

CABINET MEMBER DECISION NOTICE

SUBJECT

Changing the date for re-locating Ysgol Hafod Lon, Y Ffor and Uned Tŷ Aran, Dolgellau to the new site in Penrhyndeudraeth

CABINET MEMBER

Coun. Gareth Thomas

DECISION

Based on the fact that the work on the site of the new school in Penrhyndeudraeth will not have been completed adequately to allow the transition period safely before re-locating pupils from their current locations in accordance with the original implementation date of 1 September 2016:

- Approve changing the implementation date for re-locating Ysgol Hafod Lon, Y Ffor and Uned Tŷ Aran, Dolgellau to the new site in Penrhyndeudraeth from 1 September 2016 to 31 October 2016.

REASON FOR THE DECISION

Following a consultation period with stakeholders and publishing a Statutory Notice, Gwynedd Council Cabinet approved in its meeting on 13 January 2015 to re-locating Ysgol Hafod Lon, Y Ffor and Uned Tŷ Aran, Dolgellau to a new site in Penrhyndeudraeth on 1 September 2016, increase the capacity of the school and add a residential element to the provision.

Because Ysgol Hafod Lon and Uned Tŷ Aran pupils have special educational needs the Education Department and the Head of Ysgol Hafod Lon were of the opinion from the start that it was imperative to allow a transition period in order to give the children time to familiarise themselves with the new school through a series of visits over a period of a month or two before moving to the new site permanently.

The original intention was for this to happen during June and July with Ysgol Hafod Lon and Uned Tŷ Aran re-locating on 1 September 2016, but because there was a delay in commencing work on the site and, despite every effort, that it was not possible to make up for lost time, the work on the new school in Penrhyndeudraeth will not be completed adequately to commence the transition period safely until September 2016. Because of this Gwynedd Council is of the opinion that it would be wise to use September and October as the transition period and delay the re-location of the school and the unit until 31 October 2016, which is the first day after the Autumn half term.

The Welsh Government School Organisation Code (006/2013), which are the guidelines that have to be followed when adapting any school provision states:

*Proposals **must** normally be implemented as determined or approved (with or without modifications). However, if a proposer is satisfied, after consultation with any affected governing body, that a proposal would be unreasonably difficult to implement on the original implementation date, or that circumstances have so altered since the proposal was approved that its implementation on the original date was inappropriate, it may modify the proposal so that its implementation is delayed by up to three years.*

Because of the reasons noted above, the Council believes that it would be unreasonably difficult to implement the proposal on the original date.

In accordance with Code guidelines we have consulted with the Governing Body of Ysgol Hafod Lon on the proposal to change the re-location date and they confirmed in their meeting on 16 May 2016 that they are happy with the proposal.

Gwynedd Council therefore approves changing the re-location date for Ysgol Hafod Lon, Y Ffor and Uned Tŷ Aran, Dolgellau to the new site in Penrhyndeudraeth from 1 September 2016 to 31 Hydref 2016.

If the decision isn't called in, we will share the decision with all relevant stakeholders including parents, carers, staff, Welsh Government and Estyn (in accordance with the Welsh Government School Organisation Code (006/2013)).

RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Locating Pupils 1 September – 30 October 2016

The current Ysgol Hafod Lon and Uned Tŷ Aran pupils will continue to attend Ysgol Hafod Lon, Y Ffor and Uned Tŷ Aran, Dolgellau until the new re-location date.

Children transferring from mainstream schools to the new school will remain in their current schools until the new re-location date.

Any children transferring from ABC Units will remain in the unit until the new re-location date.

The budget for Ysgol Hafod Lon between 1 September – 30 October will be based on the numbers and needs of the children who will be attending during that period, increasing when the additional children transfer to the new site from other schools from 31 October onwards. In the meantime the schools where the additional children will be located between 1 September – 30 October will continue to receive the relevant allocation for that period. Therefore changing the re-location date will not have an effect on the Education Departments contribution towards the children's education.

As the Welsh Government capital grant contribution is to be spent on the new school in the periods 2015/16 and 2016/17 i.e before 31 March 2017, changing the re-location date will not affect the grant conditions or the Council's ability to claim the contribution.

The Welsh Government School Capital Funding Unit, who are responsible for the 21st Century Schools Programme, have agreed to the change in the date of relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and Uned Tŷ Aran and that they are also content for us to change the benefits realisation dates that were noted in the original award letter.

Therefore the change in the re-location implementation date will not affect the Council's ability to claim the grant as long as it conforms to the terms of the original award letter, with some amendments to benefits realisation dates.

VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

1. Chief Executive :- Nothing to add.
2. Monitoring Officer :- The notice has received input from the Legal Department therefore I have nothing to add regarding its propriety.
3. Chief Finance Officer :- The decision to change the implementation date of re-locating Ysgol Hafod Lon from the 1 September 2016 to 31 October 2016 appears unavoidable. The Education Department will need to manage and shoulder any revenue obligations that results from the delay.

Regarding the capital grant / loan, the original award letter notes that the funding is for the period 2015/16 and 2016/17, and needs to be claimed in full by March 2017. Therefore, with respect to expenditure, the delay does not create a problem to the grant application / claim.

VIEWS OF THE LOCAL MEMBERS

Peter Read :- Nothing to add.

Dyfrig Siencyn :- Nothing to add.

SIGNATURE

DATE



7/6/16
