



**Grŵp Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus a'r Gymraeg**  
**Public Services and Welsh Language Group**

Andrew Thomas  
Director of Education, Leisure and  
Lifelong Learning

19 January 2024

Dear Andrew

I am writing to provide an update following the submission of your strategic outline programme variation request in December 2023.

The variation requested four changes to your approved strategic outline programme for investment as part of Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. This involved the removal of the Ysgol Newydd Swansea Valley project and the inclusion of three new projects:

- A new build for Godre'rgraig Primary School;
- An extension for Ysgol Maes y Coed; and
- A refurbishment of an existing building to establish a Skills Centre and Vocational Hub.

This request has been reviewed by our Education Investment Panel, which agreed recommendations for Ministerial consideration. Panel's recommendations have subsequently been approved by the First Minister.

I am pleased to confirm that the First Minister has approved the inclusion of the Ysgol Maes y Coed and Skills Centre and Vocational Hub projects, subject to approval of the relevant business cases. Panel noted that these projects would need to be reflected in the authority's rolling programme as these will not be delivered within the Band B timeframe.

In relation to the revised option for Swansea Valley, Panel did not consider there to be sufficient information provided to recommend approval of the introduction of the proposed Godre'rgraig Primary School project. Panel was concerned about the potential impact the proposal could have on the Welsh language given the proposed increase in English medium places, and would request a full Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) to consider the proposal any further. The WLIA would need to

consider provision across the Swansea Valley area, with mitigation for any negative impacts identified. Panel also noted concerns regarding the estimated cost of the project at £17 million, which is just £5.7 million less than the original proposal, with a much narrower scope.

The First Minister has approved the removal of the Ysgol Newydd Swansea Valley project from the authority's Band B programme but has not approved the inclusion of the Godre'rgraig Primary School project.

Any future request to include a revised proposal for Swansea Valley can be done so through the local authority's 9-year investment plan submitted as part of the rolling programme, and any subsequent variations.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if it would be useful to discuss this in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emyr Harries', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Emyr Harries  
Deputy Director, Education Business Planning and Governance