

## **GIFTING OF GWYNFRYN SITE**

This is a statement pursuant to Standing Order 19.13.

I propose to authorise a Notifiable Transaction to which Standing Order 19.13 applies. The Notifiable Transaction involves the gifting of a site that falls under Standing Order 19.15 (i)(a).

The Gwynfryn site is currently in possession of the Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust and houses a unit of the North Wales Hospital planned for closure under the Clwyd Mental Illness Strategy. It covers an area of approximately 4 hectares (10 acres) and consists of largely traditional buildings built in 1900 including two that are believed to be Grade II Listed. It will be surplus to the Trust's requirements and returned to the ownership of the Assembly on 31 March 2003. The land is considered to have a value of £350,000 (three hundred and fifty thousand pounds). A sum equivalent to that amount will, however, need to be transferred to the Conwy and Denbighshire Health Trust to fulfil a commitment already given to them by the Assembly that the disposal price would be available to them to offset new service developments within the Mental Illness Strategy.

The Brondyffryn Trust (a company limited by guarantee) has asked the Assembly to "gift" the site to them. It is intended that the site should become an integral part of the overall redevelopment of Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn and should provide the location for the complementary and ancillary non-statutory facilities. On the eventual disposal of the current Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn site, Denbighshire County Council have already indicated that they are prepared to recycle the capital receipt (the value of which has yet to be determined) into the costs of the intensive education support unit which is to be located on the Gwynfryn site or to wider educational capital purposes. It would be our intention to seek to tie this receipt to the Gwynfryn development.

Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn is a special school for autistic children in Denbigh. The Assembly has already contributed £2m to the project to enable educational facilities to be provided at both the Tyn-y-Fron Primary School and Denbigh High School sites. As indicated, it is proposed that the Gwynfryn site should include new residential and respite facilities for pre-16 pupils operating in some cases on a 52 week basis; an intensive education support unit; an education and residential unit for post-16 pupils; and an assessment, research and training development unit. The estimated cost of providing these facilities is £3.3 million with the resources being principally attracted from the private, voluntary and charitable sectors.

The justification for gifting the site, as advanced by the Brondyffryn Trust which we would accept, is the fact that the site was originally gifted to the State by a local philanthropist (John Ablett) to enable the North Wales Hospital to be constructed. As such, the intended use would be compatible with its original gifting.

To ensure that the Assembly's interests are safeguarded, I would propose in gifting the site to the Brondyffryn Trust to require that it reverts to Assembly ownership if:-

- i. the proposed developments do not take place within a stipulated timescale; or
- ii. should it ever cease to be used for the agreed purposes.

The provision of these facilities will enable the Assembly, Denbighshire County Council in conjunction with the other 5 North Wales LEAs, Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust, Brondyffryn Trust and the wider voluntary sector to establish the first regional centre of excellence for autism in Wales. Apart from its flagship nature, it will provide major educational and health gains and enable significant revenue cost savings to be achieved by LEAs in their SEN budgets.