



## Area Review - Information Paper

### Area 1: Ysgol Rhos Helyg, Ysgol Brynford and Lixwm CP

#### **Background**

Flintshire's 2010 School Modernisation Strategy has been updated and approved by Cabinet January 2015.

#### **Why is School Modernisation needed?**

The School Modernisation Programme is required because we need to:

- Ensure education provision is both high quality and sustainable
- Improve the quality of school buildings and facilities
- Provide the right number of school places, of the right type, in the right locations
- Address unsustainable school buildings and supporting infrastructure
- Recognise that doing nothing means higher pupil teacher ratios as funding reduces
- Ensure that we can maximise external funding through the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme

The key 'drivers' or criteria for modernisation which underpin the above are:

- Educational improvement
- Resilient school leadership
- Suitable buildings
- Unfilled places
- Diminishing resources

The primary school portfolio has 1967 (or 17.15%) unfilled places (based on January 2015 school data returns), whilst the national target set by Welsh Government is to reduce this level to under 10%.

#### **Cabinet**

Recommendations for first phase of the School Modernisation Implementation Plan were presented and approved by Cabinet in June 2015.

Cabinet agreed to complete an area review of the following schools:

Area 1 - Brynford CP School, Lixwm CP School and Ysgol Rhos Helyg, Rhosesmor

The schools in the area met a number of triggers for review as per the Council's School Modernisation strategy

## Options for the Area

Options initially presented for discussion with Headteachers and a representative group of governors at each school were as follows:

- Option A: status quo
- Option B: area school multiple sites (two)
- Option C: area school one site
- Option D: federation

The outcome of those discussions were that there was universal agreement that the option D should be dropped and option B should be replaced by the following option:

- Two schools in the area. One school at Ysgol Rhos Helyg, with amalgamation of Brynford CP and Lixwm CP onto one site.

## What options will now be considered?

- Option A: status quo
- Option B: two schools in the area. One school at Ysgol Rhos Helyg with amalgamation of Brynford CP and Lixwm CP onto one site
- Option C: area school one site

## What do the options mean?

### Option A: status quo

- Each school remains as it is, retains its name, category, budget, governors, staff and remains in its community.

### Option B: two schools in the area.

- Ysgol Rhos Helyg would remain as it is, retains its name, category, budget, governors, staff and would remain in its community.
- Brynford CP and Lixwm CP would amalgamate onto one site. The amalgamated school would retain its category but would have a new name, governing body, head and budget and would remain in one of the communities.

### Option C: area school (one site)

- Area school - one site, the school would retain its category but would have a new name, governing body, head and budget and would remain in one of the communities.

## School Organisation Code.

- The area review currently does not form part of the formal process as specified in the School Organisation Code.
- However should Cabinet agree to either option 2 or 3, then the Council would be required to undertake the process outlined in Welsh Government's **School Organisation Code**. This would form a separate process post Cabinet approval (Spring 2016). Any School organisation proposals in Wales must be undertaken in accordance with the **School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013**. Link to the code:

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/130719-school-organisation-codes-en.pdf>

## What will happen next?

Timelines are sequential and typically are as follows:

- Area review – (approximately) 6 months (options appraisal work)
- Cabinet approvals
- Statutory proposals - 9-12 months (if agreed by the Council's Cabinet)
- Cabinet approvals
- Construction Procurement/Construction Work (where applicable)

Officers from the Council will now conduct option appraisals based on the 3 models identified earlier in the document. Appraisals will be conducted using Welsh Government and Welsh Local Government Association guidance on option appraisals.

To support the appraisal process, Impact Assessments will also be conducted on buildings, equalities, language, transport and community

Once the information has been collated, the Council will seek the views of key stakeholders and present its findings to staff, governors, parents and carers in arranged consultation events; this will happen early in spring 2016. (Dates to be confirmed)

Special young person's consultation events will also be co-ordinated in the 3 schools around the same time to seek the views of young people.

The views of key stakeholders together with the option appraisal information will be presented to Cabinet in spring 2016. Cabinet will consider all the information and make a decision on the best option for the area.

The timeline for potential school organisational change will be dependent on which option the Cabinet opt for. Further information will be made available at the appropriate time.



**Contact details:**

Should you have any comments, queries or ideas, contact details are as follows:

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