

Jeremy Miles AS/MS
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg
Minister for Education and Welsh Language



Ein cyf/Our ref DC/JMEWL/00510/23

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Cllr Steve Hunt
Leader of Council
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
leader@npt.gov.uk

6th April 2023

Dear Steve,

Thank you for your letter dated 16 March requesting a meeting with Ministers to discuss your recent consultation on proposals for schools in the Swansea Valley, which has raised a number of alternative proposals.

I note that you wish to discuss the potential funding implications/options and how the Welsh Government can support your endeavours to obtain the best outcome for the communities. In his response to Andrew Thomas on 21 March, Owain Lloyd advised the Council that the Welsh Government funding currently allocated to the Swansea Valley project forms part of your Local Authority's Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B funding envelope. Therefore, if the Local Authority was to determine that the project was not to progress, the funding in principle would remain allocated to Neath Port Talbot Council.

However, the Local Authority would need to submit a Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) variation, which would then need to be considered by the Education Investment Panel and Ministers. The revised proposal would be subject to approval of a three-stage business case process including compliance with Sustainable Communities for Learning criteria, with which your officers will of course be familiar.

I should also say that in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013, there is potential for any proposal to be referred to Welsh Ministers if certain limited parties decide to take this step. Given the role of Ministers in the statutory school organisation process, Ministers are unable to comment on any proposal which they may later be required to determine if a reference is made. I am afraid therefore that I must decline your request for a meeting.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

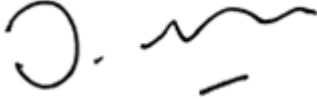
Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I trust however that the information already provided is sufficient for the Council to reach its decision on its preferred next steps. Should you wish to discuss further please contact my officials at: SustainableCommunitiesForLearning@gov.wales and I look forward to hearing what decision the Council reaches in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

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