

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** **EDUCATION AND YOUTH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **MONDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF OFFICER (EDUCATION AND YOUTH)**

**SUBJECT:** **SCHOOL MODERNISATION REVIEWS**

**1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To update members on the progress made with School Modernisation.

**2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 This is a follow on report to the report on School Modernisation progress presented to Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

2.02 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

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

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

- 2.04 Welsh Government funding criteria for 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools programme will only fund major modernisation projects. Minor refurbishment or maintenance projects are not eligible for grant under this programme.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The primary school portfolio has 2182 unfilled places (Source: ADEW national benchmarking data – January 2014).
- 3.02 As considered in building the Council's budget strategy taking action may impact positively on pupil teacher ratios across the school network or mitigate against some of the impacts of falling grant funding and increasing operating costs. Doing nothing in relation to school organisational change means that pupil teacher ratios will increase in future years. Current infrastructure is not sustainable in response to austerity. However, each individual and area school review needs to be considered on its individual merits.
- 3.03 The programme for the reviews is set out in the Cabinet report at Appendix 1.
- 3.04 Reports at each stage of the review process will be open to scrutiny as well as consultation and decision making processes set out in the Statutory Code.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Members note the information outlined in the report.

### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 The 21st Century Schools programme current tranche is funded via the Welsh government and Flintshire Local Authority funding package of £64.2m.
- 5.02 2019-2021 – Anticipated Band B Programme (circa £500m available nationally). The matched funding rate for this has yet to be confirmed by the Welsh Government.

### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 School Modernisation is a key strategy in addressing the gap in achievement in some school communities due to poverty. Options will need to be informed by provision for and outcomes in overcoming the impact of poverty.

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 The environmental impact of educational provision is consistently improved through school modernisation projects. Environmental impacts are analysed, reported and considered as part of school organisational decisions

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 There are no equalities implications from this report. Equalities Impact Assessments will be conducted as part of a school or area school review/s.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 There are no direct personnel implications arising directly from this report.

9.02 Reorganisations of schools will impact in various ways on the personnel employed. Whenever there is an impact on the workforce of school modernisation proposals, the Flintshire County Council policies related to personnel matters together with the National Teachers Pay and Conditions documents and adhered to in order to minimise any negative effect.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Consultation would be required in accordance with the Statutory Code on school organisation. This would be commissioned through a Cabinet decision on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 No consultations are required for this report.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Cabinet report 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

School Modernisation Strategy – Cabinet 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015

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