

Future Use of Tŷ Deri

Considerations and Options



Background

- During the planning phase for the new school it was decided to construct Ty Deri as a residential facility with a 19 bed capacity. This decision was taken in consultation with the headteachers of the 3 special schools and was based on the level of usage at the time (2009/10).
- The facility is configured into four self-sufficient wings. Two of the wings are each equipped for 4 pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Two other wings contain 5 and 6 beds respectively which are equipped for pupils with complex needs as a consequence of an autistic spectrum condition.

Utilisation of Tŷ Deri

The number of nights utilised has reduced since 2013/14 by 79%.

Why?

- Children's Services in the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Councils have developed a range of interventions including the increased use of direct payments to support families in meeting the needs of their children at home.

- Due to the declining number of CYP being placed at the school from outside the Vale of Glamorgan, there is also a decline in the CYP who were most likely to access additional respite provision.
- Children's Services in the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff have found the Monday to Thursday night, term time only provision offered at Ty Deri to be very restrictive. Respite provision is often needed at weekends and during school holidays which are challenging times for parents and carers of pupils with complex needs.
- Children's Services in the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff utilise their own provision and are able to meet current demand without Tŷ Deri.
- In order to cover the actual costs of service delivery, Ysgol Y Deri increased the charges for overnight and tea stays in line with the existing residential charge schedule. Costs were therefore increased from £72 in 2014/15 for a tea stay to £125 in 2015/16 (a 74% increase) and from £249 for an overnight stay to £375 (a 51% increase).

Action Taken

- In September 2016 the significantly reduced staffing structure was put in place reducing the staffing by circa 8 FTE.
- This has ensured that the provision is breaking even in terms of costs. The issue now is the under utilisation of the building.

Options Appraisal

The report has considered the following options:

Service option 1: Continue to provide existing respite services at Ty Deri and improve underutilisation

Service option 2: Provide a residential service

Service option 3: Provision of a residential nursing service

Service option 4: Provision of additional classroom space

Service option 1: Continue to provide existing respite services at Ty Deri and improve underutilisation

- Evidence indicates that, for the reasons outlined on pages 3 and 4, there is insufficient demand to sustain a 19 bed provision.
- It is difficult to predict future need but given the current “breakeven” position of Ty Deri it would be sensible to maintain a smaller number of beds to protect against future changes in demand.

Recommendations:

- Maintain the respite facility but reduce the number of beds to an appropriate level.
- Utilise the parts of the building that are surplus to need for alternative use.

Service option 2: Provide a residential service

- A 7 night per week, 52 weeks per year service, as either a residential or a children's home is very challenging to deliver and is high risk and specialist provision. This would be outside of the remit and skill set of education staff.
- Vale of Glamorgan Children's Service's do not provide any such provision directly and has no plans to do so.
- Education professionals are unable to contract and monitor a Children's Home, Children's Services would need to be prepared to commission the service therefore a contracted provider would need to be sought to deliver the service and there would be many difficulties associated with this:
 - High risk
 - Building not suited to being a home
 - Too large
 - Too clinical
 - Loss of control/risk
 - Very small demand
 - Linked to very complex needs

Recommendations:

- Not to use the building as a full time, 52 week residential provision at this time.
- Retain some respite provision and should the need for residential provision arise in future, this option can be reconsidered.

Service option 3: Provision of a residential nursing service

- Children who have complex health needs or life limiting conditions receive individual nursing care in their homes from the Community Nursing Service (CNS).
- The University Health Board are keen to develop a respite service for this group of children.
- Ty Deri suits the medical model.
- This proposal appears to align better with the design of the building than its use as a children's home.
- This option would not utilise all 19 beds, but would require the use of those rooms designed to support individuals with physical disabilities and medical needs. The number of rooms is not yet known.
- More information is needed to evaluate the proposal's viability.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that Cardiff and Vale University Health Board are asked to complete a demand analysis, and assess the implications of this model in partnership with Cardiff Children's Services and the Vale of Glamorgan's Children's Services.
- Retain a proportion of the building for respite provision to enable future use by the Health Board should this be viable.

Service option 4: Provision of additional classroom space

- Ysgol Y Deri opened in 2014 and was built to hold 205 pupils. In June 2017 there were 240 pupils on roll.
- The numbers of pupils requiring ALN provision is rising, with predicted need increasing over the next 5 years. Schools across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan have reached capacity and are over delivering.
- Increasing the capacity of the school would ensure that children and young people from the Vale of Glamorgan could access the provision they need.
- Not increasing the capacity would necessitate accessing placements for Vale pupils in out of county placements. This would have significant reputational and financial implications for the Council.
- Increasing the capacity of the school would increase the opportunity to offer placements to learners from outside of the Vale of Glamorgan.

- It is evident from the evaluation of the options in this report that a 19 bed residential respite facility is too large. There is no evidence to indicate that demand for such a facility will increase in future to the extent that would be required to necessitate this number of beds.
- Ysgol y Deri has recently been utilising the space available in Tŷ Deri to meet the needs of highly complex learners who without this facility would have required out of county provision in a more specialist setting.
- This has resulted in a significant cost saving and continuity of education for the learners involved.
- The additional space that the utilisation of Tŷ Deri would afford could be utilised not only to increase capacity but to meet the needs of more complex learners.

- Ysgol y Deri only has a finite number of classrooms and as numbers of pupils has increased, class sizes are at maximum capacity and to increase any further would have significant educational and health and safety implications.

Recommendations:

- In order to meet demand in the short to medium term sufficient capacity should be created by adapting part of the Ty Deri building.
- Current trend analysis does not indicate a pressing need to utilise the whole of the Ty Deri building for educational purposes. Re-configuring part of the building for education use, while retaining the remainder of the building for residential respite provision, would enable the current residential provision to continue and afford additional time to work with referring agencies to identify future potential need.