

<u>BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</u>	
Report to	The Chair and Members of the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee
Report Subject	21st Century Schools Programme Band A (2014-19) Progress Report
Report Author	Lynn Phillips – Head of Education Transformation and Performance
Report date	September 2017
Directorate	Education
Executive Portfolio	Cllr C Meredith, Executive Member Education
Date of meeting	23rd October 2017
Date signed off by Monitoring Officer	N/A
Date signed off by Section 151 Officer	N/A
Date signed off by Chair	11th October 2017
Key words	21st Century Schools, Gateway Review, Programme, Progress Risks and Financial Implications.

Report Information Summary

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The following highlight report serves to provide Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress made in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21st Century Schools Band A Programme and Band B developments - Blaenau Gwent Gateway Review 2017
1.2	The report details key developments and considerations in respect of the above, for deliberation by Scrutiny members.
2.	Scope of the Report
2.1	The report covers the 21 st Century Schools Band A Programme strategic, management context, along with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programme and project delivery progress; • financial/ budgetary considerations; and, • headline risks and issues.
3.	Contribution to the National Well-Being Goals
4.	Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CLT/Committees/Other groups
4.1	The report will be discussed at Education Directorate Management Team (DMT), Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), and the Executive Committee.
5.	Recommendation/s for Consideration
5.1	It is recommended that Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the progress made against the 21 st Century Schools Band A Programme and the outcomes from the Gateway Review.

Why this topic is a priority for the Council?							
Single Integrated Plan (SIP)	Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP)	Performance Management Improvement Framework	Transforming Blaenau Gwent	Relevant legislation	Other (please state)		
X	X	X	X				
Reporting Pathway							
Directorate Management Team (DMT)	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)	Audit	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny	Executive	Council	Other (please state)
				23/10/17	22/11/17		C21st Schools Programme Board

Main Report

1.	Background and Context
1.1	Blaenau Gwent's 21 st Century Schools Programme is driven by a desire to create a sustainable education system that facilitates high standards of learning and delivery, catering for the needs of all learners within the County Borough.
1.2	The Vision for Education (2017) in Blaenau Gwent is to improve pupil attainment, achievement and well-being through the transformation of schools and learning environments that meet 21st Century expectations and are in line with nationally recognised Welsh Government priorities. The endorsed vision is based upon a school-led, self-improving system.
1.3	<p>Blaenau Gwent's vision for education is firmly aligned to the revised Blaenau Gwent 21st Century Schools Programme investment objectives that were submitted to and approved by Welsh Government in 2016. The programme investment objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment Objective 1: to raise standards and achievement in line with localised targets at foundation phase, KS2, KS3 and KS4; and secure improved transition into post 16 learning. - Investment Objective 2: to create a sustainable model for the 21st Century school estate in consideration of both capital and revenue investment, along with the condition and suitability of buildings. - Investment Objective 3: to establish effective management and provision of school places, by having the right schools in the right place at the right. - Investment Objective 4: to implement the 21st Century Schools Programme in line with local, regional and national school organisation policy; ensuring synergy between progression, development and implementation - Investment Objective 5: meeting the needs of vulnerable learners.
1.4	The Council's Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP) identifies two high-level priorities relating to raising educational standards and corporate financial management. These priorities have resulted in the 21 st Century Schools Programme Band A Programme featuring as a key priority in the Council's Medium Term

	<p>Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Band A programme will result in a capital investment of £20.25m into the school estate, including the Council's 50% match-funding contribution of £10.125m.</p>
1.5	<p>Programme Management Arrangements Blaenau Gwent 21st Century Schools programme and project management arrangements are delivered in accordance with Prince 2 and Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) framework.</p>
1.6	<p>The Programme Manager reports to the Senior Responsible Owner and the 21st Century Schools Programme Board (PB). The PB is comprised of key Council Officers and Managers responsible for monitoring and assisting in the planning, development and delivery of the programme. Membership of the PB is regularly reviewed in managing emerging strategic priorities. The PB also oversees education based projects which have interdependencies and links to the 21st Century Schools Programme. Each project has a project team with project specific knowledge, skills and responsibilities. The project teams feed into the Programme Manager and 21st Century Schools Programme Board, ensuring that the overall Programme is managed effectively i.e. on time and within budget; issue/ risk management and escalation processes are appropriate to the overall Programme etc. Programme Board then report to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Education Department Management Team (DMT) – which acts as both a reporting stream and advisory body in the context of Education; and,- Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) – which act as the advisory body and reporting stream for the Senior Responsible Owner, linked to programme management (issues, risks, finance, priorities etc.) and future programme development.
1.7	<p>Current Programme Status The Band A programme has thus far achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Completion of Tredegar Comprehensive School re-modelling project- Completion of Abertillery Learning Community 420 place new build primary school project- Secured funding for and working towards the implementation phase of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Six Bells 360 place new build primary school

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Ystruth Primary School re-modelling project
1.8	<p>The 21st Century Schools Band A Programme is set to conclude in 2019. Blaenau Gwent's Education Transformation team, Finance and Technical Services met with Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools team, in order to review Band A progress to date and discuss planning towards Band B. Welsh Government feedback on Blaenau Gwent's delivery of the Band A programme was extremely positive, with WG officers expressing their confidence in the Council's business case development, project delivery and programme management arrangements.</p>
1.9	<p>Blaenau Gwent underwent a 2nd Gateway Review in 2014, which provided a delivery confidence assessment of Amber/ Green which means that in terms of the programme: "Successful delivery appears probable however constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery".</p>
1.10	<p>In line with recommendations from the last Gateway Review, and also in acknowledging the potential impact and intricacies associated with the wider strategic context in relation to Education, the remit of the group has widened. The reporting process linked to Programme Board now encompasses the following projects, the delivery of which is either managed within or supported by the work of the Education Transformation team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Regional Welsh Medium 2 Project- Blaenau Gwent Social , Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) 3-16 School proposal- ICT Infrastructure plans developments throughout the school estate- Blaenau Gwent Early Implementers Childcare Pilot, among others.
1.11	<p>Blaenau Gwent 21st Century Schools Programme underwent a 3rd Gateway Review in July 2017. The outcome of the review was an improvement on the previous, resulting in a 'delivery confidence assessment' of Green/Amber; in addition, programme management arrangements were commended and recognised as strong by the Gateway Review team. The Review team concluded that:</p> <p>'...In regard to the Band A projects, it appears probable that successful delivery of the school-builds will be achieved if the</p>

	<p>trajectory of progress for each scheme continues as in the last year. There are some known risks, but these are being managed and where they are outside the direct control of the Authority, they are at least understood and monitored’.</p>
1.12	<p>A Gateway Review action plan has been developed to cover the 4 recommendations and will be monitored by the Programme Board moving forward. For more information on the 2017 Gateway Review, please refer to Appendix 2.</p>
1.13	<p>SEWC 21st Century Schools Regional Group</p> <p>In 2016/17 the Education Transformation team led on the creation and administration of the South East Wales Consortia (SEWC) 21st Century Schools Regional Group. The group was established based on a strategic need to share good practice and learn from other councils who are engaged in the 21st Century schools and All-Through Schooling (ATS) agendas. The group has representation from the following councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blaenau Gwent; - Newport; - Caerphilly; - Torfaen; and, - Monmouthshire.
1.14	<p>Blaenau Gwent’s lead role on the SEWC 21st Century Schools Regional Group has enhanced the profile of the Council on a regional and national basis. The establishment of the group demonstrates an outward looking approach and will contribute to BG taking forward the review and implementation of the School Organisation Policy (2017).</p>
1.15	<p>The 21st Century Schools Band B programme was the subject of a previous Scrutiny Committee report. A development programme for leading into Band B will be developed in the autumn-term 2017, for initiation in January 2018.</p>
2.	Performance Evidence and Information
2.1	<p>Tredegar Comprehensive Re-modelling Project</p> <p>The project has now concluded post external work undertaken in the spring and early in the summer term 2017. The project was</p>

	<p>selected by Welsh Government, to undergo a project closure / evaluation workshop session with Construction Excellence Wales (CEW). The workshop was delivered in the spring-term, which deemed the project to be an example of best practice in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- value for money;- partnership working;- project management arrangements; and,- effective delivery on a live site. <p>The project closure report is currently being prepared post a lessons learned session with all relevant parties.</p>
2.2	<p>Abertillery Primary New Build Project</p> <p>The new school was occupied by staff and pupils in June 2016. Phase 4 of the project, which involved demolition of the former school and external works, concluded in November 2016. The Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams, officially opened the Tillery Street Campus in January 2017. The closure report is currently being prepared for submission to Welsh Government, and lessons learned session has taken place with the project team, school staff and pupils.</p>
2.3	<p>Six Bells Primary New Build Project</p> <p>The project involves the development of a 360 place new build primary school, which will accommodate pupils from Queen Street and Bryngwyn Primary Campuses. The school will also host a 60 place nursery and a 9 place resource base for pupils presenting with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The Full Business Case was approved by Welsh Government in March 2016. The project was granted outline planning approval in December 2016, with reserve matters to be dealt with via the planning process to be taken forward by the contractor. Morgan Sindall were appointed as the preferred contractor for pre-construction design services in February 2017. During the pre-construction design phase the contractor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- developed the design of the building in line with both the client and end user requirements; and,- completed the full reserve matters planning application. <p>Full planning approval in relation to the reserved matters</p>

<p>2.4</p>	<p>application was granted at Planning Committee, which took place on 7th September 2017. The second stage tender price is being reviewed and a further value engineering (VE) exercise is ongoing prior to agreement of the contract price and formal contractor appointment. It is anticipated that the second stage tender price agreement will be finalised in October 2017. Financial management of the project will be key in ensuring cost escalation does not impinge upon the project and programmes financial profile moving forward.</p> <p>Ystruth Primary Re-modelling Project</p> <p>In November 2016, the project Business Justification Case was approved by Welsh Government, which will result in an investment of £600,000 into the school, in order to remodel key areas ensuring that the school meets the changing needs of the pupil population. Over the last 11 months the project team have been working on the development of a detailed project brief, proposed programme and tender documentation. The project has a specific focus on the transformation of provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder – in that the resource base provision will undergo extensive remodelling works. Planning permission associated with an extension to the school has been granted, and the contractor appointments process is underway. It is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed in October 2017.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Risk Implications</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>The high level programme risks and mitigation method are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that the financial profile is able to meet the needs of the final aspects of Band A Programme delivery – the programme and project financial profiles are reviewed on a monthly basis. Financial re-profiling exercises are undertaken every 6 months, ensuring that the programme’s financial and delivery profiles are reflective of programme need. - Securing agreement of the Six Bells second stage tender costs in line with contractor appointment – regular meetings and value engineering processes are taking place between Morgan Sindall and the Council, and it is anticipated that second stage tender costs will be agreed in October 2017. - Securing contractor appointment in line with the complex

project management / programme delivery requirements for Ystruth Primary Re-modelling Project – tenders have been returned and are currently under review. A project delivery programme has been agreed with the school in line with both the current financial and delivery profiles agreed by Welsh Government.

- Ensuring that the potential for project cost escalation is managed effectively throughout the delivery of both Six Bells and Ystruth projects – financial profiles are reviewed on a monthly basis and there is a full appreciation of project costs among the project teams. Value engineering processes form part of monthly project meetings in ensuring effective cost control mechanisms are in place.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff resources and financial support is secured in line with the transition between programme bandings and delivery of the Band B Programme – the Programme SRO is in the process of addressing this risk in line with the recommendations of the 2017 Gateway Review. A report is being drafted which explores options in securing staff resource between the conclusion of Band A and initiation of Band B programmes.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Programme Financial Profile

The 21st Century Schools Programme involves a capital investment of £20.4m into the school estate within Blaenau Gwent. The programme remains on budget and has been delivered as profiled. Figure 1 (below) outlines the current financial position of the programme.

4.2 Figure 1: Financial Overview

	Total Funding	Expenditure to date	Forecast
	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE			
Abertillery Primary	9,800,000	9,800,000.00	9,800,000
Tredegar Comprehensive	2,300,000	2,300,000	2,300,000
Six Bells School	7,514,000	693,000	8,314,000
Ystruth Primary	636,000	10,000	7,514,000

4.3	A financial re-profiling exercise was undertaken during the spring-term 2017 and approved by Welsh Government during the Summer period, 2017 (please refer to Appendix 3 for the current financial profile). The forecasted spend for Six Bells project is subject to an additional bid from within the Council's Capital Programme and this will subsequently require approval by Full Council.
5.	Staffing/Workforce Development Implications
5.1	There are no direct personnel implications associated with this report.
6.	Options for Consideration
6.1	N/A
7.	Impact Assessment Against Proposals / Options
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking for the long term The 21st Century Schools Programme is a long-term programme that spans the period 2014 to 2034. The Band A element covers the period 2014 to 2019.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking an integrated approach The 21st Century Schools Programme is a key element in responding to the Council's wellbeing goals, particularly for all learners and some with specialist needs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a preventative approach The 21st Century Schools Programme will take a preventative approach to learners' needs and place an emphasis on delivering a school estate that is fit for purpose and can contribute to raising educational standards, which is a Council priority.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating The Vision for Education is based upon a school to school collaborative approach and the 21st Century Schools Programme will play a role in improving wellbeing outcomes for all learners.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement The 21st Century Schools Programme sets the strategic direction for the school estate across the County Borough. There are statutory requirements to involve stakeholders in school re-organisation proposals linked to the WG's School Organisation Code (2013).
7.2	Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Please see Appendix 2.
8.	Conclusion

8.1	<p>This report highlights that good progress is being made in relation to the delivery of the Band A 21st Century Schools Programme in Blaenau Gwent. This is independently evidenced by the positive outcomes from the Gateway Review. Additionally, there are examples of good practice in terms of both internal and external partnership work that influences strategic and operational programme development. Project management in relation to the aforementioned Band A projects is continual and consistently monitored, along with wider considerations that will support effective delivery of the Band A Programme.</p>
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Appendix 1

Assess how well your project / activity will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals.		
Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p>A prosperous Wales An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>High quality education is a fundamental pre-requisite of ensuring future local and national prosperity through the provision of an informed and well-educated workforce and society. The Local Authority's statutory role to provide school places and to monitor and evaluate school performance is fundamental to ensuring that all schools provide high quality education provision. The 21st Century Schools Programme special school will aim to improve the overall quality of the school estate and will contribute to using resources more effectively eg. Shared resources.</p>	<p>Continued development of Local Authority monitoring, evaluation and intervention processes across the school estate will further support the maintenance of high quality education.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>Promoting the natural use of the environment is a key principle of the 21st Century Schools Programme eg. forest schools initiative.</p>	<p>Creating community focussed schools will enhance our use of the natural environment.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>The 21st Century Schools Programme will provide facilities to enhance physical and emotional wellbeing for all learners, including some of the most vulnerable pupils in the County Borough. A key part of the school curriculum is the development of pupils physical and mental well-being. The council delivers the Healthy Schools programme to schools as a part of the National Healthy Schools framework, and is also working with schools to secure pupils' wellbeing. Monitoring and evaluation is a key feature moving forward.</p>	<p>Continued development of Local Authority monitoring, evaluation and intervention processes will further support the maintenance of high quality education.</p>

Date: September 2017

Report Author: Lynn Phillips/Claire Gardner

Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p>A more equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>	<p>Local Authority monitoring activity through the EAS Challenge Adviser work includes criteria relating specifically to pupils' socio economic backgrounds such as pupils receiving Free School Meals. The School Organisation Policy will contribute directly to ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential.</p>	<p>Continued development of Local Authority monitoring, evaluation and intervention processes will further support the maintenance of high quality education</p>
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</p>	<p>The 21st Century Schools Programme is primarily driven by a requirement to improve the quality of learning environments for learners. The all-through 3-16 approach also promotes well-connected communities. All schools are required to ensure appropriate health and safety and safeguarding arrangements and also to ensure links with local communities and industries.</p>	<p>Continued development of Local Authority monitoring, evaluation and intervention processes will further support the maintenance of high quality education.</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>	<p>Local Authority monitoring activity through the EAS Challenge Adviser work includes criteria relating specifically to pupils' socio economic backgrounds such as pupils receiving Free School Meals. The School Organisation Policy will contribute directly to ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential.</p>	<p>Continued development of Local Authority monitoring, evaluation and intervention processes will further support the maintenance of high quality education</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	<p>Ensuring high quality education is fundamental to securing the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of future generations. The Local Authority monitoring, evaluation and intervention programme ensures that schools requiring support are identified so that support and focus can be targetted at appropriate schools. The school curriculum includes focus on social, environmental and cultural well-being, and these aspects are monitored as a part of the programme.</p>	<p>Continued development of Local Authority monitoring, evaluation and intervention processes will further support the maintenance of high quality education</p>

Equality Impact Assessment Template Form

Description of Assessment *(Please specify below)*

This assessment is being undertaken in line with the delivery of the 21st Century Schools Band A programme delivered on behalf of Welsh Government by the Education Transformation team at Blaenau Gwent. The report demonstrates the level of progress on projects, any issues or concerns as well as forward planning, monitoring expenditure and school reorganisation projects.

The 21st Century Schools and Education Programme is a unique collaboration between the Welsh Government (WG), the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and local authorities. It is a major, long-term and strategic capital investment programme with the aim of creating a generation of 21st century schools in Wales. The programme will focus resources on the right schools in the right places, for early years through to post-16.



Responsible Officer *(Please specify below)*

Lynn Phillips Head of Education Transformation and Performance

Assessment Date *(Please specify below)*

23/02/2016

Staff Involved in Assessment *(Please specify below)*

Claire Gardner Education Transformation Team Manager;

Sharon Northall 21st Century Schools Officer;

PART 1: SCREENING EXERCISE TO IDENTIFY ADVERSE IMPACT

Does this 'Option' have an adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? (please complete all)		If yes	Please describe what the adverse impact will be?	What is the significance of the impact?	If low, please explain this 'significance' rating. (if 'high' please complete template below)
Race	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Disability	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Sex	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Age	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Sexual Orientation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Religion and Belief	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Gender Reassignment Status	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High	

					<input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No x	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	
Welsh Language	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No x	→		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	

PART2: 'High Significance' Adverse Impact Template Form

For each protected characteristics where an adverse impact has been identified and this impact has a high significance, a template form must be complete. Therefore, if an option is identified as having a highly significant adverse impact on 'Race' and 'Religion and Belief' a template form must be complete for each protected characteristics.

Which Protected Characteristics

.....

Please briefly explain why you have identified this protected characteristic as having a high 'significance' rating

.....
.....

Please briefly explain how the identified impact is likely to affect people?

.....
.....

What further information do you think is necessary understand, support or mitigate the impact of this 'option'? e.g. collection of secondary evidence, undertaking primary research, consulting/engaging with affected people

.....
.....

What possible action can be taken to reduce or mitigate the adverse impact of these options (and any associated effects)?