

Appendix A: Qualitative Benefits' Analysis

Summary of Outcomes

Introduction

A workshop was held involving Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCTCBC's) Education and Inclusion Service Directorate Senior Management and 21st Century Schools Team. The aim of this workshop was to inform the Economic Appraisal of the short-listed options and specifically undertake the non-financial benefit appraisal. At the workshop, there was a discussion of Investment Objectives, short listed options and non-financial benefit criteria. An exercise was then undertaken to weight the benefit criteria and then to score short listed options against them.

Officers in attendance:

1. Andrea Richards – Service Director, 21st Century Schools and Transformation
2. REDACTED – Head of Transformation Admissions and Governance
3. Gaynor Davies – Director of Education and Inclusion Services.
4. REDACTED – Temporary Head of School Organisation and WESP
5. REDACTED – Lead for Strategic Planning and MIM, 21st Century Schools
6. REDACTED – Head of Secondary Achievement & Wellbeing

This paper summarises the outcomes delivered because of the workshop.

Investment Objectives, Short Listed Options and Non-Financial Benefit Criteria

The workshop considered the Investment Objective's (IOs) and short-listed options which had been developed in the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and proposed nonfinancial benefit criteria against which short listed options would be assessed.

Investment Objectives

The table that follows shows the IOs that were set out in the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and remain valid within the Outline Business Case (OBC).

Table 1.1: Investment Objectives

1.	<p>Supporting Delivery of the Curriculum for Wales - Creating flexible and forward-thinking educational buildings and external environments that facilitate the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and meet the aspirations of Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and RCTCBC's Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services, Education Strategic Plan 2022-2025, and provide all pupils with the best opportunities to reach their full potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RCTCBC seeks to develop and deliver school and community facilities that provide educational, cultural, sporting, creative and recreational enrichment activities for all pupils and the wider community.
2.	<p>Inclusion and Equality - To provide inclusive facilities for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RCTCBC will provide fully accessible facilities offering equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, staff and the wider community.
3.	<p>Enhancing the Wellbeing of our Pupils and Workforce – To provide high quality and flexible education spaces suitable for the 21st Century and ensure these assets are available for community use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RCTCBC seeks to provide educational and recreational facilities which optimise the use of a school site, provide opportunities for outdoor learning and activities and enhance the external environment and the biodiversity of our school estate.
4.	<p>Sustainable Facilities fit for the 21st Century – Creating efficient and effective educational infrastructure and providing educational facilities that meet the aspirations of Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and RCTCBC's Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services, Education Strategic Plan 2022-25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RCTCBC seeks to develop and deliver stimulating and sustainable schools through the better use of resources, with improved ICT infrastructure, improved overall efficiencies and cost effectiveness. RCTCBC seeks to reduce energy consumption, meeting the net zero carbon agenda and supporting delivery of RCTCBC's Think Climate, Making RCT Carbon Neutral by 2030.

Critical Success Factors

The table that follows shows the Critical Success Factors (CSF) that were set out in the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and remain valid within the Outline Business Case (OBC).

1.	<p>Business Needs – The solution must satisfy the existing and future needs of pupils. In line with the Curriculum for Wales, flexible facilities will be created to support different styles of teaching and learning to improve well-being and achieve better outcomes.</p>
2.	<p>Strategic Fit – The solution must provide a holistic fit and synergy with other key elements of the national, regional and local strategies. The solution must focus on the delivery of sustainable and effective educational assets that will meet current and future demand for places.</p>

3.	Benefits Optimisation – The option must provide the best solution to ensure that future demand and provision of service can be delivered to meet the required performance standards. For example, improved levels of attainment, increased levels of participation and enabling resources / facilities to be used by the local community where demand exists.
4.	Achievability – The solution must be delivered within the appropriate timeframe. Delivery timescales to be acceptable to all partners and stakeholders.
5.	Affordability – The solution is affordable. Wherever possible, the solution release revenue resources from the removal of surplus places, and the removal or refurbishment of uneconomical buildings that adversely impact on teaching and learning.

Short Listed Options

The Economic Case demands that a wide range of options have been considered and objectively appraised. Within the SOC, a long list of options was generated by a consensus of RCTCBC's Education and Inclusion Service Directorate Senior Management and 21st Century Schools Team. Each long-listed option was then evaluated against the Investment Objectives and Critical Success Factors. From this evaluation, a short list of possible proposals was developed for further consideration.

These options have been revisited in the context of the OBC and in essence remain valid except for the Scope Solution Option. The Scope Solution Option has been revisited following the submission of the SOC. This has resulted in removing the following:

- Build a new school for Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda on a new site with 21st Century facilities.

The short-listed options at OBC stage are:

Option One – Business as Usual:

- Maintain current Welsh medium secondary school provision at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda.
- Provision at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda remains as is, with future repairs and redecorations dealt with on a priority basis.
- RCTCBC continue to project manage future repairs and redecorations of the school.
- Ongoing.
- Funded entirely using RCTCBC funds.

Option Two – Do Minimum:

- Demolish the Victorian building at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda and rebuild in the same footprint. Enhanced external areas, including the provision of a 3G sports pitch and improved parking and drop off areas.
- Demolish the Victorian building at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda and rebuild in the same footprint. Enhanced external areas, including the provision of a 3G sports pitch and improved parking and drop off areas.

- RCTCBC to design and manage the design and reconstruction of the Victorian teaching block and external areas.
- Deliver the new school by September 2032.
- Funded entirely using RCTCBC funds.

Option Three – Most Ambitious

- Redevelop Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda in a phased approach with 21st Century facilities.
- Build a new Welsh Medium secondary school with 21st Century facilities.
- RCTCBC to commission and project manage a consultant team to redevelop Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda, to design and build new facilities.
- Deliver the project during the 2030 academic year.
- This project is funded through a combination of RCTCBC funds and external funding via the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

Non-Financial Benefit Criteria

To carry out the non-financial benefit appraisal of short-listed options, a list of nonfinancial benefit criteria was created. These were discussed at the workshop and refined / amended to ensure that they were clear and appropriate. They are summarised in the table that follows.

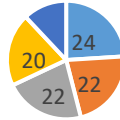
Table 1.3: Non-Financial Benefit Criteria	
1.	Provides a quality of experience to young people and raises achievement and success.
2.	Improved breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for pupils.
3.	Increasing participation in learning.
4.	Providing education and learning which meets the needs of the individual.
5.	Improve the quality of the physical learning environment.

Weighting the Non-Financial Benefit Criteria, Scoring the Short-Listed Options and Non-Financial Benefit Criteria

Weighting the Non-Financial Benefit Criteria

At the workshop, attendees considered the relative importance of the nonfinancial benefit criteria. Attendees were then encouraged to share views and explain why they each felt some non-financial benefit criteria were more important than others. Attention was paid to identifying and clarifying any differences in the interpretation of the nonfinancial benefit criteria to ensure as far as possible that all participants had a common understanding of what was meant by each.

Weighting of Non-Financial Benefit Criteria



- Provides a quality of experience to young people and raises achievement and success.
- Improved breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for pupils.
- Increasing participation in learning.

- Providing education and learning which meets the needs of the individual.

- Improve the quality of the physical learning environment.

Attendees determined the weightings to the non-financial benefit criteria, shown by sharing out 100 points between them. The pie chart that follows shows the average weighting of the non-financial benefit criteria.

On average, the non-financial benefit criteria scored relatively equal. Criterion 1 – Provides a quality of experience to young people and raises achievement and success was the most important, very closely followed by Criterion 4 – Providing education and learning which meets the needs of the individual.

Scoring the Short-Listed Options

Attendees then discussed the performance of the short-listed options against the nonfinancial benefit criteria. This was done by assessing their relative performance against each non-financial benefit criteria in turn, using a visual scale and recording the rationale for the judgements made. After the workshop a numeric scale was applied to the visual representation to enable a score to be derived. The table that follows shows the ranking of short-listed options against non-financial benefit criteria.

Table 1.4: Performance of Shortlisted Options Against Criteria											
		Poor								Good	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Provides a quality of experience to young people and raises achievement and success.	1				2					3

2.	Improved breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for pupils.	1				2				3	
3.	Increasing participation in learning.		1		2						3
4.	Providing education and learning which meets the needs of the individual.		1			2					3
5.	Improve the quality of the physical learning environment.	1			2					3	
Scale		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Rationale for Ranking of Options

Table 1.5: Rationale for Ranking of Short-Listed Options	
1.	<p>Provides a quality of experience to young people and raises achievement and success.</p> <p>Option One Option 1 scored poorly because it would not improve the quality of experience for pupils and would only maintain the status quo using existing facilities.</p> <p>Option Two Option 2 did not score highly because whilst it would improve the quality of experience for learners, this would be limited by the constraints of the existing facilities that would remain under this option.</p> <p>Option Three Option 3 scored highly as the new accommodation will greatly enhance the pupils learning experience. The new school will be modern, well ventilated, and naturally lit with exceptional internal and external facilities.</p>

2.	Improved breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for pupils.	<p>Option One Option 1 scored poorly because it would not involve any measures to improve the breadth and depth of the curriculum beyond that which is already provided.</p> <p>Option Two Option 2 did not score highly because the limitations associated with the replacement of the Victorian building. Whilst this would improve facilities and give greater external experience of the school; it does not benefit the wider school site.</p> <p>Option Three Option 3 scored very highly as the new school will have modern, flexible spaces designed with the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales in mind.</p>
3.	Increasing participation in learning.	<p>Option One Option 1 scored poorly as maintaining business as usual will not increase participation in learning, it will not increase capacity or create new, 21st Century accommodation that may attract new Welsh medium learners.</p>
		<p>Option Two Option 2 scored slightly higher as the potential to improve a focal area of the school would significantly improve existing facilities with new attractive learning and outdoor spaces potentially encouraging greater participation.</p> <p>Option Three Option 3 scored very highly as the new school, learning facilities, outdoor areas and community offer will be far more attractive for Welsh medium learners.</p>

4.	Providing education and learning which meets the needs of the individual.	<p>Option One Option 1 did not score highly as the existing teaching accommodation is limited in terms of accessibility in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and require replacement.</p> <p>Option Two Option 2 scored slightly higher as the new facilities would improve the learning environment, meeting the needs of individuals however, the limitations of the existing accommodation of the wider site would remain.</p> <p>Option Three Option 3 scored very highly as the new accommodation will be fully accessible in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and will contain vibrant, open spaces which will encourage independent learning; as well as providing modern 21st Century classrooms with state-of-the-art facilities which will hugely enhance the educational experience for all.</p>
5.	Improve the quality of the physical learning environment.	<p>Option One Option 1 scored very low as it will not involve any improvements to the quality of the physical learning environment by the very nature of maintaining business as usual, with repairs being carried out as necessary.</p> <p>Option Two Option 2 scored slightly higher as the new facilities would improve the physical learning environment, however, the limitations of the wider site would remain. This benefit would be</p>

		<p>very limited in comparison to a new school build solution.</p> <p>Option Three Option 3 scored highly as the new accommodation and outdoor facilities will be of a modern 21st Century design and will constitute a considerable improvement to the quality of the physical learning environment and will have an overall positive impact on the health and wellbeing of learners as well as their educational experience. There are some constraints i.e. varying site levels on the existing school site that may make the new build more challenging than that a flat, new site, but regardless, the quality of Option 3 would significantly improve the physical learning environment for pupils, staff and the wider community.</p>
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The visual representation was translated into numerical 'raw scores' for the short-listed options using the scale shown at the bottom of the table that follows. The resulting scores are as follows.

Table 1.6: Raw Scores of Options				
Criteria		Option One	Option Two	Option Three
1.	Provides a quality of experience to young people and raises achievement and success.	2	6	10
2.	Improved breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for pupils.	2	5	10
3.	Increasing participation in learning.	2	6	10
4.	Providing education and learning which meets the needs of the individual.	2	6	10
5.	Improve the quality of the physical learning environment.	1	7	10
Raw Score		9	30	50
Rank on Raw Score		3rd	2nd	1st

On this un-weighted basis, Option 3 scored the highest.

Criteria		Weighting	Option One		Option Two		Option Three	
			RS	WS	RS	WS	RS	WS
1.	Provides a quality of experience to young people and raises achievement and success.	24	2	48	6	144	10	240
2.	Improved breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for pupils.	22	2	44	5	110	10	220
3.	Increasing participation in learning.	22	2	44	6	132	10	220
4.	Providing education and learning which meets the needs of the individual.	20	2	40	6	120	10	200
5.	Improve the quality of the physical learning environment.	12	1	12	7	84	10	120
Total Score		100	9	188	30	590	50	1000
Rank on Weighted Score			3rd		2nd		1st	

On this weighted basis, Option 3 scored the highest.