

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EDUCATION SKILLS AND CULTURE CABINET BOARD

23rd JANUARY 2020

JOINT REPORT OF THE HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION AND THE HEAD OF PROPERTY AND REGENERATION

MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: MARGAM

LONGLANDS LANE PLAYING FIELDS AND CHANGING ROOMS

Purpose of Report

1. To obtain Member approval in declaring the playing fields and changing rooms at Longlands Lane, Margam, Port Talbot, SA13 2NR as being surplus to the ongoing strategic and operational requirements of the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Service.

Executive Summary

2. Following the successful delivery of the first wave of the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme and more specifically the establishment of two brand new 21st Century middle schools at Ysgol Bae Baglan and Ysgol Cwm Brombil, off-site sporting facilities previously assigned for school usage have become surplus to ongoing strategic and operational requirements.

Background

3. Longlands Lane playing fields and changing rooms are adjacent to Junction 38 of the M4 motorway in close proximity to Margam Crematorium and Cemetery, BOC Margam and Tata Steelworks as approximately shown edged in Black on the attached site plan at Appendix 1.
4. Previously, at a meeting on 17th July 2013 and after having received objections following extensive consultation and the publication of statutory notice as part of the Council's Strategic Schools' Improvement Programme, Cabinet referred a proposal to Welsh Government to establish a new 3-16 school at Western

Avenue, Port Talbot which would result in the closure of Cwrt Sart, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive schools together with Traethmelyn Primary school.

5. The Minister for Education and Skills approved the aforementioned proposal on 9th December 2013 (see attached WG Decision Letter Appendix 2)
6. Subsequently the Council implemented the proposal on 1st September 2016 with the opening of Ysgol Bae Baglan.
7. The playing fields and changing rooms at Longlands Lane were the designated off-site sports facilities for the former Glanafan Comprehensive School prior to its closure on 31st August 2016.
8. Pupils who would have previously attended Glanafan Comprehensive School now receive their education at Ysgol Bae Baglan, a brand new (3-16) school opened as part of the Council's Strategic Schools Improvement Programme and Welsh Government's Band A 21st Century Schools' Programme.
9. Ysgol Bae Baglan benefits from first class on-site sporting facilities including a number of grass pitches, a 3G, Astro Turf and a multi-court sports hall which are also available for community use and as such the facilities at Longlands Lane became temporarily non-operational.
10. On 22nd February 2017, following extensive consultation and the publication of statutory notice, Cabinet also determined a proposal to establish an English-medium, community school to replace Groes Primary and Dyffryn School, both of which would be discontinued with a planned implementation date of 1st September 2018.
11. As a result, the facilities available at Longlands Lane were brought back into service from Easter 2017 to provide off-site sports pitches for pupils of Dyffryn School whilst construction works progressed for their new replacement school on the existing playing fields at the Bertha Road site in Margam.
12. Ysgol Cwm Brombil was duly established in September 2018 as a 3-16 school for pupils previously attending Groes Primary and Dyffryn School both of which subsequently closed in line with the Council's ambitious Strategic Schools' Improvement Programme and Band A of the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools' Programme.
13. Whilst the new build at Ysgol Cwm Brombil, Bertha Road, Margam, saw a phased occupation by pupils from October 2018 a second stage of works continued externally to demolish both the vacated former Dyffryn School and Groes Primary buildings to accommodate necessary vehicular parking, parental/bus drop-off areas and the reinstatement of on-site sports pitches for the newly established 3-16 school.

14. All remaining external works at Ysgol Cwm Brombil were completed in October 2019 and the new school now benefits from excellent on-site sporting facilities including a grass pitch, 3G pitch and a multi-court sports hall which are also available for community use.
15. There has been no supplementary community use of the facilities at Longlands Lane for a number of years (prior to the closure of the former Glanafan Comprehensive School) and the excellent sporting facilities now on offer to the public at both Ysgol Bae Baglan and Ysgol Cwm Brombil has resulted in the playing fields and changing rooms becoming non-operational and as such surplus to the ongoing strategic needs of the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Service.
16. The changing rooms and playing fields at Longlands Lane are within the Public Information Zone (PIZ) of BOC Gases Off-site Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Plan which is likely to place some constraints on potential alternative future use of the site.

Financial Impact Assessment

17. There are no immediate financial impacts with this decision.

Integrated Impact Assessment

18. The Minister for Education and Skills has previously approved the establishment of a new 3-16 school at Western Avenue, Port Talbot (Ysgol Bae Baglan) and the resultant closure of Cwrt Sart, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive schools together with Traethmelyn Primary school on 9th December 2013, whilst Cabinet determined the proposal to establish an English-medium, community school to replace Groes Primary and Dyffryn School on 22nd February 2017. Copies of both Equality Impact Assessment Report Forms are annexed to this Report at Appendix 3 and Appendix 4
19. An integrated impact screening assessment has also been carried out which has identified that at this stage a further integrated impact assessment is not required. The screening assessment is enclosed at Appendix 5

Workforce Impact

20. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impact

21. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

22. There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

23. There are no requirements for additional external consultation in this instance.

Recommendation

24. To declare the playing fields and changing rooms at Longlands Lane, Margam, Port Talbot, SA13 2NR as being surplus to the ongoing strategic and operational requirements of the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Service.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

25. The playing fields and changing rooms are non-operational and therefore surplus to the ongoing strategic needs of the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Service.

Implementation of Decision

26. The decision will be implemented after a 3 day call in period.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Plan

Appendix 2 – Minister for Education and Skills Decision Letter

Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment (Ysgol Bae Baglan)

Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Report Form (Ysgol Cwm Brombil)

Appendix 5 – Integrated Impact Screening Assessment

List of Background Papers

a) Cabinet Report – 17th July 2013

[http://moderngov.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20130717/Agenda/\\$CAB-170713-REP-EL-AE.doc.pdf](http://moderngov.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20130717/Agenda/$CAB-170713-REP-EL-AE.doc.pdf)

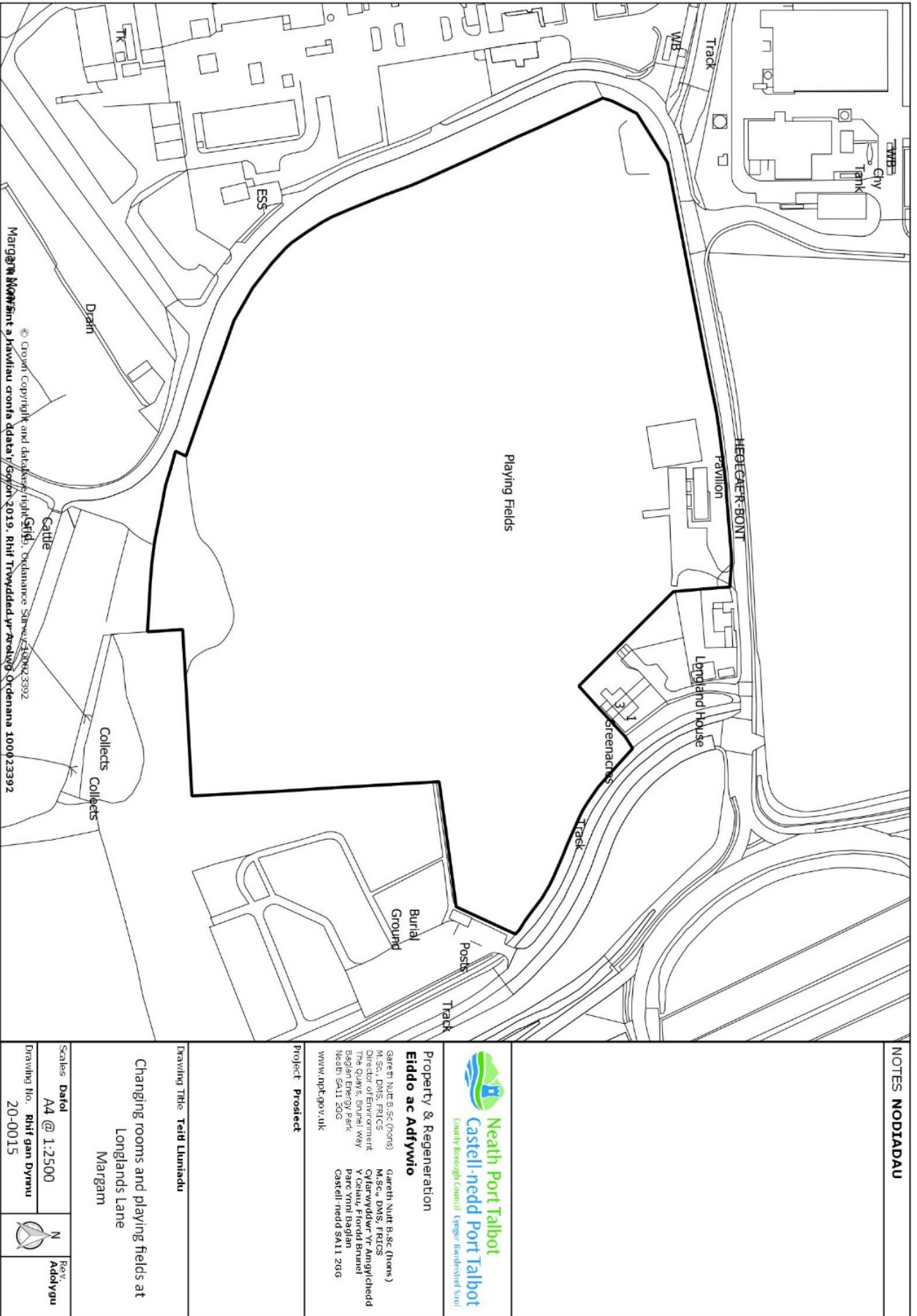
b) Cabinet Report – 22nd February 2017

<http://moderngov.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=158&MId=6586&Ver=4>

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APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2

Yr Adran Addysg a Sgiliau
Department for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Mr Aled Evans
Director of Education
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Education Department
Civic Centre
Port Talbot
SA13 1PJ

Our Ref/Your Ref: qA1081446

9 December 2013

Dear Mr Evans

**SCHOOL STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORK ACT 1998 - SECTIONS 28 AND 29
PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE CWRT SART COMMUNITY, GLANAFAN AND
SANDFIELDS COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS AND TRAETHMELYN PRIMARY
SCHOOL, AND ESTABLISH A SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AGED 3-16 YEARS
AT BAGLAN BAY, PORT TALBOT**

1. I refer to the above mentioned proposal published on 4 June 2013 by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council under Sections 28 and 29 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ("the 1998 Act"). Under paragraph 8(1) (b) of Schedule 6 to the 1998 Act, the proposal requires approval by the Welsh Ministers.
2. This matter has been considered by Huw Lewis, Minister for Education and Skills, one of the Welsh Ministers.
3. I am directed by the Minister to say that he has carefully considered the proposal, the statutory objections submitted to him, the local authority's comments thereon, the supporting evidence supplied by the local authority in accordance with the Education (School Organisation Proposals) (Wales) Regulations 1999 (the 1999 Regulations) and advice from Estyn. In exercise of his powers under paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 6 to the 1998 Act and with regard to Circulars 9/99¹ and 21/2009, the Minister has decided to approve the proposal on the condition that the local authority obtains planning permission by 30 September 2014 and on condition that a business case for funding under the 21st Century Schools Programme receives final approval.
4. In reaching this decision, and taking into account all matters brought to his attention, the Minister is satisfied that the proposal will maintain and probably improve the

¹ Circular 9/99 was issued by the National Assembly for Wales as constituted by the Government of Wales Act 1998. Further to the Government of Wales Act 2006, this Circular should now be regarded as if made by the Welsh Ministers.

standards of education in the area and will ensure the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. The Minister is also satisfied that the proposal will reduce surplus places, make revenue savings and contribute to a strategically planned high quality estate of secondary and primary schools.

5. The Minister is satisfied that the local authority has met the statutory requirements in respect of consultation on the proposal and its publication, and notes that it has submitted, in accordance with the 1999 Regulations, the information required in Schedule 4 to those Regulations. The Minister is also satisfied that consultation was carried out with children and young people sufficiently and suitably.

Objections to the proposal

6. The Minister notes that there were 3085 statutory objections and a petition of 6034 signatures. Of these, 111 were individualised responses and the remaining 2974 were signed copies of standardised objections, consisting of 29 variants. The objections came from current and former pupils, parents, grandparents and staff of Cwrt Sart, the governing body of Cwrt Sart, the governing body and school council of Melin Junior School, the Headteacher of Llansawel Primary School, local residents and councillors, Briton Ferry Town Council, Briton Ferry Pensioners, the Minister of Rehoboth Church, the National Deaf Children's Society, AFASIC Cymru, an Education Welfare Officer from Briton Ferry/Melin, a community and outreach officer, the Briton Ferry and Neath Macmillan Cancer Support Committee, the chairman of Briton Ferry Llansawel AFC, Suzy Davies AM, Bethan Jenkins AM, David Rees AM, Peter Black AM, Gwenda Thomas AM, Byron Davies AM, Peter Hain MP and Hywel Francis MP and other interested parties. He has noted the principal concerns of the objectors, which centred on the effects of the closure of Cwrt Sart. These are summarised in the Statement of Information on which he based his decision. He also noted the summary of the local authority responses, which were also included in the Statement of Information. The Statement of Information can be accessed through the Welsh Government website via the following link.

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/decisions/dr2013/iulsep/addvsa/?lang=en>

The Minister's conclusions

7. After careful consideration, the Minister feels that the responses made by the local authority adequately answer the issues raised in the statutory objections.

Standards of provision in the area

8. Although objectors take the view that pupils are provided with a good standard of education at Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive School and closing the school will have a negative impact upon the attainment of pupils from Briton Ferry and Melincryddan, the local authority believes that by bringing high performing schools together in a new build, state of the art teaching and learning environment, further improvements in performance would be realised. The Minister tends to agree with this view. The Minister acknowledges that Cwrt Sart is recognised as a good and outstanding school according to the most recent local authority monitoring school performance report, and Glanafan and Sandfields were assessed as adequate and excellent, respectively. The local authority recognises the good and excellent practice identified at the existing schools, and believes that this will provide an excellent foundation for securing future school improvement at a combined school. The Minister agrees with this conclusion.

9. Although objectors allege that large schools underperform in comparison with smaller schools, the Minister has seen no substantial evidence to support this viewpoint. There is no strong evidence, so far as the Minister is aware, that size in itself has a substantial impact on standards, as other factors, such as leadership, and good teaching, have greater bearing. The Minister feels that a larger school will have a consequently larger budget and should be able to recruit a strong and experienced leadership team. The local authority's proposed structure for the new school, and the provision of a network of smaller learning communities within a larger whole school environment would, it appears to the Minister, help to allay concerns about size. Objectors were also concerned that the larger new school could cause stress for pupils with additional learning needs, but the local authority has provided assurances to the Minister that the specialist facility will form an integral part of the proposed new school but will also have dedicated accommodation and facilities. The Minister understands that the local authority has also undertaken to consult relevant professionals with expertise in specialist areas on the planning, structure and management of the facilities. The local authority's assertion that the Learning Support Centre provision will build upon the excellent specialist support currently provided and will cater for the same range of pupil needs persuades the Minister that new facilities will more likely than not improve on those currently available and provide at least as good support to pupils as they currently enjoy. Whilst objectors were also concerned that teaching expertise would be lost, the Minister understands that the local authority has confirmed that it will work with the governing body of the new school to secure the employment of staff from the existing schools as far as possible. The Minister is satisfied on this basis that the best teaching staff will be recruited to the school and it is likely that many of them are currently employed at the existing schools. He believes that this will help to maintain the standard of education. The Minister notes that although the local authority was not entirely accurate in stating that there was a requirement to advertise Headships nationally, it intends to strongly encourage the new governing body to do so in order to attract a strong field of candidates. This is clearly a matter for discussion with the new governing body when it is appointed.
10. Some objectors also asserted that there would be disadvantage to pupils from Melin Infant and Junior Schools as they would be more likely to attend Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School in future, which is in their view a lower performing school. The Minister is aware that the local authority has countered these claims by pointing to the findings of their own monitoring which identified both Cefn Saeson and Cwrt Sart as good and outstanding schools. The Minister requested specific advice from Estyn on this aspect of the proposals and Estyn has identified no reason to suggest that Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Schools will not maintain their satisfactory standards as both perform well. Overall, the Minister is in agreement with Estyn that the proposal is likely to maintain and improve the standard of education in the area, including the standards for pupils with special educational needs. It appears to the Minister more than likely that many existing good teachers will transfer to new high quality provision as a result of this proposal, resulting in an overall improvement in provision for all pupils transferring to the new school. He is also content that for any pupils not accommodated by the new school in future, who would progress to either Cefn Saeson or Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools, whilst these schools are not in better buildings than those which are due to close, both provide good standards of education. For those pupils, the Minister takes the view that standards of provision should be maintained.

the standard of education currently provided and the continuing ability of the school to maintain satisfactory standards

11. The Minister notes that all four schools have performed at least adequately in recent years, although Cwrt Sart appears to have performed particularly well, taking into account the proportion of pupils receiving free school meals, as objectors have been quite right to point out. The Minister recognises that if pupil numbers at Cwrt Sart, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive Schools and Traethmelyn Primary School were to remain at the current level, it is likely that standards of education would be maintained. However, he believes that if pupil numbers were to continue to decline at the secondary schools, as the local authority's projections suggest, there is the possibility that it might be more challenging to maintain standards of education and for the schools to remain cost effective individually, and retain sufficient good quality staff with the relevant range of expertise.

Delivery of the curriculum

12. The Minister considers that this proposal will promote the more effective delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum as pupils will have access to a larger team of teachers, who can share good practice, a broader range of specialisms and a new 21st century teaching and learning environment. Estyn agrees with this view and believes that the proposal will cater for pupils with varying needs by providing wider choices and flexibility. The Minister is satisfied that whilst all secondary schools successfully deliver the required number of subject options, some in conjunction with the local FE Institution, the increased staffing complement and budget would provide greater flexibility to employ teachers with the required skills and a wider range of skills and subject specialisms.

the effect of the proposals on other schools and educational institutions.

13. The Minister recognises that the catchment areas of Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools will be modified as part of the proposal to include pupils from the Melin and Central Infant and Junior Schools catchments. He understands that these secondary schools can be expected to receive an influx of pupils, which will reduce their surplus capacity, and is likely to make them more cost effective. The Minister also understands that some pupils from the 2 primary school catchments already transfer to Cefn Saeson or Dyffryn, and links with secondary schools therefore already exist. The Minister does not believe that the proposal will disadvantage any other schools and they are more likely to benefit from an increase in take up. Estyn agrees with this view.

Need for places and the impact on accessibility of schools

14. The Minister notes that the proposal will remove 1,370 mainstream secondary places, whilst the number of primary school places will increase by 21, resulting in an overall reduction of 1,349 surplus places. He understands that the local authority agrees with objectors that the new school could be overcapacity for the first four years due to the transitional arrangement put in place enabling pupils to transfer together to the new provision, but it assures the Minister that there are practical options to address this situation. The Minister is content that the local authority has a series of options to consider which will help to address the potential problem of oversubscription. He also thinks it possible that some parents with primary age children may, in the interim period prior to the implementation of the proposal, opt for Cefn Saeson or Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools more often, so as to avoid siblings attending different secondary schools in future. The Minister notes that Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Schools can be expected to receive an influx of pupils which will reduce their surplus capacity.

He believes that the proposal will lead to better subscribed schools in the area in general, although it was not intended, as some objectors allege, primarily to increase the number of pupils at Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools. Objectors also allege that the pupil projections did not take into account the rising birth rate, but the Minister sees no reason to doubt the local authority's assurances that it uses a reliable method for estimating pupil numbers, with estimates based on known numbers in schools together with historical information on admission rates. The Minister is aware that routine monitoring of annual forecasting of secondary pupil numbers indicates that the local authority is generally fairly accurate and increasingly so in recent years. The Minister believes that there will be little to no impact on mainstream primary places as the capacity of the primary sector in the new school will be only marginally larger than that currently provided at Traethmelyn Primary School. He believes that the proposal will leave sufficient capacity for pupils in the overall area. In addition, the Minister notes that the local authority will review provision at both Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn in due course and in providing new schools in those localities in future, which is their intention, there would be an opportunity if it proves necessary, to increase or reduce the size of schools in those locations.

Demand for schools of a particular type

15. As Cwrt Sart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive Schools and Traethmelyn Primary School will be replaced with a new school, the Minister concludes that the quality of accommodation will be superior to that currently provided and he is content that the new school will be of equivalent linguistic type. The Minister is satisfied that in due course the capacity will be sufficient for foreseen needs and the local authority has transition options in mind to ensure that pupils can be properly accommodated in the meantime.

Journeys to school

16. Objectors allege that the local authority has only assessed one route from Cwrt Sart to the proposed new school and has not assessed routes more distant from the new school or a route from Melincryddan to Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School. Objectors also allege that the local authority did not assess the route from Cwrt Sart during normal walking to school time, and that various other matters have not been taken into account. The Minister is satisfied with the local authority's general line that assessments will need to be updated closer to the point of implementation, in the light of any new guidance from the Welsh Government or other statutory bodies, and that if school transport is indicated it will be provided. In addition to this, objectors allege that during inclement weather or for their children to attend after school activities, they will not be able to fund public transport. The Minister understands that the local authority has taken the view that the school could arrange extra-curricular activities during the lunch hour/school day or could arrange transport for pupils, and he believes that this is, overall a reasonable approach, as pupils in many areas live some distance from their secondary schools. The Minister notes that the local authority estimates that around 70 pupils will be entitled to transport but he recognises that this figure could increase depending on the outcome of the assessments of walking routes. He also notes that the local authority, in contradiction of the views of objectors, confirmed that costs of transport will not adversely affect the affordability of the proposal and that this issue will, in any case be scrutinised as part of the business case for capital funding. Whilst some objectors believe that truancy will increase due to the distance to the new school, affecting pupil outcomes, the local authority has assured the Minister that there are examples within the County Borough where pupils have similar journeys to school, and it does not result in higher levels of truancy. Overall, the Minister is satisfied that the

local authority will provide a safe walking/cycle route or transport to the new school and to Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools, in line with the guidance current at the time of assessment. He is also satisfied that journey times should also be well within the limits advocated in guidance.

Access for disabled pupils

17. The Minister is satisfied that disabled pupils will be better catered for as a result of the proposal as the local authority has confirmed that the new school will be fully compliant with legislative requirements, and all facilities will be new.

Financial implications

18. The Minister believes that the proposal represents a more efficient use of resources, as it will remove four schools which require approximately £16.8 million in repairs alone, and in all likelihood, a sum far in excess of this to bring them up to a proper standard for the delivery of the curriculum. The Minister is also aware that it will reduce the number of headteachers in the locality. The Minister notes that although the capital costs of the proposal are high at £40 million, the revenue savings will provide the means to fund the local authority's share of the investment and justify the capital expenditure. The Minister is satisfied that the local authority confirmed, in their revised submission for the 21st Century Schools Programme, in December 2011, that it would commit 50% of the required funding for the project. Objectors claimed that the costs over the lifetime of the new school will be more expensive than maintaining the current schools, but the Minister agrees with the local authority that maintaining the schools on a 'patch and mend' basis does not represent best use of resources and does not provide modern facilities for teaching and learning in the 21st century. Objectors also claimed that the proposal does not include costs of gaining planning permission, redundancy and transport costs. The Minister is satisfied that the affordability of the proposal passed assurance tests at local authority level and is subject to further scrutiny at Welsh Government level as part of the 21st Century Schools Programme. His decision on these proposals is without prejudice to any decisions that might need to be taken by him or other Ministers in relation to matters which would enable this project to proceed.
19. The Minister acknowledges the local authority's intention to develop a new build primary school with community facilities on the vacated Cwrt Sart site and to establish Welsh medium provision on the vacated Sandfields and Traethmelyn site, although no statutory steps have yet been taken to these ends. The Minister notes that the local authority has confirmed that the redundant Glanafan Comprehensive School site will be released for economic regeneration within the Port Talbot town centre and dock areas. He also notes that all school sites are owned by the local authority which has confirmed that any monies realised from the sale of any site or part site, will be reinvested into the education budget. The Minister commends this approach.
20. The Minister recognises that for the last four years, all but Sandfields Comprehensive School have carried forward a budget balance each year. He notes that Sandfields has found difficulty in managing its budget previously and this could arise again, unless action is taken.

Views of interested parties

21. The Minister believes that there were no specific objections from those with an interest in Sandfields or Glanafan Comprehensive Schools or Traethmelyn Primary School and that this could be interpreted as support for the proposal from the majority of interested

parties. However, he notes that the opposition has been very strong from those representing Cwrt Sart, and elected members of both the National Assembly for Wales and the Houses of Parliament have supported the views of these objectors. Most of the issues raised by objectors are covered in the paragraphs above and below, with the exception of wellbeing and welfare and the suitability of the site for the new school. The Minister notes that objectors were concerned that relationships between pupils, parents and social workers or education welfare officers may be compromised due to unease of access to the new school, which they claim will be a barrier to fostering close school - /family relationships. However, the local authority has assured the Minister that clear communication avenues will be established with all parents and the range and effectiveness of services available to families will be greater in a large school. Some objectors alleged that the proposed site for the new school is on industrial land where carcinogenic materials were used in production. The Minister has received confirmation from the local authority that the new school will be built on playing fields and the build is subject to formal planning approval. He is also satisfied with the local authority's confirmation that a site investigation and environmental/traffic impact assessments will need to be completed. The Minister understands that no concerns have been raised by any local authority or diocesan authority, but notes that the governing body and school council of Melin Junior School objected to the proposal. He understands that they were mainly concerned with issues already discussed above and below. However, he is aware that some were also concerned about the potential impact a new primary school which might be developed if this proposal is approved, on the vacated Cwrt Sart site, could have on Melin Infant and Junior Schools. The Minister is satisfied that the potential new school would need to be subject to consultation in due course if the local authority decides to proceed with those plans, and it does not need to be considered by him at this stage. The Minister notes that Llansawel Primary School also objected to the proposal, raising issues in common with those discussed in the paragraphs above and below. Overall the Minister is satisfied that the local authority has dealt with objections sufficiently and that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the issues raised by objectors.

21st Century Schools

22. The Minister feels that the proposal will contribute to better strategic management as it will remove three secondary schools and a primary school which will require substantial investment and secure a suitable learning environment in the future. The Minister is satisfied that the proposal will also provide a new, sustainable, 21st century teaching and learning environment, which will contribute towards improved pupil outcomes.

Consideration of alternatives

23. Although objectors allege that alternatives to closure have not been actively considered, the local authority assures the Minister that other options were considered and these were clearly set out in the consultation document. The Minister is satisfied that the local authority considered various options and was reasonable in bringing this proposal forward rather than an alternative.

Other issues

Community impact

24. The Minister notes that the local authority has carried out a community impact assessment. He is aware that objectors allege that community impact has not been assessed properly and that the proposal is counter to the School Effectiveness Framework. The Minister is satisfied that the local authority's community impact assessment identified a range of community based activities provided at the current

school sites and it has assured the Minister that the majority of these activities would either be transferred to the new school, or will be provided at the new Welsh medium school planned on the Sandfields site or the new primary school planned on the Cwrt Sart site. The Minister is aware that although no statutory procedures have yet commenced in order to realise these schemes, the local authority has indicated that as far as possible, community facilities would be maintained in any interim period between the closure of schools and the provision of alternative facilities on the vacated sites. Objectors also believe that community and sports facilities at Cefn Saeson are restricted when compared with Cwrt Sart. The Minister acknowledges that the local authority dismisses these claims as it believes that pupils will benefit from the leisure and learning facilities at the new school, as well as the enhanced community facilities that will be available at the new primary school on the Cwrt Sart site in due course and it believes that the facilities at Cefn Saeson successfully serve the community. The Minister believes this to be a reasonable approach as new community provision is clearly part of the local authority's forward plans.

25. Objectors allege that the local authority failed to acknowledge the diversity between the communities where the three secondary schools are located and they believe this will deter many pupils from undertaking extra-curricular activities, due to the threat of conflict and anti-social behaviour and the difficulty of access. However, the Minister notes that the local authority believes that bringing pupils together in this way promotes inclusion and enriches the life experiences of pupils. The local authority assures the Minister that there are other examples within the County Borough of successful secondary schools serving communities who would regard themselves as equally distinct. It also assures the Minister that some activities could be made available during the lunch hour/school day or transport could be arranged to make activities more accessible. The Minister believes this to be a reasonable position to adopt.

26. The Minister has noted the concerns of objectors that the removal of Cwrt Sart will have a detrimental impact on the area's desirability, in terms of attracting inward migration of families and economic investment. The Minister understands that the local authority disagrees with objectors on this point as outside of the school day, and school terms pupils will be able to contribute to the life and economy of their own local communities and existing community provision is likely to be retained and enhanced through the development of a new primary school on the Cwrt Sart site. Overall, the Minister is satisfied that the local authority will take actions to mitigate any negative impact on the community and clearly aims to improve community provision in this area in the longer term.

Welsh language impact

27. The Minister notes that the local authority has carried out a Welsh language impact assessment. The Minister is satisfied that standards in Welsh language will be maintained at the new school as the Welsh language provision at the proposed new school will be comparable with that currently provided and the proposal will contribute to the local authority Welsh in Education Strategic Plan by improving provision to address literacy in Welsh, and by providing future growth in the south of the County Borough by releasing a site for a second Welsh medium secondary school.

Statutory consultation

28. The Minister is content that publication procedures were carried out properly and that the local authority carried out formal consultation over an adequate period of just over

six weeks. He understands that during this period, a consultation document was circulated and public meetings were held. He is satisfied that the local authority consulted with a wide range of other interested parties in addition to those most directly affected. The Minister understands the views of objectors who alleged that the local authority failed to acknowledge that the plans to reorganise secondary education in Briton Ferry and Melincryddan were separate, in that pupils from the latter area would not be likely to attend the new school. He takes the view that whilst the consultation document could have done more to explore the particular effects of the proposal on pupils from Melincryddan (and the Central Junior School) by providing more details about the other secondary schools in the area, these schools would have been well known to the relevant communities as a substantial proportion of pupils each year from the primary schools involved already opt for either Cefn Saeson or Dyffryn for secondary schooling. It therefore appears to the Minister that, overall, the effect of the proposal was clear to parents. Objectors also believe that the consultation meetings failed to give pupils the opportunity to consider and discuss the proposed closure of their local school and that the strong opposition against the closure of Cwrt Sart was ignored. However, the Minister understands from the local authority that the Cabinet members had access to the consultation responses, the alternative proposal was reported to the Cabinet and was also included within the consultation document. The Minister has been assured by the local authority that there has been no impropriety in decision making on the part of the local authority cabinet and that relevant interests were declared. Overall, the Minister is satisfied that sufficient information and time was provided to interested parties, allowing them to make an informed decision as to whether to support or oppose the proposal.

Class sizes

29. The Minister recognises the good record of adhering to infant class size legislation and junior class size policy at Traethmelyn Primary School. He does not anticipate this changing as the capacity of the new school for primary age pupils will be similar to that of Traethmelyn Primary School and classrooms can be designed to accommodate 30 pupils.

Equality impact

30. The Minister notes that the local authority has carried out an equalities impact assessment, which identified no adverse effect on any particular group. The local authority has reported that there could potentially be a negative impact on children's travel to school arrangements, through increased travel distance but has assured him that a full travel assessment has been commissioned of routes to the proposed new school and to Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools. The Minister is aware that the local authority recognised that there could be potentially be an impact on pupils outside of the 3-16 age group, as they would not be able to attend the new school. However, the local authority has assured the Minister that pre-school activities are available in the locality and post-16 education is available at Neath Port Talbot College and within the County Borough at a Welsh medium school and a Faith school. The Minister has received confirmation from the local authority that pupils with additional learning needs will be provided for in a mainstream setting and in an integrated Learning Support Centre, in line with current arrangements at Cwrt Sart and Sandfields. The Minister is satisfied that sufficient consideration has been given to equalities issues and that the overall impact of the proposal will not substantially prejudice any group.

Factors taken into account for proposals to reorganise secondary schools

31. The Minister acknowledges that the number of qualification options available at Cwrt Sart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive Schools varies however; he is satisfied that all schools provide sufficient options in accordance with the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure, and that they collaborate with Neath Port Talbot College. The Minister believes that this proposal will provide potential for delivery to be enhanced at one location due to the larger number of pupils on roll and larger staffing complement. The Minister is also satisfied that sufficient options are available at Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools, for the pupils transferring from Melin and Central Schools. The Minister is content that the Neath Port Talbot 14-19 Network was consulted and he notes that they offered no comments either adverse or favourable. The Minister is content that the proposal contributes towards the transformation agenda. Objectors allege that closing Cwrt Sart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive Schools will disrupt pupils' studies at GCSE level. The Minister is satisfied that the local authority has put a transitional arrangement in place for all Y8, Y9, Y10 and Y11 pupils from the existing secondary schools to transfer to the new school, to provide continuity of education and to avoid disrupting pupils' studies. Overall, the Minister feels that the proposal will contribute to the ease of the delivery of a wide range of options and qualifications for pupils within the area.

Additional considerations where proposals include the reorganisation of SEN provision

32. The Minister is in agreement with Estyn that the planned improvements for learners with special educational needs at the proposed school suitably focus on the learning outcomes for all pupils as detailed in the local authority's Performance Improvement Plan 2013-2015. He notes that the Plan's 7 strategic themes are closely aligned to Children and Young People's Plan priorities, the Inclusion Strategy activities and the Regional Integrated School Improvement Service's objectives. The Minister notes that the schools involved are all based in Neath Port Talbot, therefore he recognises that there is no evidence of regional collaboration for this particular proposal. The Minister does not anticipate there being an impact on other services within the local authority and he believes that the proposal will not be likely to have a wider impact as the new provision will consolidate provision currently delivered in 2 locations. The Minister believes that the proposal will improve the standards of accommodation as Cwrt Sart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive Schools and Traethmelyn Primary School have all been proposed for closure and he anticipates that the new provision will ensure that the health, safety and welfare of pupils is well supported. The Minister is content that the local authority consulted widely in respect of this proposal, contacting 3rd sector bodies in addition to the Health authority. He recognises that the local authority has also undertaken to consult relevant professionals with expertise in specialist areas on the planning, structure and management of the facilities. The Minister is aware that no comments were forthcoming from the Health authority and therefore he concludes that it does not oppose the proposal.

33. The Minister notes that this proposal is due to be implemented with effect from 1 September 2016 and from that date pupils attending Cwrt Sart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive Schools and Traethmelyn Primary School will, subject to the expression of parental preference, transfer to the new school at Baglan Bay. Furthermore, also from that date pupils leaving Melin and Central Infant and Junior Schools will, subject to the expression of parental preference, transfer to Cefn Saeson and Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools, respectively. The Minister looks to the local authority to ensure that appropriate transitional arrangements are put in place and that

the transfer of pupils is carried out with the minimum disruption possible. The local authority should inform Schools Management and Effectiveness Division of the Welsh Government, Department for Education and Skills when the proposal has been implemented.

34. Schools Management and Effectiveness Division of the Welsh Government, Department for Education and Skills should be informed of the new school's official name as it will appear on the Instrument of Government, along with the school's address, so that a school number may be issued to you.
35. The Minister has set the condition that planning permission should be obtained by 30 September 2014. Schools Management and Effectiveness Division of the Welsh Government, Department for Education and Skills must be informed as soon as planning permission has been obtained.
36. I am sending a copy of this letter to the Chief Executive of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of Cwrt Sart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive Schools and Traethmelyn Primary School, the statutory objectors and Suzy Davies AM, Bethan Jenkins AM, David Rees AM, Peter Black AM, Gwenda Thomas AM, Byron Davies AM, Peter Hain MP and Hywel Francis MP. The Chief Executive, Headteachers and Chairs of Governors will receive a copy of the Statement of Information.

Yours sincerely



STEVE VINCENT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR: SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS DIVISION

APPENDIX 3

Equality Impact Assessment

**updated in respect of Equality Act 2010*

Ysgol Newydd Bae Baglan Proposal

Section:	<i>Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP)</i>	Officer responsible for the screening/scoping:	<i>Richard Gordon Programme Manager Strategic School Improvement Programme</i>
Policy/Procedure /Process to be assessed:	<i>School Organisation</i>	Is this a proposed new of existing policy/procedure /practice?	<i>Existing</i>
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice	Proposal to discontinue Cwrt Cart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive schools and Traethmelyn Primary school, and establish a school for boys and girls age 3-16 years at Baglan Bay, Port Talbot		
2. Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice?	<p>The Council has a duty to secure efficient primary and secondary education in its area and to promote high standards and the fulfilment of every child's potential. To meet this duty the Council has approved an approach to school improvement based on a strategic programme for change underpinned by a clear set of principles that focus on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. standards in education b. the need for places and the accessibility of schools c. the quality and suitability of school accommodation d. effective financial management <p>The Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme determines the way future education is provided within the County Borough. Progressing the improvement programme means taking difficult decisions in relation to school organisation.</p> <p>The cost of maintaining significant surplus capacity and falling school rolls together with old and deteriorating building stock constrains the Council's ability to invest in teaching and learning and does not represent an efficient use of public money.</p> <p>Building a new school provides greater prospects for improving educational attainment for pupils. New schools require a significant</p>		

capital investment of public money for which the Council is heavily reliant on grant funding from the Welsh Government to supplement its own spending capacity. Given the funding limitations of both, best value has to be achieved from the resources available, particularly in circumstances of falling school rolls and reduced revenue funding with which to operate and maintain schools.

The provision of a new, 21st Century secondary school to replace Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive, Glanafan Comprehensive and Sandfields Comprehensive schools, together with Traethmelyn Primary school, presents an opportunity to provide for the pupils from these areas 'state of the art' teaching and learning facilities in purpose built accommodation.

All three secondary schools have significant surplus capacity, representing an inefficient use of resources. The proposed new school will fall within the 10% target for surplus places set by the Welsh Government.

Bringing the three secondary schools together on one site creates a sustainable school and an affordable and cost effective 21st Century building providing unparalleled teaching and learning opportunities. Within the new build there is also an opportunity to consider further on site community provision such as the co-location of social workers, education support officers, together with professionals from external agencies in purpose built flexible accommodation.

In addition, closing Sandfields Comprehensive school releases a site for the establishment of a much needed secondary school Welsh medium education in the south of the County Borough. The release of Cwrt Sart Comprehensive school site facilitates the reorganisation of primary school and community provision in the Briton Ferry area; whilst the release of the Glanafan Comprehensive school site integrates with the emerging plans to regenerate Port Talbot Town centre and the Port Talbot Docks area.

Whereas establishing a school to replace Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive, Glanafan Comprehensive and Sandfields Comprehensive schools relies on the transfer to neighbouring schools of part of the catchment area currently provided for at Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive and Glanafan Comprehensive schools, this should have a positive impact on surplus capacity at those neighbouring schools.

	<p>Both Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive and Sandfields Comprehensive schools have on-site Learning Support Centres providing for pupils with a range of special educational needs. Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive school has planned place provision for pupils with hearing impairment and autistic spectrum disorder and pupils with speech and language difficulties. Sandfields Comprehensive School has provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, pupils with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. The plans for the proposed new school include a Learning Support Centre that will provide for the same range of pupil needs and the same number of pupils as the existing Learning Support Centres at Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive and Sandfields Comprehensive schools. This specialist facility will form an integral part of the proposed new school but will have dedicated accommodation and facilities. In addition, Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive and Glanafan Comprehensive schools have Inclusion Centres located on site which support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and it is proposed to continue this provision at the new school.</p> <p>Pupils attached to the Learning Support and Inclusion Centres will be able to benefit from 21st century facilities and the wider range of expertise available in a larger setting.</p>
<p>3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy /procedure /practice?</p>	<p>The children of compulsory school age who would otherwise receive their education at Cwrt Sart Community Comprehensive, Glanafan Comprehensive and Sandfields Comprehensive schools, together with Traethmelyn Primary school. This will include pupils with hearing impairment and autistic spectrum disorder and pupils with speech and language difficulties, pupils with moderate learning difficulties, pupils with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and pupils with autistic spectrum disorder together with pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who attend specialist provision at these schools. School staff, parents, local community and educational partners will also benefit</p>
<p>4. What outcomes are to be achieved from this policy /procedure/practice?</p>	<p>Standards of education fit for the 21st century and efficient use of educational resources. Improved outcomes for pupils.</p>
<p>5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?</p>	<p>Contribute - Positive buy-in from all educational service users, having the right schools in the right places. Having school fit t=for the 21st century learner.</p>

	Detract – Conflict with educational service users, failure to carry out legislative requirements, negative decision from the Welsh Ministers
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	Pupils and Parents/Carers, School staff and Governors, Local Community, Educational Partners
7. Who implements the policy /procedure/practice, and who is responsible for it?	Director of Education’ Leisure & Lifelong Learning and Head of Support Services & Commissioning Development
8. Are there concerns that the policy/procedure/practice <u>could</u> have an adverse impact due to age?	<p>Pupils – NPTCBC as per legislation requirements offers full-time education to all children across the County Borough of compulsory school age and part-time education to nursery age pupils. In respect of this proposal, a 3-16 age range will benefit. In this respect there would be a negative impact on those outside of this age group as they would not be allowed to attend such an educational establishment. Solution. Pre-school activities are available in the local area post 16, education is available at Neath Port Talbot College. Post 16 education is also available for Welsh Medium education and at a Faith School within the County Borough.</p> <p>The specialist teaching provision at the proposed new school complements specialist provision at Learning Support Centres and Special school within the County Borough.</p>
9. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to disability?	<p>Pupils –The proposed new school will support pupils with additional learning needs, including children with statements of special educational needs, in a mainstream setting and in an integrated Learning Support Centre and Inclusion Centre that will share mainstream facilities. The new school will be fully compliant legislative requirements including the (Education) School Premises Regulations 1999, relevant British Standards and Building Regulations, and Neath Port Talbot’s Accessibility Strategy and Inclusion Strategy.</p> <p>The following are seen as key areas of reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Bulletin 93 - Acoustic Design of Schools • Building Bulletin 98 - Briefing Framework for Secondary School Projects • Building Bulletin 99 - Briefing Framework for Primary School Projects • Building Bulletin 100 - Design for Fire Safety in Schools • Building Bulletin 102 - Designing for Disabled Children and Children with • Special Educational Needs • 21st Century School Standard • BREEAM • Secured by Design

<p>10. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to race?</p>	<p>Pupils – All NPTCBC schools have relevant equalities policies to ensure that there is no discrimination against a particular group, including race.</p>
<p>11. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their religion or belief?</p>	<p>Pupils – All NPTCBC schools have relevant equalities policies to ensure that there is no discrimination against a particular group, including religion or belief. The proposed new school will adopt relevant equality policies.</p>
<p>12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to gender?</p>	<p>Pupils – NPTCBC does not have any single sex schools and, therefore, both boys and girls are able to attend any secondary school across the county borough as per NPTCBC Admission Policy and SEN panel recommendation. The proposed new school will provide for boys and girls.</p>
<p>13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?</p>	<p>Pupils – All NPTCBC schools have relevant equalities policies to ensure that there is no discrimination against a particular group, including sexual orientation. The proposed new school will adopt relevant equality policies.</p>
<p>14. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to gender reassignment?</p>	<p>Pupils – All NPTCBC schools have relevant equalities policies to ensure that there is no discrimination against a particular group. The proposed new school will adopt relevant equality policies.</p>
<p>15. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to pregnancy and maternity/paternity?</p>	<p>Pupils – All NPTCBC schools have relevant equalities policies to ensure that there is no discrimination against a particular group, The proposed new school will adopt relevant equality policies.</p>
<p>16. Can any adverse impact on one or more groups be justified?</p>	<p>Potential adverse impact could be to on children’s travel to school arrangements. Increase travel distance and time will result from this proposal. However, the proposal complies with the Council’s home to school travel arrangements which conform to legislative requirements and have been equality impact assessed.</p> <p>Support with home to school travel will be made available in line with the Council’s Home to School Transport policy. Secondary school pupils living more than 3 miles from their designated school will be considered for assistance with travel costs. At primary level, the relevant distance is 2 miles. Travel routes will be assessed for appropriateness and ‘safe-travel’. Where no appropriate/safe travel route is available, assistance with transport will be provided in line with the Home to School Transport policy.</p>

	<p>Pupils with statements of special education needs will have their transport requirements assessed on an individual basis.</p> <p>A Community Impact Assessment has identified community provision in the areas affect by the proposal. The proposal seeks to enhance existing community provision. Therefore there will be no negative impact on community groups and users of community provision.</p>
17. Is there any concern that there are unmet needs in relation to any of the above groups?	The process of re-organisation of schools across the county borough has not identified any unmet need to date. However, the Strategic School Improvement Programme will identify and evaluate unmet need.
18. Is there a missed opportunity for improvement in relation to any of the policies, procedures or practices to promote equality?	NPTCBC has all relevant policies updated to ensure the most recent legislative requirements are met
Evidence and Data used for Assessment	<p>Relevant Legislation</p> <p>Estyn Reports and School Link Officer Reports</p> <p>Age Profiles</p> <p>Surplus Pupil Places Data</p> <p>School Budget and Financial Information</p> <p>Staffing Structures</p> <p>MSCW Capacity Schedules</p> <p>Historical and Projected Pupil Numbers</p> <p>Pupil Postcode Analysis</p> <p>Building Condition Surveys and Suitability/Sustainability & Accessibility Assessments</p> <p>Consultation responses</p>
Consultation	<p>Legislative</p> <p>Community Plan Partnership</p> <p>Unitary Development Plan</p>
OUTCOME OF ASSESSMENT	<p>The proposal to discontinue Cwrt Cart Community, Glanafan and Sandfields Comprehensive schools and Traethmelyn Primary school, and establish a school for boys and girls age 3-16 years at Baglan Bay, Port Talbot should have no adverse effect on any particular group.</p> <p>The process has checks and monitoring in place to ensure any unmet</p>

	need is identified and any potential adverse affect is fully evaluated and impact mitigated.
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Signed: *Richard Gordon, Programme Manager, Strategic School Improvement Programme*

Date 040713 (*Revisited*).

APPENDIX 4

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Report Form

Where do you work?	
Service Area:	Strategic School Improvement Programme
Directorate:	ELLL

(a) This EIA is being completed for a...

Service/ Function	Policy/ Procedure	Project	Strategy	Plan	Proposal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(b) Please name and describe below...

Proposal to

Close Dyffryn School and Groes Primary School and make provision for the pupils to attend a newly created 'all-through' (3-16) school on the site of Dyffryn (upper) School/Groes Primary school

(c) It was initially screened for relevance to Equality and Diversity on ...

20.06.2016

(d) It was found to be relevant to...

Age.....	x	Race.....	x
Disability.....	x	Religion or belief.....	x
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex.....	x
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welsh language.....	x

(e) Lead Officer

Name: Debora Holder-Phillips

Job title: Programme Officer

Date: 26.10.2016

(f) Approved by Head of Service

Name: Andrew Thomas

Date: 26.10.2016

Section 1 – Aims:

Briefly describe the aims of the function, service, policy, procedure, strategy, plan, proposal or project:

What are the aims?

To bring about change under the NPTCBC Strategic School Improvement Programme which affects the number of pupils and age range of pupils who may attend Dyffryn School and the closure of Groes Primary School.

At this stage the change is only a proposal and has not been consulted on. The process for change set out under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2013 requires a full statutory consultation programme to receive comments on the proposal followed by a statutory notice period for receiving objections on the proposal.

Who has responsibility?

Director of Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning, Head of Transformation and Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP)

Who are the stakeholders?

The main stakeholders are the school staff/ parents (carers and guardians)/ pupils/ governors and the wider school community of the schools affected by the proposal (there are also other key stakeholders listed under The Welsh Government School Organisation Statutory Code document no 006/2013 that must be consulted as part of the process for school closure).

Section 2 - Information about Service Users:

Please tick what information you know about your service users and provide details / evidence of how this information is collected.

Age.....	x	Race	x
Disability.....	x	Religion or belief.....	x
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex	x
Marriage & civil partnership	x	Sexual orientation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	x	Welsh language.....	x

What information do you know about your service users and how is this information collected?

Age

Pupils -The proposal relates to an English-medium secondary school and an English-medium primary school. Only those aged 3-11 years may access primary phase education and those aged 11-16 years may access secondary phase education.

The secondary school the subject of this equality impact assessment does not currently offer post 16

education and the proposal being considered does not intend to change this arrangement.

The primary school the subject of this equality impact assessment currently offers nursery provision and the proposal being considered intends to retain the offer of nursery provision but within an 'all-through' (3-16) arrangement.

There are recorded at the time of this assessment 790 pupils on roll at Dyffryn Comprehensive School and 167 pupils on roll at Groes Primary School.

Dyffryn (upper) School and Groes Primary School share the same site and therefore if the proposal were to go ahead the distance and travel time for pupil journey to and from school would remain unchanged as the proposal is to build a new school on the same site to accommodate both Dyffryn (upper) School and Groes Primary School pupils. This also applies to pupils attending Dyffryn (lower) School some 1.9 miles away as they too transfer to the upper school site at Y9.

As is the position currently, if a child lives outside of the recommended travel distance for either primary phase or secondary phase then that pupil will be entitled to make an application for assistance with home to school travel under the NPTCBC Home to School Travel Policy.

Staff – There are recorded at the time of this assessment 108 members of school staff at Dyffryn School and their age ranges from 22 to 68. There are 24 members of school staff at Groes Primary School and their age ranges from 20 to 61.

Governors – There are recorded at the time of this assessment 20 governors on the Dyffryn School Governing Body and 12 governors on the Groes Primary School Governing body. The Council does not hold details of the age of each governor but there is a minimum age of 18 years.

Disability

The proposal is for a new build 21st Century school which would be fully compliant with all relevant equalities legislation, including disability.

Pupils - Any pupil with a disability is assessed on an individual basis and relevant modifications, adaptation or reasonable adjustments are made where applicable, this is the case for all types of disabilities. Assessment on an individual basis includes application for home to school travel.

Dyffryn School has 182 of its pupils on the Special Educational Needs Register, 11 of these pupils have a statement of educational needs.

Groes Primary School has 51 of its pupils on the Special Educational Needs Register, 3 of which have statements of special educational needs.

Any pupil with a disability is entitled to make an application for assistance with home to school

transport under the NPTCBC Home to School Travel Policy.

Staff – The Council does not have a record of any staff member having a disability at either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Governors - Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Race

Pupils – Both schools are inclusive for pupils of all ethnic groups and ethnicity is not a criterion under NPTCBC's Schools Admissions Policy.

PLASC data for 2016 shows that BME pupils at Dyffryn School represent 8% of the pupil cohort. This is above the Neath Port Talbot average for secondary schools which for 2016 is 6%. At Groes Primary School the BME pupils represent 5% of the total number of pupils at the school. This is slightly below the Neath Port Talbot average for primary school which for 2016 is 6%

Dyffryn School has five partner primary schools, one of which is Groes Primary. As a total across the other four partner schools BME pupils have 37% BME pupils. The school with the greatest number of BME pupils is Central Primary School which has 17% BME pupils. The school has a large Bangladeshi school community and these pupils represent 52% of the BME pupils in the school.

This Bangladeshi school community is also replicated in Dyffryn School whose Bangladeshi pupils represent 29% of the BME pupils in the school. Bangladeshi pupils are the largest BME group of pupils at Dyffryn School. The next largest groups are the Gypsy/Traveller pupils and the White/Black Caribbean pupils, both these groups represent 12% of the BME pupils in the school.

Staff – HR records show that the majority of staff at Dyffryn School have declared themselves as British or Welsh, There is one member of staff who has declared 'European' and one who has declared 'other'. The Council is not aware of any BME staff members at Groes Primary School although 3 members of staff have elected to choose the option of 'prefer not to say'.

Governors – Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Religion or belief

Pupils – Both schools are non-faith schools and admit pupils of all religions/beliefs who wish to attend. Religion or belief is not a criterion under the NPTCBC's Admissions Policy which is applicable to both schools. Admission to the new school would be in line with this policy.

School records show that 22 pupils at Dyffryn School have reported their religion/belief. Out of these, 7 pupils have stipulated their religion/belief as Christian, 12 pupils have stipulated Church in Wales and 3 pupils have stipulated Roman Catholic.

School records show that at Groes Primary School 14 pupils have reported their religion/belief. Out of these, 10 pupils have confirmed their religion/belief as Christian, 1 as Church in Wales and 3 Buddhists.

Staff – Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. The Council does not hold this data for the staff of Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Governors - Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Sex

Pupils – Both schools admit both boys and girls and the new school will be a mixed sex school. At the time of this assessment Dyffryn School has 53% male pupils and 47% female pupils. Groes Primary School has 49% male pupils and 51% female pupils.

Staff – Both schools employ both male and female staff. Dyffryn School has 17 male members of staff and 91 female members of staff. Groes Primary School has 2 male members of staff and 22 female members of staff.

Governors – Both schools have male and female governors. Dyffryn School has 9 male and 11 female governors. Groes Primary School has 5 male and 7 female governors.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pupils – Dyffryn School has had 1 pupil who has been pregnant during the 2016/2017 academic year. This characteristic should not be applicable due to the age of the pupils at Groes Primary School and no pupils are recorded as being pregnant or having had a baby within this academic year.

Staff – Dyffryn School has had 3 members of staff who have been pregnant during the 2016/2017 academic year. The Council is not aware of any staff member being pregnant and none are on maternity/paternity leave at Groes Primary School.

Governors - Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Gender reassignment

Pupils – Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Staff – Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Governors - Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Marriage and civil partnership

Pupils – this characteristic is not applicable due to the age of the pupils.

Staff – HR records show that Dyffryn School has 58 married/ 5 divorced/ 2 partnered and 43 single members of staff. Groes Primary School has 17 married/ 1 divorced/ 1 partnered and 5 single members of staff.

Governors - Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Sexual Orientation

Pupils –Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Staff –Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Governors - Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Welsh language

Pupils – Both schools are English-medium schools therefore pupils will be taught through the medium of English although Welsh is taught as a second language in line with the National Curriculum. NPTCBC has developed a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for the period 2014 to 2017. Action plans produced as part of this strategy will be applied to Welsh-medium education and Welsh as a second language.

Staff – HR records show that Dyffryn School staff have classified their Welsh Language ability as 103 x Little or no knowledge/ 3 x Welsh Learner/ 2 x Fairly Fluent. Groes Primary School staff have classified their Welsh Language ability as 14 x Little or no knowledge/ 4 x Welsh Learner/ 1 x Fairly Fluent and 5 x Prefer not to say.

Governors – Data held is according to what individuals have chosen to disclose. No data is held for either Dyffryn School or Groes Primary School.

Information is collected by NPTCBC in respect of pupil and school data through various means such as Data Unit, School Admissions, School and Family Support, Additional Learning Needs Support Team, Strategic School Improvement Programme etc. Information is also gathered from Estyn Inspection reports.

Data used for completing Section 2 includes:

PLASC data as at January 2016

NPTCBC HR records

NPTCBC Governor records

School records for pupils and staff HR records

Any Actions Required?

Continue to check and monitor data held against the protected characteristics for any impact the proposal may have on any of these groups.

Section 3 - Impact on Protected Characteristics:

Please consider the possible impact on the different protected characteristics. This could be based on service user information, data, consultation and research or professional experience.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Needs further investigation
Age	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh language	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thinking about your answers above, please explain in detail why this is the case? including details of any consultation (and/or other information), which has been undertaken to support your view?

The proposal intends to create an 'all-through' (3-16) school. Close Dyffryn School and Groes Primary School and make provision for the pupils to attend a newly created 'all-through' (3-16) school on the site of Dyffryn (upper) School/Groes Primary school.

The pupils who are currently on roll at both Dyffryn School and Groes Primary School will automatically transfer to the proposed new school (unless this is not the wish of their parent/carer/guardian).

Ethnicity is not a criterion under NPTCBC's Schools Admissions Policy. Both schools which are the subject of this proposal are inclusive for pupils and staff of all ethnic groups. If the proposal goes ahead the new school will welcome all existing pupils from Dyffryn School and Groes Primary school and retain the arrangements with the existing other four partner primary schools.

The proposal does not intend to make any changes to Council policies currently applicable to the pupils, staff and governors of Dyffryn School and Groes Primary School. Although it is recognised that if the proposal goes ahead it will have a negative impact on the staff and governors of Dyffryn School and Groes Primary School as the school would close, staff would no longer be employed by the school and the governing body would cease to exist. If Dyffryn School and Groes Primary School close the proposal is for a new 'all-through' (3-16) school which would require school staff for the primary phase element of the new school. In any event the Council has an excellent reputation in terms of staff redeployment and governors would have the opportunity to apply for positions on other governing bodies at schools located nearby.

The Council has secured an 'employer's pledge' with schools whereby school governing bodies have agreed to give prior consideration to staff facing redundancy at any Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council school. In this context, the Council will be working hard to secure the employment of staff from Groes Primary School where job opportunities may exist. For those staff members who are employees of centrally delivered catering and cleaning services due to the flexibility of this service there may be opportunities within the service area for staff to transfer to other schools or venues. Other school support staff will be supported by the relevant school policies and procedures which will include full consultation. Employees identified at risk of redundancy will be given access to the Council's prior consideration register. Previous experience has shown that some staff wish to secure employment in an alternative school but others take the opportunity to take on new challenges elsewhere. The Council is proud of its track record for supporting staff in such situations.

The new build school will be a state of the art 21st Century school and therefore will be fully compliant in terms of the requirements for disabled pupils.

Both Dyffryn School and Groes Primary School have BME pupils, the largest ethnic group being pupils of Bangladeshi origin under the Welsh Government options for ethnic background. The proposal does not affect the Council's Schools Admission Policy and admissions to the new school will be in line with this policy. Ethnicity is not a criterion under this policy.

The new primary school will continue to teach Welsh as per the requirements of the National Curriculum.

<p>What consultation and engagement has been undertaken (e.g. with the public and/or members of protected groups) to support your view?</p> <p>The proposal is in its formative stage therefore it will be subject to full consultation with stakeholders.</p>
<p>Any actions required (to mitigate adverse impact or to address identified gaps in knowledge)</p> <p>The consultation process will identify if any actions are necessary.</p>

Section 4 - Other Impacts:

Please consider how the initiative might address the following issues.

You could base this on service user information, data, consultation and research or professional experience (e.g. comments and complaints).

Foster good relations between different groups	Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
Elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Reduction of social exclusion and poverty
<p>Please explain any possible impact on each of the above.</p> <p>NPTCBC aspires to deliver an inclusive education service. All schools have policies in place to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation both for the benefit of pupils and school staff. The policies are overseen by the governing body and the Council.</p> <p>NPTCBC tackles poverty and social exclusion through various initiatives including breakfast clubs, free school meals, nurture groups, family learning, Flying Start, Communities First Projects, Catch-up (funded through Pupil Deprivation Grant).</p> <p>What work have you already done to improve any of the above?</p> <p>NPTCBC undertook an Educational Inclusion Review in 2014; recommendations and actions continue to be implemented.</p> <p>Is the initiative likely to impact on Community Cohesion?</p> <p>NPTCBC aspires to deliver an inclusive education service that amongst other things ‘celebrates diversity. The proposal will seek to improve educational standards and pupil well-being through a new build 21st Century primary school; raising pupils’ levels of awareness of self and others which, in turn, will help support and encourage children and young people to become good citizens and role models within their community. The ethos of respect will be promoted by the staff and governors at the school.</p>	

How will the initiative treat the Welsh language in the same way as the English language?

The proposal relates to two English-medium schools which teach Welsh as a second language. The proposed new school would continue to teach Welsh-medium in line with the national curriculum. The Council also provides Welsh-medium schools if a parent elects to have their child educated through the medium of Welsh.

Actions (to mitigate adverse impact or to address identified gaps in knowledge).

Section 5 - Monitoring arrangements:

Please explain the arrangements in place (or those which will be put in place) to monitor this function, service, policy, procedure, strategy, plan or project:

Monitoring arrangements:

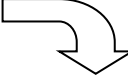
By the Council via data received from each school together with reports from School Improvement Officer Core Visits and Estyn Inspection reports. Monitoring will be undertaken by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Monitoring will also take place via the formal consultation process to be conducted.

Actions:

Section 6 – Outcomes:

Having completed sections 1-5, please indicate which of the outcomes listed below applies to your initiative (refer to guidance for further information on this section).

- Outcome 1: Continue the initiative... x
- Outcome 2: Adjust the initiative...
- Outcome 3: Justify the initiative... 
- Outcome 4: Stop and remove the initiative...

For outcome 3, detail the justification for proceeding here

Section 7 - Publication arrangements:

On completion, please contact the Corporate Strategy Team for advice on the legal requirement to publish the findings of EIAs.

Any proposal relating to school organisation requires an Equality Impact Assessment, the findings will be used to inform and shape the formal consultation process. Findings will be published as part of the consultation document and where necessary in other documents required under the school organisation processes.

Action Plan:

Objective - What are we going to do and why?	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	Outcome - How will we know we have achieved our objective?	Progress
Consult on the proposal to hear the views of key stakeholders	Director of ELLL, Head of Transformation and SSIP	2016/17 academic year	Decision to implement the proposal at the conclusion of the legislation process	On-going until implementation or abandonment of the proposal
Monitor additional data to check for any impact on the protected characteristics	Director of ELLL, Head of Transformation and SSIP	2016/17 academic year	Actions to mitigate any adverse effect	On-going until implementation or abandonment of the proposal
Monitor findings from the consultation process	Director of ELLL, Head of Transformation and SSIP	2016/17 academic year	Actions to mitigate any adverse effect	On-going until implementation or abandonment of the proposal

APPENDIX 5

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: To declare redundant playing fields & changing rooms at Longlands Lane as being surplus to the ongoing strategic and operational requirements of the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning.

Service Area: SSIP

Directorate: Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users		x
Staff		x
Wider community		x
Internal administrative process only	x	

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age						
Disability						
Gender Reassignment						
Marriage/Civil Partnership						
Pregnancy/Maternity						
Race						
Religion/Belief						
Sex						
Sexual orientation						

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language						
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English						

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		x				This initiative recommends that Members of the Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board declare the redundant changing rooms and playing fields at Longlands lane as being surplus to the ongoing strategic and operational needs of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning. This initiative does not identify or recommend potential avenues for future or alternative use and

						therefore has no impact of biodiversity or the wider environment.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		x				As above

6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
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<p>Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Following on from what is essentially an internal administrative process, this initiative does not identify or recommend potential avenues for future or alternative use and seeks member decision to declare the changing rooms and playing fields at Longlands Lane as being surplus to the strategic and operational requirements of ELLL.</p> <p>The facilities at Longlands Lane have become redundant and surplus to the ongoing strategic operational requirements of ELLL as a result of the establishment and successful delivery of two brand new 21st Century 3-16 schools at Ysgol Bae Baglan and Ysgol Cwm Brombil.</p> <p>The new schools offer first class on-site sporting facilities available for pupils and the wider community over and above that previously available at Longlands Lane including multi-use sports halls, modern changing facilities, grass pitches, Astro Turf pitches and 3G pitches.</p>
<p>Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>As above</p>
<p>Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>As above</p>
<p>Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>As above</p>

Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	N/A	N/A	As above
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7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):


A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	√
<p>Reasons for this conclusion</p> <p>Following on from what is essentially an internal administrative process, this report does not identify or recommend potential avenues for future or alternative use and seeks member decision to declare the changing rooms and playing fields at Longlands Lane as being surplus to the strategic and operational requirements of ELLL.</p>	

Following the discontinuance of Glanafan Comprehensive and Dyffryn School and the subsequent establishment of Ysgol Bae Baglan and Ysgol Cwm Brombil, the facilities at Longlands Lane have become redundant.

Ysgol Bae Baglan and Ysgol Cwm Brombil offer excellent, modern on-site sporting facilities over and above that previously offered at Longlands Lane including multi-purpose sport halls, grass, astro and 3G pitches all of which are available for wider community use.

A full impact assessment (second stage) **is** required

Reasons for this conclusion

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Roger Bowen	Programme Officer		
Signed off by	Andrew Thomas	Head of Service/Director	