

MEETING	Gwynedd Council Cabinet
DATE	18 May 2021
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams
OFFICER	Gwern ap Rhisiart
TITLE OF ITEM	New school in Cricieth

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

The Cabinet is requested to finally confirm the proposal made through a statutory notice, to increase the capacity of Ysgol Treferythyr to 150 and relocate the school to an alternative site referred to as the A497 site on 1 September 2023, in accordance with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the requirements of the Schools Organisation Code 11/2018.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

The purpose of this report is to report to Cabinet following an objection period on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Treferythyr to 150 and relocate the school to an alternative site, referred to as the A497 site, on 1 September 2023.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Council submitted an 'Outline Strategic Application' for funding from the 21st Century Schools Programme (Band B) to the Welsh Government in 2017. As part of this, a budget of £4.97m was earmarked for building a new school in Cricieth as part of a £56.14m capital programme, with a contribution of £37.46m from the Welsh Government and £18.68m in match funding from Gwynedd Council. The bid for funding to build a new school in Cricieth was made because of the poor condition of the Ysgol Treferythyr building.
- 3.2 In its meeting on 2 April 2019, the Cabinet ([see Cabinet Report – Item 8](#)) approved the right to commence local discussions in order to identify options for the construction of a new primary school in Cricieth.
- 3.3 A Local Review Panel was established in June 2019 and a series of meetings were held between June 2019 and June 2020. Panel membership consisted of Governing Body representatives, the Headteacher of Ysgol Treferythyr, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Local Member. During the meetings the needs of the school were discussed, and consideration was given to a number of potential sites for locating the new school, including the current site along with other locations that had been identified jointly with the Governing Body. Following an appraisal of all the sites, the Panel agreed on the A497 Site as the preferred site.
- 3.4 In its meeting on 13 October 2020, the Cabinet ([see Cabinet Report – Item 6](#)) gave approval to conduct a statutory consultation in accordance with the requirements of section 48 of the School Standards

and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Trefferthyr to 150 and to relocate the school to an alternative site, referred to as the A497 site on 1 September 2023, and to report back to the Cabinet after completing the consultation.

4. STATUTORY CONSULTATION

- 4.1 In accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the statutory requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a period of statutory consultation on the proposal was held with relevant consultees between 6 November 2020 and 18 December 2020.
- 4.2 A [statutory consultation](#) document was created, and a copy was distributed to all relevant consultees.
- 4.3 Also, a [consultation document was created for primary school children](#) with accompanying questionnaires. Arrangements were made for the headteacher of Ysgol Trefferthyr to facilitate sessions with the pupils of the school to receive their responses to the proposal.
- 4.4 Ten responses to the statutory consultation were received from the public, the Town Council, governors, parents and Estyn together with 78 responses from pupils.
- 4.5 A report on the consultation was submitted to the Cabinet ([see Cabinet Report – Item 6](#)) on 26 January 2021. The Cabinet gave consideration to the observations received during the statutory consultation period and the responses to those observations, and approved conducting an objection period by publishing a Statutory Notice on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Trefferthyr to 150 and relocate the school to an alternative site, referred to as the A497 site on 1 September 2023.

5. OBJECTION PERIOD

The [Statutory Notice \(Appendix A\)](#) was published on 24 February 2021, commencing a 28-day objection period. The notices were placed on the school gates and on the Council's website. All the relevant stakeholders received an e-mail with a copy of the notice, informing them that the objection period had begun on 24 February 2021. The objection period ended on 24 March 2021, and no objections were received.

6. CAPITAL FUNDING

We have agreed a business case and final capital funding with the Welsh Government for funding from the 21st Century Schools Programme to build the new school in Cricieth. Confirmation was received on 24 March 2021 that the application had been successful and that the Welsh Government will be contributing £3,174,162, namely 65% towards a final capital budget of £4,883,326 towards the school aspect of the development, with Gwynedd Council contributing the remaining £1,709,164 of funding that has been allocated for projects in the 21st Century Schools Programme.

An early years unit will also be included on the new school site. Although sharing the same site, developing the unit is considered as a separate development to the school and will not be funded from the 21st Century Schools Programme. Discussions to secure funding for the unit are continuing.

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL

7.1 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

The Welsh Government guidance (School Organisation Code 011/2018) states that a Welsh language impact assessment must be conducted as part of any proposal involving school reorganisation. An assessment was completed of the impact that relocating the school to a new site could have on the Welsh language. See the full report in [Appendix B](#).

The assessment notes that relocating Ysgol Trefferthyr to a new site in Cricieth would not have a negative impact on the Welsh language. On the contrary, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for the children of Cricieth to use the Welsh language with their peers socially and in an extracurricular sense, as the new school will have better resources for conducting more activities outside school hours.

7.2 Equality Assessment

An equality assessment on relocating the school to a new site was completed. See the full report in [Appendix B](#). It concludes that the relocating of Ysgol Trefferthyr to another site would not affect equality, whether characteristics or the general duty.

It is anticipated that the construction of a new school will strengthen aspects of equality because it will be better suited to educating every child, particularly learners with disabilities, by following the guidelines on the construction of modern schools.

7.3 Well-being Assessment

The Education Department has a role in promoting well-being aims amongst school pupils in the county through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, the Council has published well-being objectives that outline the way it will improve well-being in the '2018-23 Gwynedd Plan'.

A well-being assessment on relocating the school to a new site was completed. See the full report in [Appendix B](#). Following consideration and assessment in line with the requirements of the Well-being Act, it was concluded that the proposal did satisfy the seven well-being goals within the Act, and the Council's well-being objectives. This proposal will allow us to respond to and meet the children's needs today, and also strengthen their future well-being.

7.4 Community impact assessment

An assessment of the impact on the community of relocating the school to a new site was completed. See the full report in [Appendix B](#).

No negative impact on the community is anticipated by relocating Ysgol Trefferthyr to the new site. The new school will still be within the town community and be able to offer facilities that will benefit learners and the wider community.

The modern rooms of the new school will offer themselves for holding community activities. In establishing the new school it is intended to promote community use for the wider community, in order to make full use of the new provision and modern resources.

Building the new school on the A497 site would ensure more space for the learners, offering more options for extracurricular clubs and activities.

8. RECOMMENDATION

As no objections were received during the objection period, and since the Welsh Government has confirmed a capital funding contribution from the 21st Century Schools Programme for building the new school, it is recommended that the Cabinet approves the decision sought, which is to finally confirm the proposal made through a statutory notice, to increase the capacity of Ysgol Trefferthyr to 150 and to relocate the school to an alternative site referred to as the A497 site, on 1 September 2023, in accordance with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the requirements of the School Organisation Code 11/2018.

9. NEXT STEPS

Subject to the Cabinet's decision, these are the next steps of the process with an outline timetable:

May – June 2021	Decision referred to Welsh Ministers: In accordance with section 54 of the 2013 Act, within 28 days of the Cabinet's decision, the proposal may be referred to the Welsh Government's Minister for Education and Skills.
June 2021 – June 2023	Planning application, purchase of land, and site development, construction and furnishing.
1 September 2023	Implement the proposal: Ysgol Trefferthyr to relocate from the current site to the A497 site

10. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

The Monitoring Officer:

This report has been the subject of advice from the Legal Service. No observations to add in relation to propriety.

Head of Finance:

As part 6 of the report notes, the Cabinet has already provided for the financing of the scheme. I support the recommendation to finally confirm the proposal made through the statutory notice.

The Local Member:

Good to see there were no objections to the proposal of moving Ysgol Trefferthyr to the new site. Also glad to see that the Council has secured a financial contribution of £3,174,162 from the Welsh Government towards the development. I look forward to seeing the work on site commencing in the near future.

Appendices

Appendix A: Statutory Notice

Appendix B: Impact Assessments

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS – All relevant background documentation on the proposal are available on the Council's website through the following link:

<http://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation>