

# Schools inquiry – report will be made public in the New Year



Council Leader Andrew Burns insisted that there is no delay with the independent inquiry into the PPP1 schools and that the report will be delivered to the council's Chief Executive by the end of this year as planned.

But, the report will not be made public until those individuals or organisations who might for any reason be mentioned in it, have the opportunity to reply or comment. So this means that the report will not be available for anyone to read until at least the end of January. While there is no legal obligation to allow any organisations the right of reply, apparently the chair of the inquiry John Cole CBE has decided he has a moral obligation to allow this.

Seventeen schools which had been built or substantially renovated under the PPP1 scheme were closed earlier this year following a wall collapse at Oxfangs Primary School. The inquiry was established once all of the schools were reopened in August 2016.

The council appointed Mr Cole who is an architect from Northern Ireland to lead the independent inquiry, and it has always been stated by the council that the report was expected by the end of the year.

During the closure 7,600 pupils were affected and the council had to instigate logistics to allow all pupils to attend school, some of them during a sensitive time when they were due to sit exams.

Inspection and remedial work was carried out to the schools before they reopened.

The problem in the construction appeared to relate to faulty or missing wall or header ties.