

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD BY TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2021**

### **PRESENT**

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

County Councillors MC Alexander, B Baynham, P Davies, A W Davies, H Hulme, I McIntosh and R Powell

In attendance: County Councillors E Vaughan and JM Williams

<b>1. APOLOGIES</b>
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There were no apologies for absence.

<b>2. MINUTES</b>
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021 as a correct record.

<b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
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There were no declarations of interest reported.

<b>4. YSGOL BRO HYDDGEN LANGUAGE CATEGORY</b>
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Cabinet considered the outcome of the statutory objection to the Statutory Notice proposing to change the language category of Ysgol Bro Hyddgen from dual stream to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022. The Leader confirmed that the Cabinet had read all of the correspondence including that received the previous day. The Portfolio Holder for Education and Property confirmed that that in accordance with the Welsh Government School Organisation Code all correspondence had been received in the statutory notice period had been read and logged and that a summary of the objections received and the Council's responses were contained in the objection report. Further to that, the objections had been conscientiously considered alongside the arguments in respect of the proposals.

258 objections had been received during the statutory objection period. This included two petitions, one in support of the proposal which received 278 signatures and one against the proposal, which received 1,219 signatures. Of the remaining 256 'objections' received, 4 were in support of the proposal. The objections were summarised in the objection report.

Having considered the objections, it was recommended that the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal as outlined in the Statutory Notice for the following reasons:

- i) To improve educational outcomes
- ii) To improve educational provision
- iii) To improve leadership and management
- iv) To improve efficiency in the delivery of education
- v) To increase the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium education

County Councillor Michael Williams spoke as the local member. He noted that people felt passionately about the subject as reflected in the amount of correspondence and two petitions, one in favour of the proposal and one against. He urged the Cabinet to take on board the views of the people of Machynlleth, noting that the petition against the proposal represented some 66% of the adult population of Machynlleth.

County Councillor Elwyn Vaughan spoke as the Chair of Governors and he advised that whatever the Cabinet's decision, the Governors would do their utmost to deliver. He noted that bilingualism was the norm and that there was no reason why it should not be a success in Ysgol Bro Hyddgen. He acknowledged that there would be some concerns but welcomed the proposed Trochi immersion support. He noted that only three pupils had entered the English stream in September which was neither sustainable nor fair on the learners.

The Director of Education referred to learner entitlement noting that Estyn had made a recommendation to improve Welsh medium education in Powys including Welsh medium provision for ALN. She noted that there would not be a sudden change for those pupils currently in the school with the proposal being introduced from September 2022. She spoke about the Trochi immersion project which would be available to any pupil wishing to transfer to the Welsh medium stream. It had been piloted successfully on-line and the first face-to-face Trochi immersion experience would take place shortly. A higher learning teacher assistant was being recruited to work on Trochi in the school with pupils at foundation phase up to year 8/9. An early years co-ordinator had been appointed to work with families on ALN through the medium of Welsh or English.

The Portfolio Holder for School Transport noted that a commitment had been given in the consultation to reviewing the transport policy to address potential difficulties for pupils moving to the school from non-Welsh speaking backgrounds. With the phased approach being taken it would be the end of the decade before the full impact would be felt and, therefore, he did not feel that it needed to be dealt with at this point. He noted that the feeder schools to Ysgol Bro Hyddgen were all Welsh medium schools.

Having considered the objections received and the responses given, it was

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. To receive the Objection Report in respect of changing the language category of Ysgol Bro Hyddgen.**
- 2. To approve the proposal to make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Bro Hyddgen from**

**Dual Stream to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022.**

**5. PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK ONGOING ENGAGEMENT PROPOSAL**

Cabinet considered a proposal for an ongoing engagement exercise to gather views from the local community to meet Welsh Government requirements consider the views of local people, other persons carrying on a business in the council's area, the staff of the council and recognised trade unions.

This information which would be reported on quarterly performance reports.

**RESOLVED to approve an ongoing engagement exercise to gather views from the local community which will be reported on quarterly and included as part of the council's performance self-assessment work.**

**6. DELEGATED DECISIONS**

Cabinet noted the delegated decisions taken by portfolio holders.

**7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Cabinet noted the forward work programme.

**8. EXEMPT ITEMS**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 5 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).**

**9. 'PACKAGE DEAL POLICY GUIDE' FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Cabinet considered a proposal for the Council actively progressing package deal arrangements, by means of adopting a 'Package Deal Policy Guide' to extend the scope and size of its new homes development programme. It was proposed that the New Development Project Board, chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Economic Regeneration, would consider all package deal arrangement proposals, providing the oversight, assurance and accountability in the same way that it does for the current development projects, delivered by means of a traditional construction contract approach. There would be a due diligence process for every proposed project and if a scheme was not viable it would not proceed.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. The Council adopts the 'Package Deal Policy Guide' attached to the report as Appendix Two.**
- 2. The New Development Project Board be given delegated authority to enter into individual scheme specific package deal arrangement proposals, subject to each scheme being subject to due diligence and assessment in full compliance with the criteria set out in the 'Package Deal Policy Guide'.**

**County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)**