



NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Wellbeing

25th January 2023

Report of the Head of Early Years, Inclusion & Partnerships – Hayley Lervy

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

Ward Affected	Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) Coverage in Expansion
Alltwen	Alltwen
Bryncoch South	Bryncoch South 4
Cimla and Pelenna	Pelenna
Coedffranc Central	Coedffranc Central 1
Dyffryn	Dyffryn 1
Gwaun Cae Gurwen and Lower Brynamman	Lower Brynamman 1
Margam and Taibach	Taibach 1 Taibach 3
Neath North	Neath North 2
Port Talbot	Port Talbot 2
Resolven and Tonna	Resolven 2
Sandfields East	Sandfields East 4

Expansion of Flying Start Childcare – Phase 2

Purpose of the Report:

To seek Members' approval for the implementation of Phase 2 of the Welsh Government expansion of Flying Start funded childcare for two year olds in Neath Port Talbot.

Executive Summary:

Following WG's announcement of a phased expansion to Flying Start, Members approved a Phase one plan in July 2022. Phase 2 will focus on a phased roll of out of the part time high quality childcare element of Flying Start to 2-3 year olds, from April 2023, with a commitment to eventually extend this to all two-year olds.

The report seeks Members' approval for the roll out of Phase 2a and 2b in identified areas of Neath Port Talbot.

Background:

Following WG's announcement of a phased expansion to Flying Start, Members approved a Phase one plan in July 2022, offering the full range of Flying Start services to an additional 127 children (0-4 years) in Neath Port Talbot.

Phase 2 will focus on a phased roll of out of the part time high quality childcare element of Flying Start to 2-3 year olds, from April 2023, with a commitment to eventually extend this to all two-year olds.

Phase 2 guidance advises that expansion areas should be identified using WIMD and DWP data provided by Welsh Government to indicate which LSOAs to include as part of the next phase, along with other local data and knowledge.

Expanding Welsh language early years childcare provision has been set as one of the overarching aims of the expansion.

Welsh Government initially indicated that an additional 135 children would be offered funded childcare through Phase 2 (now Phase 2a)

and have subsequently increased this by a further 116 children (Phase 2b). This report outlines plans for both Phase 2a and 2b. The full plan to be submitted to Welsh Government is attached as Appendix 1.

Funding for 2023/24 has been awarded by Welsh Government:
Phase 2a £594,163.00 – 135 children
Phase 2b £510,563.03 – 116 children

There is an expectation that around 25% of the targeted number of children should be considered under the “outreach” element of the programme, allowing children outside of the eligibility areas to access the programme subject to need and outreach criteria.

Phase	Funding award	Total target number children	Estimated number of children in new areas	Estimated number of outreach children
Phase 2a	£594,163.00	135	101	34
Phase 2b	£510,563.03	116	87	29

Welsh Government capital funding has also been made available in order to improve quality and capacity of existing childcare settings, or for the development of new settings to address gaps in provision. Plans for this will be presented to Members in a later report.

Proposed Phase 2a and 2b Expansion Areas

Using the dataset provided by WG, the following areas have been identified for expansion – Phase 2a to roll out from April 2023 and Phase 2b from September 2023:

<u>Phase 2a LSOA's (target 101 minus outreach)</u>		
LSOA Name	Phase	Estimated 2-3 Year Olds Per Area
Lower Brynamman	new 2a	15
Port Talbot 2	new 2a	15
Sandfields East 4	new 2a	19
Tai-bach 3	new 2a	30
Tai-bach 1	new 2a	17
Coedffranc Central 1	new 2a	12
	Total Estimated 2-3 year olds for Phase 2a	<u>108</u>

<u>Phase 2b LSOA's (target 87 minus outreach)</u>		
LSOA Name	Phase	Estimated 2-3 Year Olds Per Area
Pelenna	new 2b	13
Dyffryn 1	new 2b	17
Bryn-coch South 4	new 2b	11
Resolven 2	new 2b	17
Neath North 2	new 2b	11
Allt-wen	new 2b	28
	Total Estimate 2-3 year olds for Phase 2 b	<u>97</u>

Availability of Childcare

Due to the larger expansion footprint reflected over phase 2a and 2b plans, a county wide approach will be taken to engage new and additional providers with the Flying Start programme.

Some LSOA's highlighted for expansion may not have sufficient childcare spaces, may not meet parental needs/expectations or may

not meet the Flying Start quality criteria. To address this, engagement is planned with the whole childcare sector in Neath Port Talbot to encourage their participation as a Flying Start setting. This approach will provide many advantages:

- Wider parental choice through access to more settings
- Less pressure and waiting lists within individual childcare settings
- Sustaining the wider childcare sector
- Supporting a drive to increase quality within the wider childcare sector
- Enabling wider pathways to be established and developed, allowing for consistency of support with multiagency partners, particularly in line with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) reform within the early years' sector.
- Ease of roll out for further phases of expansion.
- Even playing field for childminders

Welsh Medium Provision

In supporting access to Welsh medium provision, at least 3 additional Welsh or bilingual settings are due to open within the proposed Phase 2a and 2b expansion areas during 2023/24. Plans are ongoing for the following:

- Canolfan Plant Tregeles – Coedffranc
- Canolfan Plant Gerddi Victoria – Neath Central
- Relocation and increase in registered numbers for Cylch Blaendulais
- Cylch Trebanws – YGG Trebanws

These new settings will be used to offer and encourage Welsh language childcare to Flying Start families.

Additionally, work is ongoing through the Early Years & Childcare Team to improve the offer of Welsh through English medium settings through an awards based Welsh language quality assurance scheme,

the “Welsh Award for Childcare”, which includes support, access to training and drop-in Welsh language acquisition sessions.

Financial Impacts:

Funding has been awarded by Welsh Government for Phases 2a and 2b and as such there are no financial implications for the Council.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016).

The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below:

Any impact that has been identified is positive through the offer of funded childcare for two year old children in some of the county's most disadvantaged areas..

The expansion has been based on robust data provided from Welsh Government, with the expansion of Flying Start childcare built into a Welsh Government commitment for Flying Start childcare for two year olds to be universally available within the next two years, using a phased roll out approach. All areas of NPT should see the offer within this timescale.

The Flying Start expansion programme provides increased access, via outreach support where necessary, to additional areas of NPT. These areas have been selected based on robust data from WG as well as supporting data from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022.

Specific support will be available for children with additional learning needs (ALN) and/or a disability to access their funded childcare place.

Positive impacts are also anticipated with opportunities to use and promote the Welsh language with additional Welsh language or bilingual childcare being made available.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

We would anticipate positive impacts for valley communities through the expansion of early years provision, through Phases 2a and 2b, and also through any future expansion plans, through the provision of funded childcare for 2-3 year olds.

Workforce Impacts:

No impacts.

Legal Impacts:

No impacts.

Risk Management Impacts:

No impacts

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members grant approval to the Phase 2 expansion plans as outlined in Appendix 1, specially approving expansion into LSOAs:

a) Phase 2a – from April 2023

Lower Brynamman
Port Talbot 2
Sandfields East 4
Tai-bach 3
Tai-bach 1
Coedffranc Central 1

b) Phase 2b – from September 2023

Pelenna
Dyffryn 1
Bryn-coch South 4
Resolven 2
Neath North 2
Allt-wen

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure that the Council can commence its offer of funded childcare through the expansion of early years provision from April 2023.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is an urgent one for immediate implementation, subject to the consent of the relevant Scrutiny Chair (and is therefore not subject to the call-in procedure.)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Expansion of Early Years Provision Plan (Phase 2a and 2B)

List of Background Papers:

Cabinet Report – 28th July 2022 – Flying Start Phase 1 Expansion Plan

WG Expansion of Early Years Provision – Phase 2

WG Expansion Data - WIMD and DWP

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