

Agenda



Delegated Decisions - Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years

Date: Thursday, 31 October 2024

To: Councillor D Davies

Item		Wards Affected
1	<u>School Reorganisation Proposal - Establishment of a new primary school at Great Milton Park</u> (Pages 3 - 10)	Llanwern

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Report

Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years

Part 1

Date: 31 October 2024

Subject **School Reorganisation Proposal – Establishment of a new primary school at Great Milton Park**

Purpose To seek approval to take forward a school reorganisation proposal, commencing with a period of formal consultation, “to establish a new primary school for pupils aged between 3 year and 11 years of the Great Milton Park housing development with effect from September 2026”.

Author Assistant Head of Education – Resources

Ward Llanwern

Summary This report references the requirement to move to formal consultation on a proposal to establish a new English-medium community-maintained primary school on the Great Milton Park housing development to provide education for children aged between 3 and 11 years of age. The school is being built by the developer, Redrow Homes PLC, and will be handed over to the council in the summer of 2026.

The new school will have a published admission number of 45 for the Reception to Year Six classes, plus a 10-place specialist Learning Resource Base and a 24-place nursery class to accommodate a maximum of 48 children over the two morning and afternoon sessions. The new school will be established as a growing school to support the growth of the Great Milton Park development.

In accordance with Welsh Government’s statutory School Organisation Code, school reorganisation proposals must commence with a period of formal consultation and stakeholder engagement. The formal consultation pack will include further information regarding the proposal to enable all consultees and stakeholders to be fully informed on the proposals for establishment of this new provision.

Proposal **To take forward a school reorganisation proposal, commencing with a period of formal consultation, “to establish a new primary school for pupils aged between 3 year and 11 years of the Great Milton Park housing development with effect from September 2026” as set out in this report.**

Action by Chief Education Officer

Timetable Immediate
This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Management Team
- Education Senior Management Team
- Senior HR and Finance Business Partners

Signed

Background

Great Milton Park is a new housing development in the Llanwern area of Newport, with outline planning permission for up to 1,100 dwellings. Due to the size of the development, the planning agreement between the developer and the Council includes a requirement for a new 1.5 form entry primary school to serve the new community. This means that there will be 45 pupil places available per year group. The new school will also benefit from a Learning Resource Base providing 10 places for pupils with Additional Learning Needs and a 24 place nursery class able to take 48 children in total over the two morning and afternoon sessions.

The new school is being provided by the housing developer, Redrow Homes PLC, as part of the planning agreement with the Council to meet the needs of the local community and is planned to open in September 2026. By this time however the housing development will not be fully complete, and indeed this is not expected to be the case until 2038. To support this, it is proposed that the new school will be established as a growing school to support the growth of the Great Milton Park development. Taking this approach allows the school to grow in size as the population of the development increases over a six-year period. Under this model, admission to the school would be capped at an agreed rate over the growth period. A similar growing school model has been implemented at two other developer-led primary schools which opened in Newport in recent years; at Jubilee Park Primary School which opened in September 2017 and at Glan Llyn Primary School which opened in September 2019.

In order for the school to open in September 2026, the Council is required to take forward a school reorganisation proposal to legally establish the school.

Formal Consultation Process

The school reorganisation proposal will be progressed by the Council in accordance with the guidance outlined in Welsh Government's statutory School Organisation Code. The formal consultation period represents stage 1 of the consultation process and is an opportunity for people to learn about the proposal, ask questions and make comments that will be recorded and summarised in a consultation report. The consultation period will involve drop-in sessions for those affected by the proposal, where Council officers will be on hand to explain the proposal in more detail and answer any questions. Consultation responses can also be submitted by email. In order to support engagement with stakeholders, a Children and Young People's Everyday Summary Version of the consultation has been produced, and the Council will consult with pupils at local schools through the respective Headteachers to gain learner views on the proposal.

It is proposed that formal consultation will commence in the autumn term 2024 and will last for a period of at least 42 days. Following this, a consultation report will be drafted and published on the Council website. The Council's Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years will then consider this consultation report when taking a decision as to whether or not to progress the proposal. If the decision is to proceed, a statutory notice will be published. If there are no objections to the statutory notice, the Council's Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years will be able to take the final decision on this proposal. If there are any objections however, an Objection Report will be prepared, and the decision will be referred to the Council's Cabinet in its capacity as the Local Determination Panel.

Financial Summary

Capital

The new school is being provided by the housing developer, Redrow Homes PLC, as part of the planning agreement with the Council to meet the needs of the local community. Under this agreement however, responsibility for the fixtures, fittings and fit-out of the new school remains with the Council. In addition, since the planning agreement was determined, Welsh Government and the Council have introduced new requirements in relation to Net Zero Carbon targets. These costs will therefore be met jointly by Welsh Government and the Council through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme at an estimated cost to the Council of £230k.

Revenue

The growth of the new school will be incremental over a 6-year period, and as a maintained setting, these places will be funded through the school's Individual School Budget (ISB), distributed by the Council according to the prescribed funding formula as follows:

	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33
School Name	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Great Milton Park	655	579	161	116	93	91	38

The revenue costs associated with this proposal are currently included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). If these are not funded, the ISB funding available for all other schools will be diluted.

Risks

It is important to identify and manage any project or scheme's exposure to risk and have in place controls to deal with those risks.

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) <i>What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?</i>	Risk Owner Officer(s) <i>responsible for dealing with the risk?</i>
Failure to gain approval for the proposal within the necessary timescales	H	L	The proposal will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.	Chief Education Officer
More applications than places available in the first year	L	L	The Council's over-subscription criteria will be used to determine priority.	Chief Education Officer
Insufficient applications in the first year	L	L	Funding for growing schools is based on places available rather than places taken, and the growth model is based on some mixed-age classes to operate in the first two years	Chief Education Officer
The temporary governing body having insufficient time to appoint a Headteacher	H	L	The temporary governing body could decide to appoint an Executive Headteacher whilst permanent recruitment is ongoing.	Chief Education Officer

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Corporate Plan
Education Service Plan
Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme

Options Available and considered

Option 1: To establish the new school from September 2026 as a Welsh-medium school under a seedling school model. Whilst this would positively contribute towards meeting the targets outlined in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), this option was discounted due to the close

proximity of the development to Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd, the ongoing growth of Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Gwenlli, and the current number of surplus Welsh-medium primary school places across the City.

Option 2: To establish the new school from September 2026 as an English-medium school under a growing school model. This is the preferred option.

Option 3: To establish the new school from September 2026 as an English-medium school under a seedling school model, restricting admission to Nursery, Reception and Year One classes in the first year. Whilst this could assist in managing risks associated with migration of pupils from existing schools, this option was discounted due to the increased possibility that siblings living on the development would find themselves having to attend different schools.

Option 4: To establish the new school from September 2026 to full capacity. Whilst this would be seen as a traditional arrangement and would immediately create additional school places across all year groups, there could be an increased risk of disruption if pupils choose to migrate from other schools across the City, and some classes could be difficult to resource if there were significant surplus places. This option was discounted as it is unlikely to meet the needs of the local community in the longer term.

Option 5: To defer opening the new school until the housing development is fully complete. Whilst this would eventually result in the majority of children attending the school living within the school catchment area, no additional places would be created to support the development as it grows, likely causing issues around split siblings and high transport costs. This option was discounted as it is unlikely to meet the needs of the local community in the short term.

Preferred Option and Why

The preferred option is Option 2. Under this proposal, a new community-maintained English-medium primary school will open in September 2026 under a growing school arrangement to support the growth of the housing development. The new school will operate to full capacity from September 2031, providing an all-through primary school delivering a full 3-11 education curriculum.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Capital

The estimated cost of this scheme forms part of the Council's outline proposal for the next stage of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, the Council's share of the proposed programme is to be funded from a combination of residual funds from the ongoing Band B programme and indicative borrowing headroom of £7m per year from 2027/28. If this is not approved as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, the Council will have to fully fund this out of its own resources.

Revenue

The revenue funding required for the operation of the primary school will need to be provided through the Council's overall schools budget and the profiled additional budget requirements have been included within the Council's medium term financial plan (MTFP) for consideration within future budget decisions. The additional budget requirements will maintain 'funding per pupil' at current levels. The MTFP has already been updated to reflect the one-year deferment of this project.

The table included in the financial summary shows the financial impact of this decision over the life of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and beyond as the school will open as a growing school and therefore it will take 7 years to reach the point of being fully established due to the incremental approach to growth.

If approved, there is an unavoidable requirement to fund the budget impact of this new school, whether or not the proposal for growth within the Councils MTFP is accepted. If increased funding is not

available, it will dilute the current overall school's budget across all existing Newport schools, many of whom are already facing significant financial challenges.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The report is compliant with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government School Organisation Code, which set out the information to be included in the proposal paper and the consultation process.

Comments of Head of People, Policy, and Transformation

The proposal seeks to establish a new primary school for the Great Milton Park development. The school would increase in capacity over a six year period as the population of the development grows. Ready local access to a primary school is an important aspect of place-making for this growing part of the city. This school growth model seeks to meet longer-term demand and will mitigate the risks of reaching maximum capacity through out-of-catchment applicants.

The proposal would include a period of formal consultation that would include public drop-in sessions, the availability of documentation in hard copy and online, and learner voice opportunities.

A decision to proceed to formal consultation on establishing a new community-maintained English-medium primary school would not have any staffing implications at this time. However, should the proposals be delayed this would impact on the ability to recruit the workforce in line with the opening date of the school.

The workforce would comprise teachers (employed under National Conditions of Service for Teachers in England and Wales) and support staff under NJC terms and conditions. In line with National Conditions of Service for Teachers, consideration would need to be given to notice periods for Teaching professionals so that the appropriate workforce is in place by 1st September 2026.

Comments from Cllr Martyn Kellaway, Ward Member for Llanwern Ward

As the local ward member for the Llanwern ward, I fully support this school reorganisation proposal and the approach being taken.

Scrutiny Committees

None

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Socio-economic Duty**
- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

A full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) was undertaken and is published on the Council's website (available in Welsh [here](#) and English [here](#)). The Council has a number of legislative responsibilities to assess the impact of any strategic decision, proposal or policy on people that may experience disadvantage or inequality. A Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) has been completed to support the decision to launch this proposal and will be reviewed and updated to support the decision on whether or not to progress with the proposal following consideration of the feedback received during the formal consultation period.

This school reorganisation proposal will be undertaken in accordance with the legislation outlined in the statutory School Organisation Code. This Code outlines the key stakeholders that should be consulted with as part of the process, but this is not exclusive, and the Council has extended this list because of feedback received in relation to previous proposals. An invitation to engage in the consultation process will be emailed to identified stakeholders. The proposal will be published on the Newport City Council

website, and social media platforms will also be used to share information. The consultation documents will contain a consultation response pro-forma, and there will be an opportunity for any questions or concerns to be submitted. All consultation documents will be available bilingually in Welsh and English. The consultation will involve drop-in sessions with those affected by the proposal, and Pupil Voice sessions will be facilitated. A Consultation Report will subsequently be prepared and published and used by the Council's Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years in deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

The FEIA has identified positive impacts of the proposal in relation to *Age and Disability*. The establishment of a new school on the Great Milton Park development will support the demand for school places in an area where 1,100 dwellings are expected to be built. The school will be a 1.5 form entry 3-11 provision, meaning there will be capacity for 315 pupils of statutory school age, plus a 24 place nursery class providing 48 places over the morning and afternoon sessions. The proposal will provide a school in this new community, supporting community cohesion arrangements for children and families. The new school will be fully accessible for pupils with mobility and sensory impairments. The Council is committed to providing Learning Resource Base (LRB) facilities in all new school builds as this supports a more inclusive approach for pupils with additional learning needs. As a result, a 10-place LRB will be established within the new primary school.

Whilst no negative impacts have been identified, it is acknowledged that this proposal will not contribute to the Council's targets in relation to Cymraeg 2050. Newport's current Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) proposes to establish more Welsh-medium provision in Newport between 2022-2032. The Council notes that establishing this new school as an English-medium school could be seen as a missed opportunity towards these targets; however, it strongly believes that to establish another Welsh-medium primary school so close to Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd and so soon after the opening of Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Gwenlli and whilst it is still growing, could destabilise the current offer and have a detrimental impact on existing provision. It is acknowledged therefore that in proposing to open the new school as an English-medium school, Welsh-language provision is not being given the same level of priority in this instance and, on this basis, the Welsh language is being treated less fairly. Measures being taken to mitigate this impact are outlined in part 3 of the FEIA.

The sustainable development principle and 5 ways of working set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act have been considered as outlined below:

- Long term: the importance of balancing short- term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
The proposal seeks to establish a new school on the Great Milton Park development. The development has outline planning permission for up to 1,100 dwellings, and the planning agreement between the developer and the Council includes a requirement for a 1.5 form entry primary school to serve the site. The proposal seeks to establish the school as a growing school allowing the school population to grow over a six year period as the development population grows. This growth model mitigates risks that the school could prematurely reach its maximum capacity with out-of-catchment applicants. Great Milton Park is a permanent development in Newport and the school will be established to meet the needs of the community for the foreseeable future.
- Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help us meet our objectives.
Establishing a new school to serve the Great Milton Park development will ensure a sufficiency of primary pupil places in the area, thereby contributing to the Council's statutory duty. The growth model will also increase the possibility that siblings will be able to attend the same local school.
- Integration: Consider how the proposals will impact on our wellbeing objectives, our wellbeing goals, other objectives, or those of other public bodies.
A formal statutory consultation will be carried out and supported at each stage by a FEIA to consider the impact of the proposal. This proposal supports the "A prosperous Wales", "A more equal Wales", and "A Wales of cohesive communities" Wellbeing Goals and has no

adverse effect on any of the other Wellbeing Goals. In addition, this proposal supports the One Newport PSB well-being plan for 2018-2023, and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act's Wellbeing Goal to create a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.

- **Collaboration:** have you considered how acting in collaboration with any other person, or any other part of our organisation could help meet our wellbeing objectives. **A formal consultation will be carried out with the opportunity for engagement with all stakeholders, supported at each stage by a FEIA to consider the impact of the proposal. The school is being designed and delivered by Redrow Homes PLC, the developers at Great Milton Park, on behalf of and in collaboration with the Council and with support from Welsh Government through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.**
- **Involvement:** The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the City we serve. **The proposal will include a period of formal consultation that will offer the opportunity for stakeholders to find out more information about how it may affect them. This will include public drop-in sessions, the availability of documentation in hard copy and online, and learner voice opportunities facilitated through the Headteachers of local schools. Following conclusion of formal consultation, a Consultation Report will be prepared, published, and distributed to identified stakeholders.**

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Not applicable

Consultation

None at this stage, but formal consultation this will be facilitated with key stakeholders as part of the school reorganisation proposal.

Background Papers

FEIA

Welsh Government School Organisation Code – second edition (November 2018)

Dated: 31 October 2024