

.Date/Dyddiad 6 October 2023
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To: Parents, Carers and Guardians of children attending Ysgol Iolo Morganwg;
Headteacher, Staff and Governing Body of Ysgol Iolo Morganwg;
Prescribed Consultees.

Dear Consultee,

Proposal to provide additional school places to meet the future demand for Welsh Medium education by expanding Ysgol Iolo Morganwg from 210 places to 420 places from September 2025.

The Council consulted with prescribed consultees in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Iolo Morganwg from 210 places to 420 places from September 2025.

In line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018, a consultation exercise with prescribed consultees was undertaken between 27 February 2023 and 11 April 2023. The aim of the consultation was to inform prescribed consultees about the proposal to increase the number of Welsh medium school places in Cowbridge by expanding Ysgol Iolo Morganwg from 210 places to 420 places. The Council received 91 responses of which 86 were in favour of the proposal and 5 were opposed.

On 25 May 2023, following consideration of the consultation report, Cabinet determined to progress the proposal through the publication of a statutory notice. The statutory notice was published on the Council's website on 26 June 2023 and issued to prescribed consultees. The notice was posted at the main entrances of Ysgol Iolo Morganwg and at the proposed site of the new school building. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 provides that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections must be made in writing or by email, and sent to the proposer before the end of 28 days beginning with the day on which the notice was published ("the objection period"). As the statutory notice was published on 26 June 2023, statutory objections had to be received by 24 July 2023. It was noted that no statutory objections were received during the statutory notice period.

On 7 September 2023, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet approved the proposal to expand Ysgol Iolo Morganwg from 210 places to 420 places from September 2025. As a result a new building for Ysgol Iolo Morganwg will be built on the Darren Farm residential development with capacity for 420 pupils and the school will move in from 1 September 2025.

In determining the proposal, Cabinet were satisfied that the proposal will:

- Enable the school to further improve while catering for a greater pupil population.

- Ensure the Council is able to accommodate the future demand for Welsh medium education based on current trends.
- Provide innovative and creative learning environments which are adaptable to change and will challenge and support children to reach their full potential.
- Increase the level of community access and interaction through the use of the school's educational facilities whilst meeting the needs of the school.
- The new building will meet BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent standards and be built to an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) A rating.
- Support the objectives of the Vale of Glamorgan's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2031.
- Contribute effectively to the Welsh Government's target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The reasons for the decision in respect of the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code are as follows:

Quality and Standards of Education

Estyn commented in their response to the consultation exercise. 'Estyn is of the opinion that the proposal is likely to maintain the standard of education in the area.' By accepting and implementing this proposal, pupils will be taught in a modern, good quality building that will be able to support the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils in the foundation phase and key stage 2.

The Council's clear ambition is that educational outcomes in the Vale of Glamorgan are the best in Wales and match those of the most successful authorities in England with similar socio-economic profiles. The proposal will help deliver that ambition.

The new school building and site will provide greater opportunities for curriculum development and pupil well-being. Pupils will have greater access to digital facilities and outdoor learning areas. Enhanced provision for students with special educational needs will be available at the school.

The proposal will provide much needed investment in Ysgol Iolo Morganwg, and will help deliver the transformational change necessary for all students to achieve their full potential.

Need for places and the impact upon accessibility of schools

The proposal will ensure that there is a sustainable balance between the supply and demand for primary school places in the rural Vale across the Cowbridge and surrounding area for the long term. The proposal will increase places for Welsh medium education in the rural Vale and in the Cowbridge area that would support growth in Welsh medium primary education, supporting the Council's WESP and Welsh Governments 'Cymraeg 2050 strategy'.

Estyn commented in their response to the consultation exercise 'The local authority has set out a clear and detailed rationale for its proposal. There is a need to meet future demand from the new housing developments in Cowbridge and the wider catchment area for the school, as well as the increased demand for Welsh medium education. The proposal would also provide state of the art facilities for staff and learners of Ysgol Iolo Morgannwg, as the current school is on a very confined sloping site with limited outdoor recreational space and no prospect of substantially increasing the site to meet the Sustainable Communities for Learning standards.'

Under the proposals there are no plans to change the Council's policy on the transport of students to and from schools. Free school transport eligibility will remain unchanged as a result of this proposal. The available safe walking routes to schools used for the assessment of free school

transport will not alter as a result of this proposal.

The proposed new building will have improved access for disabled pupils and other users.

Resourcing of education and other financial implications

Funding is provided through the school funding formula which allocates the majority of funding for schools on the basis of pupil numbers.

This proposal will mean that significant capital investment will be made in establishing the new school and developing state of the art facilities. The estimated cost of the scheme £18.054m. It is anticipated that part-funding would be provided by the Welsh Government through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. The remainder of the capital funding would be contributed by the Council.

Other general factors

The Equality Impact Assessment identifies that there would be a positive impact on persons with the protected characteristics of age, disability and gender reassignment/ identity. The proposal would support the Welsh language and the school to ensure that it has the improved facilities to promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those with different protected characteristics.

There has been no perceived negative impact on the protected characteristics identified. The existing site is not fully compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 due to site constraints. Successful implementation of the proposal would enable compliance by providing a fully accessible building with gender neutral facilities.

The impact assessment identifies that the proposal would likely have a neutral impact on the local community across 2 of the 8 measures assessed. The proposal would likely have a positive impact on the local community across 6 of the 8 measures assessed. Overall, the proposal would likely have a positive impact on the local community.

Yours faithfully,



Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills