

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 30 November 2023

Title: Update regarding Childcare provision in Lampeter

Purpose of the report:

To update members on progress made in relation to supporting sufficient Childcare in Lampeter.

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:

Scrutiny requested a 6-month update on progress made to supporting the sufficiency of childcare provision in Lampeter.

Background

The Year 1 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Progress Report presented to Scrutiny in July 2023 highlighted the insufficiency of childcare availability in Lampeter. This was a concern with regard to supporting the Welsh Government's (WG) commitment to rolling out the Flying Start childcare entitlement of 12.5 hours a week of funded childcare for 2 – 3 year olds in the town.

Following the agreement to extend funded childcare through the Flying Start programme to 2 year olds in Wales, Ceredigion undertook a large scoping exercise to identify the areas for expansion. This included careful analysis of various datasets and discussions with key partners on identifying which LSOAs to expand to. Following submission of a business case to WG the following LSOAs were agreed as the expansion areas, which commenced in April 2023:

- Lampeter 1 & 2
- Tregaron
- New Quay
- Lledrod
- Llangeitho
- Borth
- Ceulanmaemawr.

Lampeter is the only town without a Cylch Meithrin or sessional childcare provision for 2-4 year olds.

Currently, many 3 year olds are starting school (mornings only) having not attended any form of childcare.

Current Situation

Although Lampeter LSOA 1 & 2 were approved for the expansion, the number of childcare places available do not meet the demand, therefore many children aren't able to access eligible childcare.

Lampeter has 1 private day nursery registered for 36 children and 3 childminders offering 22 places. All providers are currently full and are unable to accept any additional children who are eligible for the 12.5 hours a week of funded Flying Start childcare.

The primary objectives for expanding Flying Start are:

- *to ensure children get the best possible start in life;*
- *to tackle poverty and deprivation; and*
- *to increase the provision of childcare services and of Welsh medium childcare places and settings.*

Research tells us that high-quality childcare produces greater longer-term benefits for our children and strongly influences their future life chances. The right childcare can help tackle some of the more entrenched issues that result from living in deprivation, including low skills and poor health that will take time to overcome.

Research shows that children who attend quality early years settings are more independent, concentrate on their play for longer and, on entry to school, are more co-operative and better prepared for the challenges they meet.

[Phased expansion of Early Years Provision | GOV.WALES](#)

19 children are currently eligible for Flying Start childcare in the Lampeter 1 & 2 area. However, the Local Authority can only fund places for 10 children due to insufficient spaces being available. Initial conversations and investigations into expansion were held with the private Day Nursery. Following the decision by the Day Nursery not to expand its service due to premises issues, Flying Start officers have been working with Mudiad Meithrin to investigate the potential to establish a new Cylch Meithrin in Lampeter.

Mudiad Meithrin Development Officers have identified individuals to establish a Volunteer Committee. The role of the committee is to act as the governing body or registered person with CIW. The committee holds the overall responsibility and liability for the provision, and not the manager or any staff member. The Committee need to ensure that they

- Meet the legal requirements to operate as a childcare setting and registered charity
- Have sound financial systems established and maintained, and the setting is sustainable to run
- Confidentiality is upheld at all times.

Finding a suitable venue to accommodate a Cylch Meithrin/Sessional childcare has been difficult due to requirements to adhere to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) / National Minimum standards (NMS) regulations. However, progress is now being made. Discussions are taking place to establish a Cylch in either the Scouts Hut in

Lampeter or possibly within Ysgol Bro Pedr. The Cylch will aim to open in January as an unregistered setting to begin with, which means that children can only access the provision for less than two hours, with the intention to become registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) by April 2024.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why.

No. This is an update on progress made to supporting the sufficiency of childcare provision in Lampeter following an update on Year 1 Progress Report for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Report presented in July.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: N/A
Collaboration: N/A
Involvement: N/A
Prevention: N/A
Integration: N/A

Recommendation(s):

No recommendations required. Further updates will be presented to Scrutiny as part of the Year 2 CSA Progress Report.

Reasons for decision:

No decision required – update on progress made.

Contact Name: Carys Davies

Designation: Childcare Strategic Manager

Date of Report: 6 November 2023

Acronyms:

- WG Welsh Government
- LA Local Authority
- FS Flying Start
- CSA Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
- CIW Care Inspectorate Wales