

## Welsh Language Impact Assessment

### FINANCING SCHOOLS – REVIEWING THE FUNDING FORMULA TO RAISE STANDARDS

#### Context

1. This Welsh language impact assessment<sup>1</sup> has been carried out to inform Member decision making in respect of the proposal's alignment with Council's position on the promotion and celebration of Welsh language and Welsh culture.
2. Welsh medium schools receive school budget shares using the same formula as English-medium school although a separate capitation element is included to compensate for the additional costs in delivering Welsh language education. This is a small element of the overall primary school budget share allocation – less than 1%. In all other regards, the impact of the proposed revised formulas will be the same as English-medium.
3. At a school based level, implementing the revised formula to include the capitation uplift (all options) will result in improved facilities for delivering Welsh language education and for supporting Welsh cultural activities.

#### The reasons for revising the formula

4. The Council's school funding formula was substantively revised in 2011. It is this modified version that is currently used to distribute funding to schools.
5. The current formula has been an important step forward towards a more equitable distribution of funding to schools. However, there are aspects of the formula that need further revision, particularly in light of the continuing economic constraint placed upon public finance.
6. The school estate has changed significantly since 2011 with a number of small schools being closed, federations formed, infant/junior schools amalgamated and new schools established. The current funding formula no longer reflects the balance between

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<sup>1</sup> First iteration: 190917/ Second iteration: 030118

small and large schools. Support via the formula for the remaining smaller schools is still disproportionately impacting on the overall funding allocation to schools, resulting in funding not being distributed equitably on a 'per pupil' basis.

7. In short, the formula is still subsidising smaller schools, i.e. the schools with the fewest of pupils, to the detriment of the larger schools, a position which is no longer sustainable.
8. A further revision of the current primary funding formula is necessary to address these continuing issues of inequity.

### **Welsh language impacts associated with the proposal**

9. The Council recognises that language and culture are essential parts of an individual's identity and it is committed to promoting and celebrating the Welsh language and culture in a pro-active and inclusive way. The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) details how it intends to further develop Welsh language education in schools. Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot schools where children benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and understand their lives in a Welsh-medium environment. The Council underpins this principle by ensuring universal access to this provision.
10. As with the review of 2011, compared to the status quo smaller schools will receive reduced budget shares and this is the case under all three options. Larger schools will benefit. The Council currently supports small and large Welsh-medium schools, although school reorganisation has reduced the number of small Welsh-medium schools.
11. Increasing the capitation allocation from 10% to 50% will provide added financial support to Welsh-medium schools.
12. The risks associated with the proposal in this review are common across all primary schools. These can be found in the risk assessment attached to the report as appendix C.

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13. In light of the evidence presented it is concluded that:

- The formula as consulted upon will bring added benefit to Welsh-medium schools specifically by increasing the level of the capitation supplement to 50%.
- This change will result in Welsh-medium schools receiving more funding within the Capitation Line of their formula allocation.
- In all other regards, the proposed revision does not distinguish between English-medium and Welsh-medium schools and, as such, the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English, in line with the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011.