

SUBJECT:	Report to Undertake Regulated Alterations at Monmouth Comprehensive School to Reduce the School Capacity and Establish a Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB)
MEETING:	Cabinet
DATE:	24th March 2016
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All Monmouth wards

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To conclude the ongoing statutory process on the proposal to make regulated alterations at Monmouth Comprehensive School, including a reduction to the School's capacity and the establishment of a Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB)
- 1.2 To provide members with details of any objections received following publication of the statutory notice concerning the above.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 That members consider the objection report in Appendix 3 and agree to implement the following regulated alterations with effect from the 1st September 2017 in line with the reasons stated in paragraph 4 of this report:
 1. Reduce the school capacity from 1671 places to 1600
 2. Establish an SNRB at the school.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In April 2015, Welsh Government approved Monmouthshire's 21st Century Schools bid to establish a new 1600 place mainstream school and 55 place ALN facility in Monmouth.
- 3.2 On the 7th October 2015 Cabinet agreed to commence statutory consultation on the above regulated alterations as outlined in recommendation 2.1.
A list of consultees can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The consultation period ended on the 6th December 2015 and following the publication of a consultation report, Cabinet took the decision on 6th January 2016 to proceed to publish a Statutory Notice. The statutory notice period was from 20th January 2016 until 17th February 2016. (Appendix 2)

- 3.5 In line with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 the Authority has to publish an Objection Report following the publication of the Statutory Notice. The Objection Report is at Appendix 3 and provides:
- Details of the Objections received to the proposal.
 - The Local Authorities response to these issues.

3.5 During the objection period two objections were received one was received from a resident and one from Monmouth Town Council and both were in relation to the reduction to the schools capacity. There were no objections received in relation to the establishment of the SNRB.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 At present pupils with ALN are transported outside of the Authority to access specialist provision. Following extensive consultation on the ALN strategy the preferred and most cost effective way forward is to have specialist facilities within the four secondary schools and to create an SNRB at Monmouth Comprehensive School.
- 4.2 An SNRB at Monmouth Comprehensive School will offer an inclusive education as close to home and the local community as possible. This provision will be for pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties which could include Autism and physical impairment and will offer a broad, balanced and relevant range of learning opportunities within a modern and inspirational environment.
- 4.3 Reduction of surplus places is one of the key criteria for Welsh Government when assessing business cases for 21st Century Schools funding. The funding for Monmouth Comprehensive School has been agreed on the basis of the new school having a capacity of 1600 and a 55 place ALN facility.
- 4.4 In order to reduce the level of surplus places within the area through the 21st century schools programme it is necessary to reduce the capacity at all four secondary schools. The capacity is presently 1671 and as at January 2016 there were 1626 pupils on roll.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The total capital investment for the additional learning needs facility is £1.2 million which has already been secured as part of the 21st century Schools funding, with 50% being provided by Welsh Government.
- 5.2 The average cost to educate a pupil with additional learning needs in a specialist placement outside of the county is £25,000 per year based on current costs and arrangements. The estimated cost to educate a pupil in an SNRB within the county, such as the one that is proposed in Monmouth, is £5,500 per year based on current costs.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

The future generation's process has been completed and is at Appendix 4.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications associated with this report in the context that the proposals do not impact on the schools current safeguarding arrangements.

8. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet Members

DMT

SLT

Statutory Consultees (Appendix 1) including all Local Members for the Monmouth area.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Welsh Government School Organisation Code 006/2013

Welsh Government Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales Guidance 021/2011

Statutory Notice

Consultation Document and Consultation Report on proposed changes (7th October 2015 and 6th January 2016)

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