Unions provided observations regarding the general role and responsibilities of the teacher and the management of the centres, including how teacher salary levels should be set, measured against the change in duties. Specific reference was made to the need to consider TLR responsibility payments, in line with the Teacher Pay and Conditions 2018 document. Reference was also made to the importance of identifying the work that leaders at every centre do, as well as their role fostering professional relationships on many levels, along with the need to make important decisions on a local level. There will be a need to consider practical arrangements for the management of the centres in the models under consideration, whilst also ensuring the safety and welfare of the children. The need to consider the possible challenges regarding the role of the Leader in being responsible for the primary and secondary provision and any differences between the two curriculums was noted.

In the context of the role of the new Leader presented as an amendment to the option under consideration, UCAC acknowledged that there was an argument for introducing a new management tier to the structure. Nevertheless, UCAC was unable to support a situation where the leader is expected to be responsible for the primary and secondary provision. The NEU union was of the opinion that one person could not have the expertise to respond to the demands from both sectors.

In relation to the arrangements for the after-care provision, UCAC noted that it would be "very difficult to see how a teacher or assistant could be released to carry out the after-care during the course". Similar observations were received from NEU, asking how it would be possible to "...release a teacher or assistant to visit former pupils - without having supply staff to take their place". It was suggested that it would be useful to receive further information on how the vision would be able to meet the need.

The NEU union noted concern about the timing of any change in the context of the need to prepare for the new curriculum, in particular at the Secondary Language Centre.

In relation to the financial situation, it was asked how the restructuring would ensure savings in the next three years.

AN EVALUATION OF THE OPTIONS WHICH WERE CONSULTED ON

Each of the options for restructuring the Language Centres included in the consultation leads to an increase in the teacher: pupil ratio of 1: 8 in each Centre to a maximum of 1 : 16 (apart from Option 1, which increases the number of children in each centre to 19 (removing one Centre), in order to retain the current staffing structure of two teachers).

As there is no current study of the requirements relating to a pupil : teacher ratio of 1 : 8, and that the pupils' language fluency and their ability to fully immerse into the normal language of our schools is the outcome for the Centres and the way that this success is measured, the Head of Education is of the opinion that there would not be any significant impact on the quality of provision when increasing the teacher : pupil ratio, with the support of a level 4 assistant for up to 16 children. During the consultation, Dolgellau Language Centre provided evidence that they had succeeded in immersing up to 10 children using this model, and there was no evidence that those 10 children were less fluent in Welsh or had experienced difficulty in integrating into the main school's normal environment.

In increasing the teacher : pupil ratio, the same would be expected of the Language Centres in immersing children in Welsh as, considering the education system as a whole, the expectation is that a maximum of 16 children under the care of one teacher with the support of a level 4 teaching assistant would represent a reasonable provision. The current structure already implements a 1 : 16 ratio at intervals in order to release the second teacher. In addition, the option under consideration enables an even more generous teacher : pupil ratio than the current ratio to any Language Centre on occasion, with the Leader stepping to fill the role of the second teacher in a Centre. When this occurs, it means that that Language Centre would have two teachers and a level 4 assistant for approximately 16 children, which is a very generous ratio. As a result, should any of the options consulted upon be implemented, the expectation in terms of the quality of the provision and the results in terms of success in immersing the children in Welsh would be the same.

Similarly, when the Foundation Phase was established, the requirements of the Welsh Government identified the need to aim for or achieve a ratio of 1 : 8 pupils for Nursery and Reception, and 1 : 15 for Years 1 and 2. As a result of the considerable cuts of £1.2m made to the Foundation Phase, which equates to 70 assistants, our schools have moved further away from the Welsh Government ratios. However, the expectation for our schools is to achieve the same standards despite the cuts, and given the current inspection profile of our primary schools, to a great extent this is being achieved.

The Language Centres mainly provide a service for KS2 and KS3 children, namely 7-14 year olds. Due to the considerable cuts to the school system over a number of years, there are now classes of 30 and more in KS2 under the care of one teacher often without an assistant, together with a number of teachers in KS3 teaching subjects where they are not specialists. However, standards at KS2 and KS3 have remained consistently good over a given period.

Therefore, given the above - as with the Foundation Phase, KS2 and KS3 – in implementing any of the options which were consulted upon, it is expected that the Language Centres will achieve the same standards and maintain the quality when immersing children in Welsh.

4.6 THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

A presentation was given to the Language Committee on the restructuring of the Language Centres. The presentation included details on the financial situation of the Language Centres, the options consulted upon, along with the main messages from the consultation held with the staff and the unions on those options.

The Language Committee expressed concern about the quality of the education if one of the options consulted upon would have to be chosen. The Language Committee's objection to the options provided by the Education Department was also noted.

4.7 THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A report was submitted before the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on the restructuring of the Language Centres, including details on the consultation process implemented, the options presented, as well as the observations of the staff and unions on those options.

The Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee noted that it was grateful for the update on what had happened with the internal consultation, and expressed sincere gratitude for the work done at the Language Centres.

Nevertheless, no clear message was received from this committee regarding the resolution to the financial deficit; however, the committee had specific messages to refer to the Education Department, namely:

- Concern that none of the principles forming the basis for the options submitted for consultation purposes included ensuring that the quality of the provision in the future and the committee stressed the need to hold an equality impact assessment on the options, and that there was room to measure the quality and the impact of change on the provision from now on.
- Concern regarding the potential change in the workload of those working at the Language Centres, but that this was a general concern across the entire range of services provided by the Education Department at every school, and that the

pupil/teacher ratio in every class was also an issue requiring attention. At the same time, there was an emphasis on the need to have two teacher(s) at the Secondary Language Centre.

- Support was given to continuing with discussions in an attempt to persuade the Welsh Government to continue to give more funding to support the Welsh language from now on.
- It was accepted that the grant was being cut, and although everyone would prefer if this were not the case, the committee encouraged the Department to consider any other potential sources, whether additional grant funding or any other source. Nevertheless, it was fully accepted that the schools had taken substantial and continued cuts for some time now and, although it was an option, the committee did not wish to look to the schools to fund this. In addition, concern was expressed regarding the outcome of GwE's review of the Welsh language and any further implications to the funding of the Language Centres.

4.8 **FULL COUNCIL**

At the Full Council, on 7 March 2019, the following notice of motion was submitted by Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd under Section 4.20 of the Constitution, and it was seconded:

RESOLVED, acknowledging and fully condemning the horrendous financial cuts forced on local councils by Welsh Government, specifically the cut to the education improvement grant for Gwynedd, and that any decision on the matter is a matter for the Cabinet, that this Council strongly objects to any plan or intention to change the constitution, organisation or staffing of Gwynedd Language Centres that would have a detrimental impact on their unmistakable ability in teaching Welsh to incomers within a short period of time and to integrate easily into the Welsh ethos of our schools. The Council also calls on the Cabinet to establish a robust monitoring procedure - whether changes are made or not - to ensure the best possible results for the learners. However, we declare that downgrading teachers' posts and making them assistant posts would be harmful and therefore detrimental to the units' abilities to teach the Welsh language effectively, and therefore, we ask the Cabinet to ensure that the required resources are available to ensure that this does not happen.

5. **NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE**

- 5.1 The main messages from the Language Committee, the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, and the formal consultation held with staff and the unions on the options for restructuring the Language Centres for the future were: concern about losing specialist teachers; the impact of increasing the teacher : pupil ratio on the quality of the education and children's attainment; along with the lack of evidence to show that the changes consulted upon would not have a negative impact on the provision.
- 5.2 As a result of the main messages summarised above, along with the Full Council's decision on 7 March 2019, the Education Department considers that these concerns can be addressed in one of the following ways:
 - It would be possible to maintain the current staffing situation of the Language Centres, and address some of the shortfall in the budget by changing the staff's terms of employment, i.e. remove the leadership tier in relation to terms of employment at every Language Centre, remove the TLR allowance for teachers at every Language

Centre, and incorporate the after-care as a part of the core provision of the Language Centres, thus abolishing the existing after-care post. This would go a step of the way towards meeting the financial deficit, although there would be a need to identify a financial source to bridge the remaining deficit, particularly considering that some elements of the savings would not be realised immediately.

- A pilot could be held of the staffing structure of a teacher and assistant, increasing the teacher : pupil ratio at one Language Centre only for a period, and for it to be closely monitored to identify whether it affects the quality of the education and the children's attainment. Implementing a pilot would defer any decision on the options consulted upon, therefore, it would be required to identify an alternative financial source to bridge the deficit during the pilot period.
- Any of the options consulted upon could be implemented and the financial deficit would be met in full. The Education Department would set robust monitoring arrangements to consider any impact as a result of the restructuring on the quality of the education and the children's attainment, and for the situation to be reviewed in three years. Should there be a wish to implement any of the options consulted upon by 1 September 2019, it is anticipated that the appointment process for the service's new structure would take place during the final week of April and the beginning of May. This would allow time to implement the employment appeals process if required, and to be in a situation to confirm all appointments and redundancies by 31 May 2019.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An equality impact assessment was carried out on the options consulted upon. The assessment gives specific attention to various equality elements such as race, gender, disability, language, religion or belief and age. See the full report in **Appendix 1**.

The assessment notes that the proposed options are unlikely to have any negative impact on equality characteristics. One of the principles forming the basis for the options for restructuring the service to address the budget shortfall was that the restructuring would not affect the availability of the provision for children, i.e. the same number of children would access the service. This would ensure the same equal opportunities for children in terms of accessing the service.

The Council will follow the usual procedures by supporting and monitoring, in order to ensure the compliance of every Language Centre with the equality characteristics.

7. WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT

As part of the considerations for activities and projects, the Education Department has a role to promote the well-being objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 amongst the county's pupils. Full consideration was given to any impact deriving from the proposed options against the seven well-being objectives of the Act, along with the Council's well-being objectives, including holding an impact assessment. It was concluded that the proposed options enabled the centres to continue to contribute effectively towards achieving the objectives of the act.

8. VIEWS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

i. Monitoring Officer

The report highlights options open to the Cabinet when deciding on the way forward. The report also details specifically the results of the consultation process with the staff and advice of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet is required to give specific attention to these matters together with the other relevant considerations when coming to a conclusion on how to address the financial gap. Whichever option is followed the Cabinet will need to be clear about its reasons for deciding on the direction.

ii. Principle Finance Officer

Despite a year-on-year reduction in grant funding, the Language Centres have been protected at historical provision level, and it is now inevitable that the model of provision must be considered in order to cope within the constraints of the grant.

I confirm the accuracy of the figures in Part 2 of the report. If it is not possible to reduce the costs by £ 96,000 in full for the 2019/20 financial year, a temporary funding source will need to be identified to bridge any shortfall.