



# CONSULTATION REPORT

Proposal to change the age range of  
St David's High School, Saltney from 11-18 to 11-16 from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016

SEPTEMBER 2015

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Following the end of a school organisation consultation period, the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires the proposer (the Council) to publish a consultation report. In this document the proposer is required to:

- Summarise each of the issues raised by the consultees.
- Respond to these by means of clarification.
- Set out Estyn's view (as provided in its consultation response) on the overall merits of the proposal.

1.2 This report should be considered by decision makers prior to determining any recommendation relating to a proposal.

## **2.0 The Proposal and Consultation**

2.1 Cabinet resolved on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2013 that approval be given for the commencement of consultations with the relevant schools in relation to sustainability of post-16 provision and opportunities to reduce inefficiencies in accordance with the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme and the agreed Strategic Outline Case.

2.2 Consultation was carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. The consultation period commenced on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015 ended on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

2.3 In accordance with the Code, consultation documents, including a Children and young people version were published on Flintshire County Council's website on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

2.4 Hard copies of the consultation document were delivered to six schools. These were St David's High School, Broughton Primary School, Wood Memorial Primary School, Saltney Ferry Primary School, Sandycroft Primary School and St Anthony's Primary Roman Catholic Primary School, Saltney for people unable to access the website.

2.5 To assist and encourage people to give us their views, the Council produced a response document. This formed part of the Consultation Document, this document was also published on the Council's website. The Children and Young People's version of the Consultation Document contained a more straightforward response form. The

Consultation Response Form was converted into an online survey, links to the survey were also published on the website.

2.6 All consultees received an email with the link directing them to the formal consultation document and supplementary documents on the first day of the consultation (5<sup>th</sup> June 2015).

2.7 Documents were produced in both Welsh and English.

### **3.0 Meetings**

3.1 Judicial review conclusions in relation to a proposal in South Wales and supplementary advice from Welsh Government Legal Counsel led to a re-run of the consultation on the proposals at St David's High School, Saltney, from an earlier stage to mitigate potential risk around determination.

3.2 Given the above, and as it is not a requirement of the code to facilitate meetings around school organisation change, the Council opted, in the case of St David's High School, Saltney, not to re-run consultation meetings in the area. In accordance with the Code, the consultation was principally conducted electronically.

### **4.0 Consultation Responses**

4.1 In total two responses were received during the consultation stage, these included a response from Estyn in the form of a short report and an electronic response form returned from Coleg Cambria.

4.2 The table below shows the methods people used to respond to the consultation:

Method of contact	Number of contacts received
Consultation Response Forms	1
Children & Young People's Response Forms	0
Letters and Emails	1
Letters and Emails – Children and Young Persons	0
Total number of contacts	2

4.3 The breakdown of the response types is set out below

No.	Response Type	St David's High School		Other		Total
		Actual	%	Actual	%	
1	Consultation Response Form	0	0	1	100	1
2	Letters and Emails	0	0	1	100	1
Totals		0	0	2	100%	2

## 5. Response forms and correspondence

5.1 The Consultation Response Form was designed to establish:

- Whether people agreed or disagreed with the change of age range;
- The capacity in which they were responding;
- Whether or not they were linked to the school;
- Whether they wanted to make any other comments.

## 6. Response from Estyn

### 6.1 Estyn's response to the proposal to change the age range of St David's High School from 11-18 to 11-16 and Flintshire County Council's response.

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales have prepared this report. Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn.

However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortium, which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### Introduction

The proposal is by Flintshire County Council.

The County Council proposes to reduce the upper age limit of St David's High School from the present 18 to 16. St David's is currently part of a consortium arrangement for post 16 provision. Under the proposal St David's would phase

out their post 16 provisions by 2016. From 2016 pupils who wish to study at post 16 would do so at the new purpose built sixth form centre in Connah's Quay.

### **Summary/Conclusion**

The proposal demonstrates clearly the authority's intention to transform post 16 provision. The proposal is part of the Flintshire School Modernisation Strategy and forms part of the wider strategic plan for 14 – 19 provision in North Flintshire. The new sixth form centre at Connah's Quay is part of the 21st Century Schools Programme.

The proposal is likely to improve the standard of education provision for post 16 pupils who will benefit from having access to modern learning facilities and a wider range of courses than presently offered at St David's School and the local consortium.

### **Description and advantages**

The expected benefits of the proposal are clearly defined and link well to the stated purpose and rationale. The alternatives to this proposal have been considered and good reason given as to why these have been discounted.

The proposal sets out well its assumption that the proposed purpose built post 16 hub located at Coleg Cambria, Connah's Quay will provide the potential for a wider range of learning opportunities with more modern facilities, than that provided currently. It is envisaged that the proposed change will make the provision more responsive to the needs of learners and Estyn believes that this is a reasonable assumption. It will centralise resources on one site with the intention of making the provision both efficient and sustainable. Under the current consortium arrangements pupils' access chosen courses by travelling between sites. The proposal should eliminate this.

The proposal states that the stay-on rate for St David's sixth form is lower than the County average. The local authority has assumed this is due to the availability and proximity of alternative sixth form course options. However, they offer no evidence to support this assumption, or the degree to which the proposal may alleviate this attraction elsewhere. (1)

The proposal clearly states that there will be no adverse effects upon the 11-16 provision in St David's. However, the proposal does not evaluate the impact any loss of staff who teach at both sixth form level and pre-16, may have on teaching for the 11-16 pupils. (2)

The proposal includes an analysis of the performance of St David's pupils at key stage 4. However, the analysis does not include the outcomes for sixth form pupils

at St David's and therefore does not help make a case for improved outcomes arising from the move to larger and integrated sixth form provision. (3)

The proposal states clearly that although the provision of post 16 education at Coleg Cambria, will not change the language designation, the Post 16 hub has the potential to provide additional opportunities to learners to access more options through the medium of Welsh should there be appropriate student demand.

The equality impact assessment refers to a broad range of vulnerable groups and their needs as learners. However, the analysis does not provide enough detail of the impact of the proposed changes on these vulnerable groups who want to follow post 16 courses. (4)

A disadvantage of the proposal is that pupils from Saltney who want to follow post 16 courses will travel approximately 8 miles to the sixth form centre at Connah's Quay. However, free transport will be provided for these pupils as part of the Flintshire post 16 transport arrangements.

The proposal does not address the existing surplus places at St David's which would need to be re assessed should the upper age limit be reduced. (5)

### **Flintshire County Council Response to Estyn**

1. Saltney, St David's is located one mile from the Welsh/English Border, losing students to post 16 provision in Chester and surrounding areas is considered to be a factor to student choice. However, it is hoped that the combination of the range of courses offered by Coleg Cambria, the new 21<sup>st</sup> Century Post 16 facility, partnership working and effective marketing of the facility will ensure that there is a sustainable and improved uptake from students in Saltney.
2. In the Consultation document the Council has confirmed the following:
  - There are no significant implications of the proposals on the quality of the existing 11-16 provision at St David's High School. The school has a history of being successful at Key Stage 4. The Welsh Government School Categorisation system placed the school in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quartile for learner outcomes in 2014, having previously been in Band 2 (out of 5) in 2013.
  - The school was last inspected by Estyn in 2011 and was judged to be "Good" with "Excellent" prospects for improvement. Estyn judged the school to be likely to improve based on highly effective leadership and support provided by senior and middle management, a culture of high expectations and a successful track record.
  - The Regional School Improvement Service (GwE) judged the school's prospects for further improvement to be good. Their most recent Focus Visit Report comments on well-constructed planning, staff being aware of priorities

and good progress in meeting targets published in the School Improvement Plan. It recognised strengths and areas of outstanding practice and no significant areas requiring support.

- GwE will continue to support and monitor the school on a termly basis.
  - The Local Authority's school funding formula contains "lump sum" elements in acknowledgement of the general overheads/fixed costs which all schools have regardless of their size or pupil numbers. This approach to funding schools ensures that smaller schools are not unfairly disadvantaged
  - Additionally, there is no evidence to suggest 11-18 schools outperform 11-16 schools.
3. As St David's Saltney was unable to deliver post 16 Education in line with the Learning and Skills measure independently, consortium arrangements were formed a number of years ago. Consequently data held by the Authority has been evidenced on the consortium rather than at individual school level.

The table below illustrates outcomes for the consortium (which include St David's) have been below, both the Local Authority and National performance indicators for the past 3 years:

Description	Year 11/12		Year 12/13		Year 13/14	
	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
Consortium	91	563	91	755	89	655
LA	97	700	97	750	97	750
Wales	97	773	97	807	97	804

Number on Roll – St David's High School, Saltney (6<sup>th</sup> Form)

	Jan 15	Sept 14	Jan 14	Sept 13
Year 12	49	46	48	50
Year 13	37	39	42	42
Year 14	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>92</b>

(Source PLASC data)

4. Learners who are able to achieve level 3, will have access to a new state of the art post 16 facility which will remove the need to travel between sites to access

a range of courses. A wider range of courses will be available and free transport will be provided to learners from the Saltney area who wish to attend the post 16 hub at Coleg Cambria. Additionally, there is no provision for post 16 learners who cannot achieve level 3 at St David's High school currently. However, Coleg Cambria offer almost exclusively a range of courses for learners at level 1 & 2

5. The current proposal is focused on the centralisation of a Post 16 facility. The Council is aware of its responsibility to manage and reduce unfilled places in its portfolio. The Local Authority will continue to work with the school to reduce excess capacity in line with the Welsh Government National Policy for Local Authorities to reduce surplus places in Schools. In order to address this together with the suitability, sufficiency and condition issues, the Authority is conducting a feasibility study of St David's High School with a view that a capital scheme will be put forward for inclusion in the Council's ongoing 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools programme or alternatively the Local Authority's onward Capital programme.

## **6.2 Coleg Cambria Response**

A positive response was received from Coleg Cambria through the electronic response form. This was the only response received using this system:

*'The creation of the new purpose build sixth form centre in North Flintshire will transform post-16 A level provision. Coleg Cambria is proud to be working in partnership with St David's High School and with Connah's Quay, John Summers and Holywell High Schools along with Flintshire County Council to improve learning opportunities within the area. We are confident that by working together this transformation programme will improve learner choice and learner outcomes both pre and post 16.'*



## APPENDIX A - Summary of Consultation Document Recipients

No	Stakeholder	Number of recipients
1	Parents/Carers of pupils at St David's High School, Broughton C.P. School, Wood Memorial Primary School, Saltney Ferry Primary School, Sandycroft Primary School and St Anthony's Primary Roman Catholic Primary School, Saltney	1262
2	Teachers at St David's High School, Saltney	37
3	Support staff at St David's High School, Saltney	27
4	Governors at St David's High School, Saltney, Broughton C.P. School, Wood Memorial Primary School, Saltney Ferry Primary School, Sandycroft Primary School and St Anthony's Primary Roman Catholic Primary School, Saltney	10
5	The Church in Wales Diocese of St Asaph	1
6	Roman Catholic Diocese of Wrexham	1
7	Headteachers and Chairs of Governors at nearby Secondary Schools and Primary Schools	10
8	Flintshire County Council Local Members representing areas affected by the proposal	5
9	Local and Regional Assembly Members and Members of Parliament representing areas affected by the Proposal	2
10	Saltney Town Council	1
11	The Welsh Ministers	1
12	Estyn	1
13	Relevant teaching and support staff Trade Unions	9
14	North Wales Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service – Consortium GWE	1
15	North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner	1
16	Cheshire West County Council	1
17	Flintshire Transportation Officer and neighbouring Local Authority Transport Officers	2
18	Local Communities First Partnership	1
19	Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board	1
20	URDD	1
21	Coleg Cambria	1
22	Children and Young People's Partnership	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1377</b>