

MEETING	Gwynedd Council Cabinet
DATE	19 July 2022
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Beca Brown
OFFICER	Gwern ap Rhisiart / Rhys Glyn
TITLE OF ITEM	Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant Projects

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 The Cabinet's support is sought to proceed to submit full business cases to the Welsh Government to secure funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant scheme to deliver the purposes of the following projects:
- a) **Project 1** - Invest over £1.1m to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of Gwynedd Language Centres - the second phase.
 - b) **Project 2** - Invest over £1.5m in capital funding and £0.3m in revenue funding to increase the capacity of three schools (Llanllechid, Bro Lleu and Chwilog), in order to support Welsh communities of linguistic significance (i.e. the communities with over 70% of Welsh speakers) to thrive.
- 1.2 Cabinet approval is requested to carry out a statutory consultation on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog to 95, which is an increase of over 25% to the existing capacity, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and report back to the Cabinet after completing the consultation.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE APPLICATION

In 2021, the Welsh Government submitted a proposal inviting Local Authorities to apply for funding from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant scheme. The Welsh Government's main aim for the grant was to support investments that would facilitate growth in Welsh-medium education and the use of Welsh, aimed specifically at projects that would make a prominent contribution towards achieving the Welsh Government's aim of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

As a result of the invitation to apply, the Education Department submitted a bid to fund two projects.

On 21 February 2022, confirmation was received from the Welsh Government that they had given their approval in principle to fund 100% of the capital and revenue funding towards the two projects submitted in the bid.

This amounted to £1,151,000 of capital funding towards the development of the Language Centres and £1,533,000 in capital funding towards increasing the capacity of three primary schools.

The Government has also given its approval in principle to a revenue grant of £341,874 towards employing a full-time teacher in each of the three primary schools for a period of two years. After the two year period, it is anticipated that the increase in the number of learners at the schools would be reflected adequately in their budgets so that they can continue to fund the posts of these teachers on a permanent basis, following the initial two years.

The budgets for the two projects are noted in the table below:

Project	Sum
Project 1: Increase capacity and improve the learning environment of Language Centres	Capital: £1,151,000
Project 2: Increase the capacity of schools to support Welsh communities with a linguistic significance (i.e. communities of over 70%) to thrive	Capital: £1,533,500 Revenue: £341,874 Total: £1,875,374
Total	£3,026,374

3. BACKGROUND TO PROJECT 1: Invest over £1.1m to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of Gwynedd Language Centres - the second phase.

On 6 July 2021, the Cabinet approved a new vision for the Immersion Education System in Gwynedd towards 2032 and beyond. As a part of this vision, and after receiving £1.1m from the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, we are in the process of establishing two brand-new immersion education sites in Gwynedd, located in strategic areas of the county, and areas of linguistic significance, namely Tywyn and Bangor. We are also in the process of improving the resources in the Porthmadog immersion education site, which is again located strategically in the centre of the county. These three sites will provide immersion education to learners from years 5-9 in a learning environment of the highest degree.

In addition, we also have three primary sites which provide an immersion education for years 2-4. These immersion sites have not received any capital investment as part of the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant funding.

Therefore, we saw an opportunity to submit a bid to the second phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, in order to reconcile capacity and improve the learning environment at the three immersion education sites that did not receive an investment in the first phase.

By means of this bid, the Education Department is eager to incorporate the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, and offer cross-curricular experiences for all learners. It is also intended to ensure a strategic location for each of the immersion sites that will be a means to extend experiences and increase the opportunities for learners who are latecomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom by being located within convenient reach of facilities such as the Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n lach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, this will be an opportunity to extend the learners' experiences as they benefit from experiences that bring the Welsh language to life. To this end, by means of the capital investment from the first and second phase, each of the Immersion Education System sites will be suitable to deliver the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales and offer cross-curricular experiences for all learners. Since it was established in the 1980s, the immersion provision in Gwynedd has been pioneering in the field, and the new-look system will consequently modernise the provision, the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, as well as all capital investment and the best facilities, will continue to pioneer now and in the future.

Maesincla Language Centre

Maesincla Language Centre is located within the Ysgol Maesincla building in Caernarfon. The space that Maesincla Language Centre has is restricted (which consists of two classes of a different size, one of which is very small), disrupts the quality of the experience for the learners. Also, the space within the Language Centre is not convenient for delivering the Curriculum for Wales and to offer enriching cross-curricular experiences to the learners.

Considering that Maesincla Language Centre will provide an immersion education mainly for years 2-4, there is a need to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and plan bespoke space for play areas, as well as quiet areas. Also, there is no suitable space available to meet parents or external agencies as needed.

By means of the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to extend and adapt the existing space of Maesincla Language Centre in order to improve the learning environment and ensure a bespoke space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, including indoor and outdoor play areas, as well as a suitable space for visitors.

Dolgellau Language Centre

Dolgellau Language Centre is currently located in a building between the primary site of Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau, and the Council's offices in Cae Penarlâg, Dolgellau. Presently there is only space for one class for a total of between 8-12 learners at Dolgellau Language Centre and the Centre shares playtime and lunchtime facilities with the Ysgol Bro Idris primary site. Based on the demand for immersion education in the area, there is need to increase capacity at Dolgellau Language Centre and reconcile the number of learners received at each site across the Immersion Education System. Also, the space at the Language Centre is not convenient to deliver the Curriculum for Wales and enriching cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

Considering that the Dolgellau Language Centre would provide an immersion education to years 2-4 mainly, there is a need to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and plan a bespoke space for play areas, as well as quiet areas. Also, there is no suitable space available to meet parents or external agencies as needed.

By means of the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to relocate the existing site of Dolgellau Language Centre to an alternative site at Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau, in order to improve the capacity of the Centre, improve the learning environment and ensure a bespoke space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, including indoor and outdoor play areas, as well as a suitable space for visitors.

Llangybi Language Centre

Llangybi Language Centre is currently located as a part of the Ysgol Llangybi building. The Language Centre in Llangybi is not located in a strategic location in the county, and the current location of the Centre restricts the experiences available for learners in order to enrich the learning experiences. The space at the Language Centre is not convenient for delivering the Curriculum for Wales and enriching cross-curricular experiences for the learners. Considering that Llangybi Language Centre will provide an immersion education for years 2-4 mainly, there is a need to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and plan bespoke space for play areas, as well as quiet areas. Also, there is no suitable space available to meet parents or external agencies as needed.

Therefore, by means of the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to relocate the existing site of Llangybi Language Centre to a strategic location on the site of Ysgol Cymerau in Pwllheli. This will be a means to improve the learning environment and ensure a bespoke space for the

requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, which will include indoor and outdoor play areas, as well as a suitable space for visitors. By relocating to Pwllheli, it will also ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means to extend experiences and increase opportunities for the learners who are latecomers to use their Welsh outside the class, i.e. by having convenient access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n Iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thereby bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners. Inevitably, relocating the Language Centre to Pwllheli will have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi, in terms of the number of staff and adults on the site. The Council acknowledges the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for accommodating the Centre. Following the relocation, the use of the Centre's space will be available for the school's purposes.

This investment would lead to improving the experiences, resources and learning environment for intense immersion for year 2-4 learners in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, and it will enable the Authority to provide an immersion education to more learners in line with the increasing demand on the service.

Currently, there is a limit on the capacity number of learners at the immersion education settings of 72 learners per term, however, the *phase 1* capital investment, as well as the *phase 2* capital investment; means that the number of learners that could be immersed in the Language Centres will increase to approximately 96 learners per term.

Therefore, securing a further capital investment in our immersion education system in Gwynedd is a way of ensuring growth in the number of learners that benefit from a Welsh and bilingual education in the county, as well as ensuring an increase in the number of learners who use the Welsh language in formal and informal contexts, contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's aim of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

3.1 THE NEED FOR A DECISION

Although the project's funding has been approved in principle by the Welsh Government, there will be a need to submit a full business case before them in order to secure capital funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant in order to invest £1.1 million in our Language Centres for year 2-4 learners.

3.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGE

3.2.1 Equality assessment

An equality assessment was completed on our plans to invest £1.1 million in *phase 2* capital funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant at the three primary age Language Centres (years 2-4), who are currently located in Caernarfon, Llangybi and Dolgellau. As a part of the proposal, we also considered the impact of relocating and reconciling the capacity of Dolgellau Language Centre to accept 16 learners like the rest of our Language Centres, and we considered the impact of relocating the Llangybi Language Centre to Ysgol Cymerau, Pwllheli. See the full assessment in **Appendix A**.

It is concluded that investing £1.1 million of capital grant funding from the Welsh Government, as well as the investment that has already been made in our Immersion System, in order to reconcile capacity and relocate Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres, will not have a negative effect on equality, whether on characteristics or on a general duty.

3.2.2 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

An impact assessment was completed on the proposed impact of increasing capacity and improving the learning environment at our Primary Language Centres in Gwynedd on the Welsh language specifically. See the full assessment in **Appendix A**.

It is noted in the assessment that investing £1.1 million of additional Welsh Government phase 2 capital funding in our Immersion Education System is a way of ensuring a teaching environment of the highest standard, increase the capacity of the Centres, as well as ensuring strategic locations for all of the immersion education sites, creating the best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among the learners that are new to Gwynedd.

3.2.3 Socio-economic impact assessment

A socio-economic impact assessment was completed on the proposal to invest £1.1 million in capital funding, increase capacity and relocate the Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres, as well as improve the learning environment at Maesincla Language Centre. See the full assessment in **Appendix A1**.

It is concluded that what is being proposed will generally have a positive socio-economic impact, because through the phase 1 and 2 of the Welsh Government capital investment all centres will be strategically located across the county, and through opening two new Language Centres in key locations in the county, and at the same time increasing the capacity, it will be an opportunity for learners to benefit from an immersion provision that is more local to them.

3.2.4 Well-being Assessment

The Education Department has a role in promoting well-being aims amongst school pupils in the county through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, the Council has published well-being objectives that outline the way it will improve well-being in the '2018-23 Gwynedd Plan'.

A well-being assessment was completed on the proposal to invest an additional £1.1 million in *Phase 2* Welsh Government Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant in our Immersion Education System, increase capacity and relocate the Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centre. See the full assessment in **Appendix A2**.

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the seven well-being act goals and Council's well-being objectives, it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

The proposal, if approved, will ensure that learners who are latecomers and who are referred to the provision in one of the three Primary Language Centres in question are educated at centres that will have received the same level of investment as the rest of the Centres, and will be in a position to be able to offer consistent learning experiences in a learning environment of the highest regard across the System. The assessment details the strength of the proposal that highlight that more learners in Dolgellau every term and across the system as a result, will have opportunities to live and thrive in a naturally Welsh society, increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others and give them a fair opportunity to develop into confident and equal speakers amongst their peers.

4. BACKGROUND TO PROJECT 2: Increase the capacity of schools to support Welsh communities with a linguistic significance (i.e. communities of over 70%) to thrive

During the Summer Term 2021, the governing bodies of three schools and their local members contacted the Education Department, concerned about the lack of capacity at those school to address

the increase in learner numbers as a result of housing developments within their natural catchment areas, namely Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwillog.

An opportunity was identified to submit an application to the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant to respond to the situations at these schools and package the application around communities of linguistic significance (communities with over 70% of Welsh speakers).

By means of this application, the Education Department is eager to support economic, housing and social enterprise developments in some communities of linguistic significance in the county, by increasing the capacity of the schools in response to a growth in the population as a result of these developments. By intertwining all of these elements of community regeneration together, it can create solid grounding for these communities, and create the best possible conditions for the Welsh language and for the communities to thrive.

There is also an opportunity to combine the Welsh-medium Capital Grant that is available to the Education Department via the 106 Agreement, which is a legal agreement between the developers and local planning authority, which are associated with the housing developments in the areas in question. These agreements make it mandatory for developers to satisfy specific planning obligations, such as a contribution towards the local education provision when realising the development in question.

4.1 Ysgol Llanllechid

4.1.1 New housing developments

Adra housing association has recently developed a new 18 house estate in the catchment area of Ysgol Llanllechid, with a number of additional pupils now living in the school catchment and attending the school. *Adra* housing association has also obtained planning permission to develop 30 social rent affordable housing in another site, which is again located within the Ysgol Llanllechid catchment area, and this development will again lead to additional learners coming to live in the school's catchment area. Based on the formula for projecting the number of children in new houses, it is anticipated that 30 houses will translate into around 12 additional children requiring a place in Ysgol Llanllechid.

4.1.2 Increase in pupil numbers

243 pupils (reception - year 6) + 27 nursery pupils attend Ysgol Llanllechid (September 2021 Census), which means that it exceeds its capacity of 213 + nursery. Based on the projected numbers, it is anticipated that the number of learners will continue to be high over the next 5 years.

This means that it will be very difficult for the school to cope with the numbers without creating an additional classroom for them.

4.1.3 Finance

In addition to a share of the £1,533,500 in Welsh-medium Capital Grant, which will be available towards developing an additional classroom at Ysgol Llanllechid, the sums noted below have also been earmarked for developing the school.

A Section 106 sum of £121,152 has been committed for the Education Department's use as a result of the housing developments in the Ysgol Llanllechid catchment area.

Ysgol Llanllechid is also included as a part of the Band B Condition and Suitability project in the 21st Century Schools scheme. Although the adaptations made to the building and its condition by means of Band B will not directly respond to the increase in the number of learners, since this project meets

the maintenance needs of the building, safeguards the access and exchanges a room to create suitable non-contact time space, it will improve the school environment.

Merging these budgets would be a means to ensure that Ysgol Llanllechid has a building that is fit-for-purpose and has sufficient space to serve the children of the catchment area and its community appropriately for the future.

A revenue sum of £113,958 is also available from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant in order to employ an additional teacher for a two year period at Ysgol Llanllechid.

4.2 Ysgol Bro Lleu

4.2.1 New housing developments

Two estates consisting of 12 and 24 new houses are currently being developed in the catchment area of Ysgol Bro Lleu. Based on the formula for projecting the number of children in new houses, it is anticipated that 36 houses will translate into around 15 primary age children.

4.2.2 Increase in pupil numbers

178 pupils (reception - year 6) + 21 nursery pupils attend Ysgol Bro Lleu (September 2021 Census), which means that it exceeds its capacity of 159 + nursery. Based on the projected numbers, it is anticipated that the number of learners will increase further over the next 5 years.

The likely increase in the number of learners means that it will be very difficult for the school to cope with the numbers without creating an additional classroom for them.

4.2.3 Finance

In addition to a share of the £1,533,500 in Welsh-medium Capital Grant, which will be available towards developing an additional classroom at Ysgol Bro Lleu, the sums noted below have also been earmarked for developing the school.

A Section 106 budget of £64,000 has been committed for the Education Department's use as a result of the housing developments.

Merging this finance would be a means to ensure that Ysgol Bro Lleu has sufficient space to serve the children in the catchment area and its community appropriately in the future.

A revenue sum of £113,958 is also available from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant in order to employ an additional teacher for a two year period at Ysgol Bro Lleu.

4.3 Ysgol Chwillog

4.3.1 New housing developments

Over last year, Chwillog has seen the emergence of a new estate of open market housing in the village, which have now become a home to a number of young Welsh-speaking families, and there is planning consent for another two housing estates in the village, which could lead to a total of up to 39 additional houses in Chwillog over the coming years. Based on the formula for projecting the number of children in new houses, it is anticipated that 39 houses will translate into around 16 primary age children.

4.3.2 Increase in pupil numbers

The number of learners at Ysgol Chwillog has increased every year for the last five years, and projections suggest that it will have reached full capacity of 65 learners in September 2022, with 70

pupils (reception - year 6) + 15 nursery. It is anticipated that the increase in learner numbers will continue over the next 5 years.

The likely increase in the number of learners means that it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the school to cope with the numbers without urgently creating an additional classroom for them.

4.3.3. Finance

In addition to the share of £1,533,500 in Welsh-medium Capital Grant, which will be available towards developing an additional classroom at Ysgol Chwillog, the sums noted below have also been earmarked for developing the school.

A Section 106 budget of £6,240 has been committed for the Education Department's use as a result of the housing developments.

Merging this finance would be a means to ensure that Ysgol Chwillog has sufficient space to serve the children in the catchment area and its community appropriately in the future.

A revenue sum of £113,958 is also available from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant in order to employ an additional teacher for a two year period at Ysgol Chwillog.

4.4 THE NEED FOR A DECISION

4.4.1 Statutory process

The Schools Organisation Code notes that a statutory process must be conducted if '*an enlargement of the premises of a school (excluding nursery and special schools), which would increase the capacity of the school by at least 25% or 200 pupils as compared with the school's capacity on the appropriate date. In determining an increase in capacity all enlargements that have taken place since the appropriate date are to be taken into account together with the proposed enlargement.*'

Adding a classroom to Ysgol Chwillog would increase the capacity to 95, which is an increase of over 25% of the existing 65, which is the school's capacity at the appropriate date in this case. This means that a statutory process will need to be conducted before it is possible to make any adaptations that will lead to increasing the school's capacity. The first step in the statutory process will be to conduct a statutory consultation on the proposal.

4.4.2 The Welsh Government Business Case

Although the project has been approved in principle, a full business case will need to be submitted to the Welsh Government in order to secure funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant.

The use of any funding received to adapt Ysgol Chwillog will be subject to the outcome of the statutory process.

4.5 ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGE

4.5.1 Equality assessment

An equality assessment was completed on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Llew and Ysgol Chwillog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B1**. It is concluded that increasing the capacity of the three schools would not affect equality, in relation to characteristics or the general duty.

4.5.2 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

An assessment was completed on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Llew and Ysgol Chwillog on the Welsh language. See the full assessment in **Appendix B1**. It is concluded that increasing the capacity of these schools would not have a negative impact on the Welsh language in the catchment areas. Indeed, it is anticipated that creating sufficient space for all

primary children in the catchment area in their local school will create the conditions that will support the prosperity of the Welsh language amongst the children and in the communities in question.

4.5.3 Socio-economic impact assessment

An assessment was completed on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwillog on the socio-economic elements. See the full assessment in **Appendix B1**. It is concluded that increasing the capacity of these schools will not have a negative socio-economic impact on the individual areas. It is anticipated that creating sufficient space for all primary children in the catchment area will create a firm grounding for the communities and create the best conditions for the prosperity of the communities in question.

4.5.4 Well-being Assessment

The Education Department has a role in promoting well-being aims amongst school pupils in the county through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, the Council has published well-being objectives that outline the way it will improve well-being in the '2018-23 Gwynedd Plan'.

A well-being assessment was completed on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwillog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B2**. Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the seven well-being act goals and Council's well-being objectives, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

The proposal will ensure that the children in the three catchment areas are educated in schools that are of a suitable size and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others, and to give them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

Adapting these schools to secure sufficient space for all primary children in their catchment areas will mean that pupils will be able to access education in their communities.

It is anticipated that creating sufficient space for all primary pupils in the catchment area of their local school will create the conditions that will support the prosperity of the Welsh language amongst the children and in the communities.

4.5.5 Community impact assessment

A community impact assessment was carried out on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwillog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B3**. After considering the impact of the proposal on the three communities, it is not anticipated that increasing the capacity of the schools by adding a classroom will not have any negative impact on the communities.

On the contrary, increasing the capacity at the schools will secure plenty of places for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities. It is anticipated that increasing the capacity at the schools will create a firm grounding for the communities and create the best conditions for the Welsh language and the prosperity of the communities.

4.5.6 Assessment on the quality and standards of education

An impact assessment on the quality and standards of education was carried out on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwillog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B3**. As a result of conducting the assessment, we are of the opinion that increasing the

capacity at the schools by adding a classroom is likely to have a positive impact since it will ensure that sufficient space is available to educate children in suitably-sized classes for the future.

4.5.7 Assessment of the impact on travel arrangements

An assessment was carried out on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwillog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B3**.

As we are considering increasing the capacity of the three schools in response to the projected increases within their catchment areas, and anticipate that the homes of the majority of the children will be located within two miles of the school, and considering the existing numbers who receive free transportation, it is not anticipated that there will be any significant impact on transport arrangements as a result of increasing the capacity of the schools in question.

5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

Subject to the Cabinet's decision, a period of statutory consultation will take place, in line with the Schools Organisation Code (011/2018), on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Chwillog to 95. Following the 42-day consultation period, we will prepare a report noting any comments received and the relevant responses, and we will report back to the Cabinet.

We will also prepare business cases to be submitted to the Welsh Government's application assessment panels for capital and revenue funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant in order to secure their financial contribution to the two projects.

The use of any funding received to adapt Ysgol Chwillog will be subject to the outcome of the statutory process.

The table below notes the next steps, along with an outline timetable for implementation.

Date	Task
September 2022	Hold discussions with Ysgol Chwillog's Governing Body to explain the statutory procedure needed in order to comply with the requirements of Section 48 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
October - November 2022	Conduct a statutory consultation on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Chwillog.
October - December 2022	Present business cases to the Welsh Government for Projects 1 and 2 .
January - February 2023	Report back to the Cabinet after completing the statutory consultation on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Chwillog and receive the Welsh Government's decision regarding the funding.

6. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

The Monitoring Officer:

“As the proposal in relation to Ysgol Chwillog is a regulated alteration under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, the process that is proposed in relation to that school will be statutory one and will follow the requirements of the Act and the School Organisation Code.”

Head of Finance:

“I support the decision sought. I can confirm that the grant that is the subject of this report funds 100% of the capital and revenue costs of these schemes, as set out in Part 2 of the report. Officers from the Finance Department have discussed the financial aspects of the scheme in detail with Education Department officers, and have challenged some of the assumptions in the report to test the robustness of the financial plans. I believe that it is reasonable to expect that the schemes will be delivered within the grant available, and I am confident that arrangements are in place to keep a close eye on the costs of the projects, given the current rate of inflation experienced by the construction industry.”

Views of Local Members:

Councillor Paul Rowlinson (Local Member for the Ysgol Llanllechid catchment area)

"I would like to enthusiastically support the request for money to be invested in Ysgol Llanllechid. The school is already well over its capacity; there is no space for teachers to work on CPA work, no dedicated music room, no teachers' room large enough to house all the staff, lack of suitable places for holding intervention groups and holding professional discussions and often there are several different activities held in the hall at the same time. The headteacher and the governing body are concerned because the housing developments in the area will certainly increase the pressure on the building. The standard of the Welsh Language at Ysgol Llanllechid is excellent and the school succeeds in introducing the language to the pupils; it was noted in the headteacher's report to the governing body in March this year that all KS2 pupils speak Welsh fluently although only 62% speak it at home. This investment would enable the school to provide Welsh language education for the additional pupils and contribute to the goal of having one million Welsh speakers by 2050."

Councillor Rhys Tudur (Local Member for Ysgol Chwillog catchment area)

"I approve and support the intention to invest in Ysgol Chwillog. It is a great school and extremely Welsh. The school is in real need of investment to be able to maintain the significant increase that has been in its capacity and also the predicted increase. The current resources are completely insufficient. I am pleased that forecasts of population growth in the village of Chwillog have been fully considered in the reports.

I also believe that the reports do not include sufficient consideration of the impact on neighbouring schools. However, I accept if that does not have to be considered in the reports."

GWYNEDD CABINET DECISION NOTICE

Date of Cabinet Meeting:	19 July 2022
Date decision will come into force and be implemented, unless the decision is called in, in accordance with section 7.25 of the Gwynedd Council Constitution	3 August 2022

SUBJECT

Item 6: WELSH GOVERNMENT'S WELSH-MEDIUM EDUCATION CAPITAL GRANT PROJECTS

DECISION

It was agreed to proceed to submit full business cases to the Welsh Government to secure funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant scheme to deliver the purposes of the projects below:

- a) Project 1- Invest over £1.1m to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of Gwynedd Language Centres - the second phase.
- b) Project 2 - Invest over £1.5m in capital funding and £0.3m in revenue funding to increase the capacity of three schools (Llanllechid, Bro Lleu and Chwilog), in order to support Welsh communities of linguistic significance (i.e. the communities with over 70% of Welsh speakers) to thrive.

It was agreed to conduct a statutory consultation on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog to 95, which is an increase of over 25% to the existing capacity, in accordance with the requirements of section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and report back to the Cabinet following the completion of the consultation.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In 2021, the Welsh Government submitted a proposal inviting Local Authorities to apply for funding from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant scheme. The Welsh Government's main aim for the grant was to support investments that would facilitate growth in Welsh-medium education and the use of Welsh, aiming specifically towards projects that would make a prominent contribution to achieving the Welsh Government's target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The Education Department submitted a bid to fund two projects, and back in February confirmation was received from the Welsh Government that they had given their approval in principle to fund 100% of the capital and revenue funding towards the two projects submitted in the bid.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND ANY RELEVANT DISPENSATIONS APPROVED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

No declarations of personal interest or relevant dispensations were received.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

The department consulted the Local Councillors and their views can be seen in the report.

The Statutory Officers were consulted to seek their views, which were included in the report.
