

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
HAVERFORDWEST ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOL
TASK AND FINISH GROUP
MONDAY 19th MARCH 2018**

Present:

Cllr Mike Stoddart,
Cllr Tim Evans,
Cllr Lyndon Frayling,
Cllr Alison Tudor,
Cllr Stan Hudson,
Cllr Reg Owens,
Cllr Michael Williams (Chair)
Cllr Phil Baker (Observer),

Kate Evan-Hughes, Director for Children and Schools
Darren Thomas, Head of Highways and Construction
Barry Cooke, Head of Property
Jane Harries, Headteacher, Haverfordwest High VC School
Andrew Nicholas, Project Manager
Shafi Alam, Highways Engineer
Lara Lawrie, Planning Ecologist
Gary Nicholas, Leisure Services Officer
Nicola Lewis, Finance Manager
Cath Davies, 21C Programme Co-ordinator

1.0 Apologies

- 1.1 Jon Haswell, Director of Finance
Nick Haggart, Legal Executive

2.0 Previous Minutes and Actions

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2018 were agreed as a true record.
- 2.2 The Head of Highways and Construction went through the actions points arising from the last meeting which will be discussed further at the relevant point in the meeting.

3.0 Project Managers Report / Presentation

- 3.1 The Project Manager gave a presentation highlighting the work that has taken place since the previous meeting took place. It was confirmed that Highways / ecology consultants have been commissioned and are currently preparing design options for access into the current Sir Thomas Picton site.
- 3.2 Atkins, the appointed consultants have taken an early view on access off the Scotchwell roundabout and confirmed that work will impact on the two lower points (as shown in presentation) during the construction works, therefore it is likely there

will be an impact on ecology during the construction period. This has led to alternative access to the site being explored.

- 3.3 Correspondence has taken place with Welsh Government regarding alternative access of the Trunk Road into the STP site. The Trunk Road Agency have confirmed that a WelTag appraisal is required in assessing access to the new STP site. The WelTag appraisal process is similar to that of the business case process the Authority has to go through to obtain 21st Century Schools funding,
- 3.4 The Highways Engineer confirmed that there are five stages to WelTag and this could take 6 – 8 months. Following a question from Cllr Mike Stoddart, the Project Manager confirmed that a planning application for the road would not be able to be made until the WelTag process has been completed. The Project Manager also confirmed that there was a rigorous approval process with NRW and the Authority would not be able to proceed discussions with NRW until all other options had been explored.
- 3.5 The Head of Highways and Construction confirmed that as part of the WelTag appraisal process, the 'do minimum' option was to be explored again i.e. accessing the site from the Prendergast entrance. This should be treated with caution though as an optioneering exercise previously carried out confirmed that use of this entrance for the new school would impact on the surrounding area.
- 3.6 Cllr Tim Evans questioned why the issues associated with the ecology around Scotchwell roundabout had not been raised when the roundabout was built. The Project Manager confirmed that the roundabout had been built prior to the site being designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 3.7 The Head of Property confirmed that other sites had been looked at as a potential option for the new secondary school including the Conygar site but this had been discounted based on cost.
- 3.8 Cllr Stan Hudson questioned whether the Prendergast option would be sufficient following the change in catchment area for pupils from Neyland. The Highways Engineer confirmed that most of these pupils arrive by bus and therefore there would be minimal impact on the number of vehicles accessing the site.
- 3.9 Cllr Mike Stoddart queried if planners were unable to be satisfied that access to the STP site was sufficient, would we be able to satisfy them in terms of the Tasker Milward site. The Head of Highways and Construction confirmed that some work had been done to review the highways infrastructure around the TM site and whilst there was some congestion around that area, some of it was not directly attributable to the school.
- 3.10 The Project Manager confirmed that the above issues all lead to the Scotchwell roundabout option being unfeasible and therefore it would be a high risk strategy to continue with extensive ecology surveys. The option will continue to be looked at a high level as part of the WelTag appraisal.
- 3.11 Cllr Alison Tudor stated that a school on the STP site would be preferable to a potential housing development, even if the access was through the existing Prendergast entrance, however should this option be developed than a meeting with residents would have to be held to obtain their views. Cllr Tudor also questioned whether the Cherry Grove site could be used as a drop off point for

parents to relieve the pressure on the Prendergast entrance. The Head of Highways and Construction confirmed that although work had been carried out on access from Cherry Grove which had been discounted due to resident concerns about increased traffic movements, the work did not include researching using the existing site as a drop off point.

- 3.12 The Director for Children and Schools stated it is important that traffic movements around the STP site are thoroughly reviewed to avoid any risk to pupils when accessing a confined site.
- 3.13 Following a question from Cllr Tim Evans, the Head of Highways and Construction confirmed that there are at least three drop off points if the school had been situated on the TM site, however all currently work is focused on the STP site following a decision by Cabinet to pursue looking at this site.
- 3.14 Cllr Tim Evans queried whether using Scotchwell car park had been considered as a drop off point or if a one way system had been considered such as accessing the site in Prendergast and exiting at Cartlett. The Head of Highways and Construction stated that these options had not been considered as the road alongside Scotchwell belongs to the Trunk Road Agency and would both impact on the efficiency of the road network which is already at capacity around Salutation Square.
- 3.15 The Head of Highways and Construction queried whether members of the Task and Finish group had received enough information to date and if they were happy to proceed to the WelTag appraisal stage.
- 3.16 Cllr Tim Evans queried whether it was possible to overrule the SAC. The Planning Ecologist stated that whilst it was possible to overturn the SAC, there is an intensive 4 – 5 stage process which will need to be followed. To get to the final stage (IROPI), the Authority will have to demonstrate there are no feasible alternative solutions to the plan or project which are less damaging.
- 3.17 Cllr Phil Baker queried whether the WelTag appraisal will include alternative sites. The Highways Engineer confirmed that the WelTag appraisal is only relevant to the STP site.
- 3.18 The Finance Manager stated in order to obtain 21st Century Schools funding for the project, a robust business case process will need to be followed which will include an appraisal of all options – including the TM site. If the TM site comes out as preferred option financially, there is a risk that WG could cap the funding at the TM site, with the Authority having to fund 100% of the difference in costs. The Director for Children and Schools reiterated that WG may see the TM site as offering better value for money and not support the STP option.
- 3.19 Concerns were raised regarding the TM site and the issue of crossing the road to access the playing fields was once again highlighted as a concern. The Director for Children and Schools stated that pupils at Ysgol Dewi Sant have to cross a main road to access their playing fields and there have been no incidents, however this comparison was rejected by Cllr Alison Tudor and Cllr Reg Owens. The Head of Highways and Construction stated that mitigation measures could be put in place to reduce the risk of crossing the road to access the playing fields.

- 3.20 Cllr Tim Evans questioned whether the new Haverfordwest Primary School could be situated on the current TM site. The Director for Children and Schools stated that the Authority is still in the consultation process and therefore is unable to comment on any future plans for the school.
- 3.21 Cllr Mike Stoddart stated despite concerns raised, the preferred site for the school remains as STP and asked the Headteacher of Haverfordwest High what her opinion on the matter was. The Headteacher stated that she would support proceeding with the WelTag appraisal which includes exploring the Prendergast entrance.
- 3.22 The Project Manager presented a plan of the Tasker Milward site and the decant options available should a full decant of the STP site be agreed during the construction phase. The proposed solution combines Portakabin classrooms along with bespoke modular blocks to create additional classroom space of 3660m². The estimated cost of a full decant is £2.5m for a period of 104 weeks. The Project Manager explained that without a full decant, the construction period could be lengthen by six months at a cost of £1.5m.
- 3.23 The Head of Property provided members with an update of the piece of land which had been identified previously as unregistered. It was confirmed that this piece of land belongs to Pembrokeshire County Council subject to rights etc.
- 3.24 It was also confirmed that an offer had been made on the piece of land adjacent to the Scotchwell roundabout although given recent developments this may no longer be needed. There was another parcel of land identified should an entrance off the trunk road be deemed feasible which had the same landowner. This parcel of land has planning permission for two bungalows which would need to be factored into the purchase price.
- 3.25 The Project Manager informed members that a Risk Register had been drawn up for the project and had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting.
- 3.26 Discussions were held on the impact of the decision on Leisure Services. The Leisure Services Officer informed members that whichever site the school was to be situated on, there would be additional financial pressures on Leisure Services. A meeting has been arranged with Tennis Wales to discuss potential funding streams should the Authority wish to relocate the current Tennis Centre on TM site on the STP site.
- 3.27 Cllr Michael Williams proposed that all members continue to support the use of the STP site for the secondary school and agree to progress with the WelTag appraisal. This was agreed by all members present.