

## Risk Assessment

### **STRATEGIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN ENGLISH- MEDIUM 3-11 SCHOOL TO REPLACE ALLTWEN, GODRE'RGRAIG AND LLANGIWG PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

#### **Context**

1. This risk assessment has been carried out in line with the Council's Risk Management Policy 2018.
2. Implementing the proposal will result in the establishment of a new build primary school to replace Alltwen, Llangiwg and Godre'rgraig primary schools, which will be discontinued. The new school will serve the combined catchment area of the three existing primary schools.

#### **The reasons for the proposal**

3. The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. This will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities in order to ensure future provision is sustainable.
4. it is proposed to establish an English-medium 3-11 school with a specialist learning support centre, in new build premises to accommodate pupils from the current catchment areas of Alltwen Primary, Godre'rgraig Primary and Llangiwg primary, all of which will close on 31st August 2024.
5. It is proposed that the new school will be built on land in Council ownership at Parc Ynysderw, Pontardawe and that it will form part of learning, health and wellbeing community campus made up of Cwmtawe Community School and Pontardawe Leisure Centre. The campus will be further enhanced by the addition of a new build 25 metre, 6 lane swimming pool with additional learner pool on the site, to complement the current health and wellbeing offer for pupils and the wider community.

6. The new English-medium community primary school for boys and girls aged 3-11 years will accommodate 630 full-time pupils and 140 part-time (70 a.m./70 p.m.) nursery age pupils. It will be managed with one head teacher and one governing body and will have one budget allocation and one group of staff.
7. The new school will serve the combined catchment areas of Alltwen, Llangiwig and Godre'rgraig primary schools. Pupils from the three existing schools will automatically transfer to the new school subject to parental preference.
8. The new school will provide primary education for children aged 3-11 in a new build 21st century facility which will provide a stimulating teaching and learning environment in state of the art facilities .
9. Additionally the new school will provide support for pupils through the establishment of a learning support centre (LSC) for 16 pupils with a statement of special educational needs relating to Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It will also provide the opportunity to become a community hub for the area, building on the work already being undertaken by other well established primary school LSCs.
10. The new build will be funded jointly from Welsh Government 21st century School Programme capital grant monies and from the Council's prudential borrowing capacity.
11. The scheme will also include a new build 25 metre 6 lane swimming pool with additional learner pool, to further enhance the physical activity and wellbeing opportunities for pupils who currently attend Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwig primary schools and Cwmtawe Community School, as well as pupils attending nearby YGG Trebannws and YGG Pontardawe.
12. Furthermore the facilities will provide sustainable opportunities for swimming curriculum development for potentially 2500 pupils aged 3-16 in the nearby communities. The swimming pool will complement the current school and community facilities on site to deliver a 21st century health and wellbeing

offer for pupils aged 0-16 and for wider community use, making it a sustainable delivery model.

13. The combined new build School, specialist ASD provision and pool will form part of a learning, health and wellbeing community campus at the Parc Ynysderw site, complementing the existing Cwmtawe Community School and Pontardawe Leisure Centre provision. In locating the new build facilities close to Cwmtawe Community School the development will enable pupils and staff from both schools to benefit from increased partnership working, made easier due to their close proximity.

### **Risks associated with the proposal**

14. Potential risk areas in implementing the proposal include:
  - resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support
  - educational standards not maintained
  - less effective support for pupil well-being in a larger school and in a different location
  - increased home to school travel time for some pupils
  - staff anxiety about job security and new management arrangements
  - loss of school identity from closure of existing establishments
  - forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise
  - planning permission for the proposed new school is refused
  - Welsh Government funding conditions are not met
  - discrimination against protected characteristics
  - loss of community facilities
  - increased governance and staff responsibilities
  - budget allocation insufficient to meet needs
15. Failing to implement the proposal will result in the following teaching/learning and financial benefits not being fully realised, particularly in relation to:
  - providing a stimulating and innovative teaching and learning environment that will impact positively on the self-

- esteem and well-being of all pupils and staff
- providing additional purpose built facility for pupils aged 3-11 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- pupils accessing a wider range of staff expertise
- opportunities for wider peer group interaction
- staff having greater opportunity for curriculum development and career opportunities through broader experience and enhanced continuing professional development options
- a more efficient and effective use of resources, and savings from economies of scale
- reducing the number of surplus pupil places and improving the school building environment
- creating a learning and recreational campus promoting community cohesion

### **Risk assessment**

16. The benefits of reorganisation, as set out above, will mitigate the effects of identified risks. A new school provides greater prospects for improving educational attainment for pupils. Estyn (Jan 2007) reported on the performance of schools before and after moving into new buildings, stating that ageing school buildings which are in a poor state of repair cannot meet modern teaching and learning needs. The report also states that inadequate buildings make improvements in standards more challenging and that in nearly all schools with new or refurbished buildings, pupils attainment and achievement have improved and in some cases the improvement has been significant.
17. The proposal has been subject to a full consultation which has enabled the school communities to voice concerns, raise queries and receive responses. It is believed that this will support the process of change, allow staff, governors and officers to understand concerns, with the aim of reducing anxiety.
18. A temporary governing body will be established and a head teacher appointed before the opening of the primary school. This should help to reduce staff anxiety and uncertainty about their employment situation. The head teacher together with the temporary governing body will determine the staffing

structure for the new primary school.

19. As part of the process all school based staff will be supported by the relevant school policies and procedures which will include full consultation. Previous experience has shown that some staff wish to secure employment in the new school but others take the opportunity to take on new challenges elsewhere. Employees identified at risk of redundancy will be given access to the Council's prior consideration register. The Council is committed to supporting staff at risk of compulsory redundancy and has secured the support and goodwill of the teacher associations/trade unions and governing bodies across the Council, via an employers' pledge. The Council has a good track record for supporting staff in such situations.
20. The appointment of the head teacher and the temporary governing body together with consultation with stakeholders will provide forums that will allow concerns to be considered particularly in relation to the areas of school identity resistance to change. The temporary governing body will have members with an interest in the areas served by the three existing schools and who will be well placed, therefore, to ensure concerns are addressed and with the aim of ensuring that the new school becomes the school of choice of pupils and parents.
21. With effective leadership and pastoral support structures, pupil well-being can be effectively supported in large schools.
22. An Integrated Impact Assessment will be required to fully progress this proposal.
23. A Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken and will help ensure that concerns about community impact are minimised.

Risk register

No	Risk description	L'hood score	Impact score	Overall Risk (Lxl)	Proxty *	Planned action to mitigate	Target Date	Owner	Update	Trend Up Down
1	Educational standards not maintained	1	5	Low Risk	4	Implementation of proposal together with appropriate support and challenge	Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SSIP team</li> <li>- EDS</li> <li>- GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> <li>- Inclusion support team</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
2	Less effective support for pupil well-being in a larger school and in a different location	1	4	Low Risk	4	Implementation of proposal together with the appointment of suitable headteacher and appropriate support and challenge	Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELLLS</li> <li>- Temp GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> <li>- School SLT</li> <li>- Inclusion support team</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
3	Staff anxiety about job security and new management arrangements	4	3	High Risk	1	Implementation of proposal together with consultation with staff and teacher associations/trade unions. Ongoing support from HR and clear staff plans agreed with teacher associations/trade unions. Appointment of temp governing body and head teacher.	Autumn term 2020 ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SSIP team</li> <li>- HR</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change

4	Loss of school identity from closure of existing establishments	4	2	Medium Risk	1	Implementation of proposal together with support for school community	Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Temp GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> <li>- EDS</li> <li>- SSIP</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
5	Resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support	2	2	Medium Risk	2	Information on the proposal to provide greater awareness. Effective communication with parents and staff 22.9.21 further work needed on improving support, in part due to negative information in press and social media	Autumn term 2020- Spring term 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SSIP team</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	Up
6	Forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise	1	4	Low Risk	3	Implementation of proposal together with consultation meetings and appointment of suitable headteacher,	Ongoing: 2022 - 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SSIP team</li> <li>- Temp GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
7	21 <sup>st</sup> Century School capital funding opportunity not realised	1	5	Low Risk	2	Business case approval and implementation of proposal	Sept 2020- Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELLLS</li> <li>- Environment Services</li> <li>- SSIP team</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change

8	Discrimination against protected characteristics	2	4	Medium Risk	4	EIA mitigation. Inclusive ethos and practices. Appointment of suitable headteacher. Appropriate support and challenge	Ongoing 2021 -2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELLLS</li> <li>- SSIP team</li> <li>- EDIS</li> <li>- Temp GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> <li>- Inclusion support team</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
9	Increased home to school travel time for some pupil leading to poor attendance	2	4	Medium Risk	4	Inclusive ethos and practices. Appointment of suitable headteacher. Appropriate support and challenge Safe travel routes to school supported by school travel plans	Sept 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELLLS</li> <li>- SSIP team</li> <li>- EDIS</li> <li>- Temp GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> <li>- School SLT</li> <li>- Road Safety Officer</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
10	Loss of community facilities	1	3	Low Risk	4	Community facilities enhanced through proposal	Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELLLS</li> <li>- Environment Services</li> <li>- SSIP team</li> <li>- Temp GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> </ul>	14.0522.9.21. 21	No change
11	Welsh language development not supported	1	3	Low Risk	4	Welsh will be taught in line with curriculum guidelines for an English-medium school. A larger school presents greater opportunity for language diversity and development with potentially more Welsh speakers available on the staff complement	Sept 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELLLS</li> <li>- Temp GB</li> <li>- Headteacher</li> </ul>	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change



12	Increased governance and staff responsibilities	1	3	Low Risk	4	Although a larger school will mean additional responsibilities, economies of scale and a larger pool of professional skills and expertise will allow responsibilities to be shared more widely. Appointment of temp. GB and suitable head teacher.	Ongoing: 2021 - 2024	- ELLLS - Temp GB - Headteacher	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
13	Budget allocation insufficient to meet needs			Low Risk		When the new school opens it will receive a budget appropriate for the size of the school and the number of pupils attending.	September 2024	- ELLLS - Temp GB - Headteacher	14.05.21 22.9.21	No change
14	Planning approval is not granted	2	5	Medium Risk	4	When contractors are appointed they will be responsible for developing design to meet planning requirements and regulations	Spring 2022	- Environment services - Contractors	22.9.21	
15	WG funding conditions are not met	1	5	Low Risk	4	Discussions with WG on a regular basis throughout the build process to ensure conditions are met	Ongoing	- SSIP - Environment services	22.09.21	