

Dear consultee,

Establishment of a 3-19 School in Abergavenny

I write to notify you of the Council's decision following the statutory consultation processes concerning the proposals to establish an all-through 3-19 school in Abergavenny.

You will be aware from my previous correspondence that the Council's Cabinet met on the 6th October 2021 and agreed to proceed to the next stages of the statutory process, namely, to publish statutory notices concerning the proposed establishment of the all-through (3-19) School in Abergavenny with effect from 1st September 2023. In order to accommodate these proposals, The Council would cease to maintain King Henry VIII Comprehensive School and Deri View Primary School with effect from 31st August 2023.

The statutory notices were formally published on Tuesday 19th October 2021 and allowed a 28 day window for any statutory objections. The objection period closed on 17th November 2021. An objection report has been produced detailing any statutory objections received during the objection period, alongside the Council's response. A copy of the Objection Report is available to view at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/schoolreorganisation. Hard copies of the Objection Report can be provided on request.

The Council's Cabinet met on the 19th January 2022 to consider the content of the Objection Report, and made their final decision to proceed with the establishment of the all through (3-19) school, to be located on the site of King Henry VIII Comprehensive School, with effect from September 2023, with the new school building opening in September 2024. This decision also means that the Council will cease to maintain King Henry VIII Comprehensive and Deri View Primary Schools with effect from 31st August 2023.

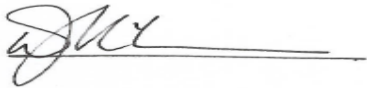
In determining the proposal, Cabinet Members gave careful consideration to key factors that concern school organisation proposals as identified within the School Organisation Code (November 2018). A summary of the considerations given to these identified factors can be found under appendix 1 overleaf. The full considerations can be found by studying the statutory documentation concerning these proposals, which can be accessed by visiting www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/schoolreorganisation

Whilst we are excited to move forward with the delivery of the new all through School, we acknowledge that this decision comes hand in hand with the closure of King Henry VIII Comprehensive and Deri View Primary Schools. The closure of a school is always an extremely difficult decision for Cabinet Members to make, particularly when the schools concerned support some of our most vulnerable

children. However, the new all through school will bring incredible opportunities to all those affected by proposals, as well as the wider community.

The Council focus will now be very much focused on working very closely with the governing bodies, staff and children to ensure that the transition process is as seamless as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. McLean', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Will McLean

Chief Officer for Children and Young People

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu yn y ddwy iaith. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis.

Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

The Council welcomes correspondence in English or Welsh or both, and will respond to you

Appendix 1

Considerations given by the Council to the key factors of the School Organisation Code (September 2018) in determining the decision to establish al all through (3-19) School in Abergavenny:

1) Quality and Standards of Education

Standards in both schools have improved over the past number of years however within a 3-19 school this improvement can continue. Pupils would be educated in high quality modern buildings which would be designed to support the effective delivery of the new curriculum. The removal of phases and key stages will give all teachers more freedom to with a wider range of professionals to decide what and how pupils will learn across a whole-school continuum. The development of a common learning continuum that is suitable for those new to school, teenagers, and young adults has the capacity and flexibility to meet the needs and interests of all learners, including those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged and those who are more able and talented. We believe opportunities to do this are greater in all-through school compared to the traditional primary/secondary model.

In making its decision, the Council have confidence that the quality and standards of education of those children and young people affected by these proposals will not be compromised and will be enhanced.

Need for places and the impact on the accessibility of schools

In making this decision, careful consideration has been given to the demand for school places within the area. At present the new LDP has not been agreed and pupil forecasts are available on information we hold at present. There is capacity available within the new build to allow for some growth.

The establishment of a 3-19 school would enhance the links already in place between the existing primary and secondary school.

The development of a new school, designed and fully equipped for 21st century learning, may result in more parents choosing to send their children or transfer them to the new school. This will impact on pupil numbers, potentially decreasing rolls in other schools and assisting with over subscription of places. This aligns to the commitment within the Council Corporate Plan for learners to be educated within the community they live in and more explicitly, for Monmouthshire's learners to be educated in Monmouthshire as their first choice.

Resourcing of Education and other Financial Implications

The establishment of the 3-19 school will allow a consolidation of interventions to tackle the socio – economic challenges in the area.

All-through schools can provide a wider range of physical spaces for both teaching and learning, and a better range of specialist spaces, resources and materials that can be accessed by learners across a wider age-range than in a single-phase setting, this includes digital, information and learning technology.,.

The establishment of all through school could benefit from economies of scale and avoid cost duplication. The revenue budget for the proposed school would be constructed in line with the current school funding formula ensuring equitable distribution of finance based on pupil need.

The Council in making its decision to establish the 3- 19 school has determined that the new school will provide value for money and a clear commitment to support all our pupils in order that the 'have the best possible start in life'

Specific Factors in Consideration of School closures

The Council has completed a Future Generations assessment which both acknowledges and mitigates the impact on the community as a result of the decision to establish a 3-19 school and close Deri View and King Henry VIII Schools.

The Council explored alternative options to the closure of the two schools. Other options considered involved building two new schools on the King Henry site but keeping them as separate schools. This was ruled out as it does not affect the change in socio economic deprivation or address the drop in in attainment levels at Key stage 3 due to transition.

Despite the option to close two schools and establish an all through school being the most expensive option considered, the Council believes that this option enables delivery of the new Curriculum for Wales by providing greater flexibility and capacity. Changes to what and how pupils learn will be easier to manage in an all-through environment than in a single-phase school. This will help fulfill our committed to improving the educational achievement and attainment for all children and young people in in the county through the provision of an inclusive education system that places the learner at the centre.